

Jehovah-Nissi

The Goodlings in Mexico with



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"The Lord is Our Banner"

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The Day(s) of the Dead



November 1st and 2nd are the two 'official' days celebrated as 'Day of the Dead' here in Mexico. While each region observes this ancient custom (dates back to an Aztec festival dedicated to 'The Lady of the Dead') a little differently and there are differing opinions as to the 'why' of the observance, some believe in and desire a visit from deceased ancestors/relatives, some do it 'just in case', while others desire to continue a longstanding tradition and it's primarily a cultural/custom type observance. Regardless of motivation there are a few things that seem to be consistent: November 1st is the day to honor deceased children, while the 2nd is reserved for adults. In the home a thoughtfully planned altar is prepared containing at least the following items; **Photo of the Deceased** (some personal items would be included as well to help the visiting 'spirit' feel at home again), **Water**-quenches the thirst of the spirit and symbolizes 'purity of the soul', **Incense**-cleanses the area of 'bad spirits' and incites prayer, **Flowers**-brightly fall colored flowers are grown this time of year: marigold yellow, deep maroon, bright white, lavender, or orange petals are placed on the floor to form a path from the front door to the altar in order to guide the spirit home again, while the whole flowers adorn the altar and fill the space with their

Praise for His longsuffering

We have 58 "very close" neighbors on our street alone, look out our back window and there are another 59. Continue outside the gate of our privada and you'll find a street about 2 blocks long that leads to another 400...yet we are a small speck in this community of 15,000 homes. As we walk around and see so many people, both families and individuals, it is overwhelming. So we ask, "Lord, how do we make an impact in this place for Your Kingdom? What can we possibly do?" We continue walking and see the volcano smoking in the near distance, a clear representation of His power, His presence and are reminded that He is holding back His wrath, but for how much longer?

Currently between the 3 of us (Dawn, Keith, Tyler) we are involved in classes and relationships with over 45 non-believers on a regular basis. Some are Bible studies, some English only and some simply friends. We were able to get some bilingual bibles which are great to use for "English" class. It is an amazing thing to see someone open their bible and have no idea where Genesis is; it is even more amazing to see them learning God's Truth for the first time. We have so many opportunities and not enough time or energy. We really need God's wisdom and guidance to know WHO to love and HOW to love them with His love, His heart, His Spirit. Women are much easier to reach than the men, no surprise! Join us in asking God to raise up 12 national men here in Los Heroes to go forth as His disciples, teaching and preaching the Word...going from house to house daily, adding thousands to their number. This is the perfect set up for that to be able to occur as the homes are so close. As we look to the hills we know where our help comes from and want our neighbors to know it too.



Dawn with three of her 'English Students' as well as Sabrina and Sara from the New Song ESL Team that was here in August

pungent aromas. **Bread**—a key element and an offering for the soul. 'Dead bread' is found in every bakery during this season. **Liquor**—tequila, beer, or the favorite wine of the deceased is provided for 'them' to remember the good things of their life. **Salt**—an item also representing purification as well as adding 'spice' to the food of this life. **Candles**—very critical in lighting the way for the spirit while representing the ascension of the spirit.

Specially cut paper decorations—add to the festive atmosphere and most often purple and yellow are used to signify the union between life and death. There are many other items that might be included, but as you can tell from this short list, everything has a purpose and meaning. You may be wondering if actual 'spirit activity' takes place in and around these altars. We can't say for sure, but most everyone who participates in this 'tradition' agrees that when they eat the food and drink the drink (yes, the family then partakes of the meal after the spirit(s) 'eats' first) that the food has no flavor, the drink has no taste, and the flowers have no aroma! The Bible has something to say about inviting and entertaining spirits, and we can be certain that 'dear old departed grand-ma' isn't the one paying a visit! This is just one example of the complex nature of the cultural and religious climate here in Mexico, as so much of the belief and 'faith' is placed in a mixture of thousands of years of old animism and Roman Catholic theology that was already far from Biblical truth when it landed on the shores of Mexico in the 1519 via Cortez and his fellow 'Missionary Spaniards'.



One constant reminder of God's power and mercy. Popo

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They that trust in the LORD shall be as mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever. As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the LORD is round about his people from henceforth even for ever. **Psalm 125:1-2**

Praise and Prayer Offerings :

- MEMO CONTINUES TO MAKE PROGRESS. HE HAS BEEN ALCOHOL 'FREE' FOR OVER 2 MONTHS NOW AND CONTINUES TO ENJOY WEEKLY BIBLE STUDY WITH KEITH. MAY HE SOON TRUST CHRIST, ALONE
- DAWN AND KEITH CELEBRATED AND CONTINUE TO GIVE GOD ALL THE GLORY FOR 25 YEARS OF MARRIAGE (11-5-1983)
- A FRACTION OF THE NAMES THAT FOR US-HAVE FACES, FOR THE LORD-HAVE SOULS, AND FOR YOU-BEG PRAYER: GLORIA, OSCAR, SOLEDAD, BANY, IXCHEL, DAVID, SEBASTIAN, LUIS, JORGE, JAVIER, MARIO, WALDO, ANTONIO, ROBERTO, SOCORRO, ROSA, VALENTIN, CIRILA, RAUL, ELISA....AND SO MANY MORE
- THERE IS MUCH NEGATIVE SENTIMENT IN THE US REGARDING MEXICANS, WELL MAYBE IT'S ACTUALLY AGAINST 'ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS' AND MEXICANS ARE AN EASY TARGET. EVERY TIME YOU SEE OR HEAR A NEWS REPORT REGARDING THIS CONTROVERSIAL ISSUE, WILL YOU PRAY FOR THE PEOPLE OF MEXICO?
- AS OUR TEAM MEETS TO FOCUS OUR EFFORTS, MAY WE HEAR CLEARLY FROM THE LORD, AND BE DELIVERED FROM ASKING HIS BLESSING ON OUR PLANS AND IDEAS. HIS WILL BE DONE. AMEN.

May you know His grace, truth, and love-today,

Keith, Dawn and Tyler



Mama n Skipper (Dawns parents) during their visit in August. Here with Gloria, a shop owner in the Parian, the mom of one of Tyler's former soccer teammates, and one of Dawn's many English students.