## 'Before the midwife can get there, they've already had the baby.'

(Exodus 1:19, The Message Translation)

I laughed. God sure knows how to speak! I'd gone to bed tired and weary, at the end of my 3<sup>rd</sup> pregnancy, wondering, 'When is this baby coming?' This was the first verse my eyes fell on when I opened my Bible. God knew exactly how I was feeling and his sense of humour cheered me up and reassured me! Well, our Sam didn't arrive quite that quickly, thankfully! He was born 2 days later, and I had plenty of time to get to the hospital!

There are lots of verses in the Bible related to pregnancy and birth. Through each of my pregnancies, God has used them to minister to me. I write out the ones that are most meaningful to me, read them, speak them out, pray them for myself and baby. They build faith for an easy pregnancy and birth, and a healthy happy baby.

Below are some verses. Look them up, write out the ones that speak to you, meditate on them. There were some weeks in my pregnancies, especially at the end, when I would pray verses out every night when I went to bed.

Your baby chosen and created by God Ps 139:13-16, Rev 4:11, Eph 2:10, Jer 1:5, Ecc 11:5, Is 43:7, Job 10:8-12

Children blessed, and a blessing Ps 127:3-5, Ps 128:3-4, Deut 7:13-14, Deut 28:4, Luke 1:42, Prov 20:7, Ps 113:9

Set free from fear in pregnancy and birth 2 Tim 1:7, Prov 3:24, John 10:10, John 14:27, Rom 10:17, Phil 1:6, Phil 4:6-7, Is 54:17, Is 26:3, 1 Jn 4:18, Ex 23:25-26, Deut 7:13-15

Easy pregnancy and birth - redeemed from the curse of sickness and pain Is 53:4-5, Gal 3:13-14,29, Mat 8:17, Ps 103:1-4, 1 Tim 2:15 ('saved' - kept safe & sound), Is 66:7-10, Ex 1:19, Phil 4:13, Luke 1:37, Deut 7:13-15

God is faithful 1 Jn 5:14-15, Heb 10:23

Other things to pray: Baby in the womb - each part of the body to form perfectly; cut baby free from any hereditary diseases ie eczema, asthma, bad eyesight etc; bless the baby - tell him/her they are loved and wanted; pray for a content baby who sleeps & feeds well, and who has a spirit tender and receptive to God; for baby to get into the correct position for birth...

Delivery - peace, joy, quick and easy, no pain; no complications; older children to be excited about baby coming, and able to adjust to baby's arrival...

And everything else you can think of!!!

'...cast all your care upon Him, for He <u>cares</u> for you.' 1 Peter 5: 7

God Snippets 'Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful' 'faithful' - completely trustworthy.

Hebrews 10:23, 2 Peter 1:2-4, Numbers 23:19, 2 Samuel 7:28-29

Pasta Fun (use uncooked pasta!) - glue different types of pasta onto card to make

patterns/pictures...use food colouring to colour pasta - put into clear plastic bottles to make shakers...thread coloured pasta with holes onto string/shoelaces to make necklaces...give saucepans, spoons, bowls and pasta to stir and 'cook'.

Painting with Water! An outside activity for warm weather! Gives kids a bucket of water and big paint brushes (real decorating ones). They can 'paint' the outside walls of the house, the patio, garden path, rocks etc. When the walls dry, they can start all over again! Keeps them occupied for ages!

'Supernatural Childbirth'! Apart from some of the storybooks I read to my children, there is one book I have read more than any other. It is called 'Supernatural Childbirth', by Jackie Mize (published by Harrison House, and available from Christian bookshops). I have read it several times each pregnancy! It is filled with God's promises concerning conception, pregnancy and birth; and testimonies from women who have experienced miracle conceptions, sickness-free pregnancies, and pain-free births! Sound good?! It is! It really builds faith.

Pregnancy and birth are meant to be wonderful God-given experiences. Jesus died to save us not only from sin, but to free us from EVERY curse, including sickness and pain (Is 53:4-5, Gal 3:13-14,29, Deut 28). Let me share my testimony.

After the birth of my first son, I was left feeling pretty traumatised! Not so much because of the birth, but because of the medical intervention -I had to lie on my back with a monitor strapped to my stomach for most of the time; the doctor burst my waters way too early - later I was put on a drip to speed up contractions, I had a catheter put in, an episiotomy performed and stitches!! Phew! Not much fun! BUT, praise God, through the whole process of labour and delivery I had absolutely no pain - not even with the episiotomy and stitches. Yes, it was hard work and intense - especially the last hour or so of contractions, and the pushing, but it wasn't painful. I had gone into hospital in complete peace, with God's promises strong in my mind and in my heart, and God did the miracle for me. Afterwards, I did wonder about the pain-free bit - maybe the intensity of the contractions is what people call pain, I thought. My second birth I went into the hospital much later, didn't let the doctors intervene - though I still had stitches - and was again in perfect peace and expecting a pain-free birth. All went well until I was about to push then I suddenly felt the most incredible pain - it only lasted a few seconds and I remember saying 'Ooh, that hurt'. That is the ONLY pain I have felt in 3 deliveries, and I am actually very glad for it because now I know without a doubt, that apart from those few seconds my births have been pain-free. The rest was intense but it was not pain. The only way to describe the intensity without the pain is to liken it to when you strain to push or pull something very heavy, or try to unscrew a lid that doesn't want to be opened! – your muscles do some hard work, and it can be exhausting, BUT it doesn't hurt. The intensity of the last contractions are even greater than that of course, and in each of my pregnancies I did use gas and air the last hour or so. (Use whatever is of help to you-you don't have to prove anything to anyone - no-one except my husband knew what I was believing for my deliveries. Some women find breathing exercises useful; others speak in tongues to help them through the contractions; for me I found just saying the name of Jesus over and over in my head washed me in peace and eased my body through the contractions.) My 3<sup>rd</sup> delivery was wonderful - so much more natural, no intervention, no pain, our little boy out in just one or two pushes. He was our biggest baby at just under 9 lbs, but I had no stitches. Third time round I had the faith for that - previously I hadn't. My next delivery...well...it's going to be even better!

My pregnancies have also all been easy - a few 'off' days early on but no sickness. God is very good, and 'he who promised is faithful' Hebrews 10:23

It may be difficult for you to believe for anything better if your present or previous pregnancy/delivery has been tough. But you don't have to work up some great faith all by yourself - simply read God's promises over and over -speak them out- until they become part of you, till you have that real kind of heart revelation 'Wow..this is TRUTH, and I can experience it too'. The main thing is to be in God's perfect peace for each stage of the process. Get hold of the book 'Supernatural Childbirth' too - it explains so much more, and really helps build faith. There are whole sections too about God's promises for you if you have difficulty conceiving or have had miscarriages. You too CAN be a 'joyful mother of children' (Psalm 113:9).

Each pregnancy you can believe more, God will work, and each pregnancy/birth can be better than the last.

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