

“Playfully Jump Like Calves”

Our farming operation in rural Eastern Oregon was 99% agricultural, with a few random pets for good measure - two horses, “Karen” (friendly) and “Sue” (mean as a snake!), a Siamese cat, “Muffin,” a rotund bunny, “Thumper,” and a llama...*with no name*. I came up woefully short in my knowledge of animal science as we didn’t have goats, sheep, donkeys, pigs, cattle, or chickens. Nevertheless, I was fascinated with farm animals and relished visiting a “real” farm.

One fine day, the opportunity arose. Mom pulled the station wagon up to a large cattle operation, and my heart melted when I saw baby calves leaping across the pasture. They had just been released from the barn and were elated with their newfound freedom. Recognizing this as a heaven-sent occasion, I threw my leg over the fence, *but in no way, shape, or form did I clear the fence*. Worse yet, I failed to recognize the B-flat humming sound as electricity and received the shock of my life!

I hadn’t thought about that accident for forty-some years. Still, last night, as I read this verse, it came to mind, *“But for you who revere my name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its rays. And you will go out and frolic like well-fed calves”* (NIV, 2011, Mal. 4:2). I reread it after taking editorial liberties: “But for you who revere my name, the **son** of righteousness will rise with healing in **his** rays. And you will go out and frolic like well-fed calves.”

Jesus so blesses me; most of the time, I am filled with joy, delight, and hope for the future. That wasn’t the case recently, as I processed the news that one of my adult children had transitioned. Life can be oh-so-sweet, but during that time, I was grief-stricken and fearful. It wasn’t until I *fully* turned my eyes to the **son** (Jesus – the coming Messiah) and asked for healing and freedom from fear that the layers of my grief began to evaporate slowly. *“For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind”* (NIV, 2011, 2 Tim. 1:7).

Today, I can – *and I hope you can too* - delight in the day, frolic about, and “playfully jump like calves.”

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