

Devotional Thought

Week of: March 2, 2008

“He will call upon me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble, I will deliver him and honor him” (vs. 15).

Psalms 91:9-19

*T*his statement verse 15 toward the end of this resounding psalm is, for me, a more accurate and true-to-life reflection of the Lord’s protection against evil than the words found in the 9th verse of this chapter which states: *“then no evil will befall you.”* In this verse the psalmist does not suggest that troubles never comes to the person who has faith. The promise of the psalmist is that when trouble comes, as it will come for us all in this life, God will be with us in and through and far beyond the trouble.

The Bible records many dramatic rescues which include the Red Sea crossings, the lions’ den experience, and many more. These have proved to be the exception rather than the rule in the history of faith. The experience of most Christians whom I know that have undergone many different kinds of trials has not been one of immediate and spectacular deliverance, but rather of the abiding, steadfast presence of God in the midst of sufferings, trials and disappointments of life. During difficulties, there has been a presence which has made the trials bearable, even though it seemed barely sufficient much of the time. Yet God has provided strength to the faithful to bring them through the darkest midnight and deepest valley, if not in triumph, yet we have survived. This has allowed us and prepared us to face each new day with a deeper faith and truer knowledge of God’s divine grace.

I have known dark and difficult times in my own life. There have been times when I have felt myself alone, abandoned and my urgent prayers unheard, or at least unanswered. Yet as I look back over the years, from the sunlight of today and on the backside of yesterday, I recognize and have to acknowledge that it was the rod and staff of God’s guidance and firm shepherding that has brought me to this day. I am thankful today for the hand of God that had guided me and protected me during difficult times.

John Newton penned the beautiful and toughing words that echo my thoughts at this writing. He wrote:

Thru many dangers, toil and snares I have already come;
‘Tis grace hath brought me safe thus far, and grace will lead me home.

PRAYER: Help us to learn from difficult moments, O God, so that when we feel deserted, lost on a lonely, chilly, and distant island, we might have confidence and trust in you. Help us to be wise enough to look beyond our unreliable self and in the gloom of night might hear the shepherd’s seeking call. May we recognize your voice of warm compassion and reaching out might place our hand in yours so you can lead us home rejoicing. AMEN.

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