

Pleasant Valley
Church of Christ

3317 Amidon
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(316) 838-4195
www.letjesusleadus.org

Schedule of Services

Sunday

Classes 9:30 am
Worship 10:30 am
Evening 6:00 pm

Wednesday

Classes 7:30 pm

The Pleasant Valley Church of Christ is a non-denominational group of believers who are committed to following Jesus in our attitudes, our relationships, and our worship. If you want the same thing in your life, please contact us. We'd like to help.

Unless otherwise noted, all scripture quotations are from the New King James Version Bible, Thomas Nelson Publishers.

Wings



*"But those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength;
they shall mount up with wings like eagles" (Isaiah 40:31)*

June 14, 2009

My rock and my fortress

by David King

"Bow down Your ear to me, deliver me speedily; be my rock of refuge, a fortress of defense to save me. For You are my rock and my fortress; therefore, for Your name's sake, lead me and guide me" (Psa. 31:2-3).

In ancient times, the ideal refuge from marauding armies was a strong fortress built on a high mountain. Attackers could not use siege engines against its walls, and its elevated position limited the amount of damage that could be done by lobbing stones into it. Stocked with ample supplies of food and water, a mountain fortress was impregnable. Its inhabitants were safe from harm.

In David's mind, this image of a strong mountain fortress was the ideal metaphor for God. He often used the expression "my rock and my fortress" to describe God (see also 18:2 and 71:3). A study of this Psalm will help us find in God that same refuge.

David wrote this Psalm in a time of extreme affliction. "I am in trouble; my eye wastes away with grief, yes, my soul and my body!" (v. 9). This affliction came from two directions. First, he was targeted by personal enemies who sought to destroy him: "I hear the slander of many; . . . they take counsel together against me, they scheme to take away my life" (v. 13, see v. 4, 15). Even his friends turned against him (v. 11).

But trying to evade the schemes of his enemies was complicated by a second problem, the frustration of having to deal with his own imperfections: "My strength fails because of my iniquity, and my bones waste away" (v. 10).

Between the attacks of his enemies and the burden of his own mistakes, David felt like "a broken vessel" (v. 12), worthless and despised.

That feeling, of course, is universal in the human race. For all our posturing and pretense, in our hearts we struggle to find a purpose in life. But that purpose eludes us, and life seems destined to destroy us.

David found a refuge from this despair in God. Three times in this Psalm, he says that his trust is in God (v. 1, 6, 14). He cannot trust others; he cannot trust even his own abilities. But in God he found the source of strength that enabled him to endure life. By looking to God for help, he found the stability and courage he needed to tackle life's challenges.

David's trust in God was not merely an act of mental concentration. It influenced the way he lived. "You are my rock and my fortress; therefore, for Your name's sake, **lead me and guide me**" (v. 3). David cast himself upon God's mercy, not only as a shield from harm, but as a source of direction. By staying close to God, David found the counsel he needed to make wise decisions in dealing with life. We cannot expect God to help us, if we reserve the right to spurn His instructions when we find them inconvenient.

Life can be tough, but it need not be miserable. "I will be glad and rejoice in Your mercy" (v. 7). The message of this Psalm is simple: If we flee to God as our rock and our fortress, we can take on life with confidence: "Be of good courage, and He shall strengthen your heart" (v. 24).