

Friday 14<sup>th</sup> August 2020

In you, O Lord, I have taken refuge;  
let me never be put to shame;  
deliver me in your righteousness.  
Turn your ear to me,  
come quickly to my rescue;  
be my rock of refuge,  
a strong fortress to save me.  
Since you are my rock and my fortress,  
for the sake of your name lead and guide me.

*Psalm 31:1-3*

Time and again I find myself turning to the psalms, and always the words seem to fit my circumstances and my emotions. Sometimes we can be filled with thanksgiving, joy, sorrow, doubt or fear but they reach out to us in our need. This psalm is David calling out to the Lord to deliver him from his troubles, and David is making his request to God based on what he knew of God's name and character. This is emphasized in verse 3: 'Since you are my rock and my fortress, for the sake of your name lead and guide me'. David knows that God is righteous and loving and that he desires to deliver his people. David also shows his complete trust in God by his words in verse 5: 'Into your hands I commit my spirit'. Jesus used this phrase when he was dying on the cross showing his total dependence on God the Father (Luke 23:46). Stephen repeated these words as he was being stoned to death (Acts 7:59), confident in death that he was simply passing from God's earthly care into God's eternal care.

Throughout David's life he constantly turned to God for guidance and advice. A prime example of this is when David saves Keilah.

When David was told, 'Look, the Philistines are fighting against Keilah and are looting the threshing-floors,' he enquired of the Lord, saying, 'Shall I go and attack the Philistines?'

The Lord answered him, "Go, attack the Philistines and save Keilah.'

But David's men said to him, 'Here in Judah we are afraid. How much more, then, if we go to Keilah against the Philistine forces!'

Once again David enquired of the Lord, and the Lord answered him, 'Go down to Keilah, for I am going to give the Philistines into your hand.' So David and his men went to Keilah, fought the Philistines and carried off their livestock. He inflicted heavy losses on the Philistines and saved the people of Keilah.

*1 Samuel 23:1-5*

The important thing for us to be aware of is that David sought the Lord's guidance before he took action. He listened to God's instructions and then proceeded accordingly. David fought the Philistines and carried off their livestock. This was a heavy loss for the Philistines. This victory saved the people from starvation and possibly death.

I wonder how often you and I fall into the trap trying to find out God's will for us after the fact, and have to ask God to undo our hasty decisions? We should slow down, take time to seek God's help

and guidance before we act. God can and does lead and help us in different ways. It may be through good advice from others, through scripture and the leading of his spirit in our hearts.

Trust in the Lord with all your heart  
and lean not on your own understanding;  
in all your ways acknowledge him,  
and he will make your path straight.

*Proverbs 3:5-6*

Heavenly Father, thank you for being our Good Shepherd and guiding us. Help us to trust you and to rest in your wisdom, allowing your spirit to guide us through the challenging moments of life.

Amen.