

Devotion: Tuesday, April 7, 2020

Psalm 71 ---The Message

¹⁻³ I run for dear life to God,\

I'll never live to regret it.

Do what you do so well:
get me out of this mess and up on my feet.
Put your ear to the ground and listen,
give me space for salvation.
Be a guest room where I can retreat;
you said your door was always open!
You're my salvation—my vast, granite fortress.

⁴⁻⁷ My God, free me from the grip of Wicked,
from the clutch of Bad and Bully.
You keep me going when times are tough—
my bedrock, God, since my childhood.
I've hung on you from the day of my birth,
the day you took me from the cradle;
I'll never run out of praise.
Many gasp in alarm when they see me,
but you take me in stride.

⁸⁻¹¹ Just as each day brims with your beauty,
my mouth brims with praise.
But don't turn me out to pasture when I'm old
or put me on the shelf when I can't pull my weight.
My enemies are talking behind my back,
watching for their chance to knife me.
The gossip is: "God has abandoned him.
Pounce on him now; no one will help him."

¹²⁻¹⁶ God, don't just watch from the sidelines.
Come on! Run to my side!

A mighty fortress is our God,

A bulwark never failing;---Martin Luther

King David the author of Psalms 71 challenges us to think long and hard about the source of our security. For years, we have trusted government to provide us with political security, law enforcement to provide us with community security, our medical system to provide us with health security. But we are learning every day that there can be breakdowns in these systems.

Where is solid security to be found?

The writer of Psalm 71 calls God "bedrock and a fortress," one who can free us "from the grip of the wicked" (vv. 3-4). The psalm challenges us to put our faith in the Word of God instead of in human words, to place our faith not in technological fixes, but in theological fixes.

This virus is showing us that we all need a strong fortress -- a refuge that cannot be penetrated by hackers or criminals, illnesses or enemies, failures or betrayals. We long for a place that is a rock of refuge, a mighty fortress, a bulwark that never, ever fails.

Psalm 71 is a Psalm of lament. King David is approaching the end of his life and is experiencing a great deal of uncertainty as to his own future. ...

Chris Enstad writes:

Life isn't fair the saying goes. And that is true to an extent, but I would rather live by the notion that life is life and that life is given to us as a gift and that gift is good because it comes from the one who has known you and me from when we were young, indeed, as David prays, it is God who took you and me alive out of our mother's womb, who ushered that first holy breath into our lungs, the lungs that sputtered into action, the lungs that have carried us to this moment, and who will carry us into a future that perhaps we don't quite see clearly yet, but that God has set before us.

Psalm 71 challenges us to put our total trust in God, rather than in the people or institutions of this world. It invites us to depend on the Lord for security, rather than on anything that the world can provide. When we put our faith in God, we discover that he is a rock of refuge and a strong fortress. We find that he is strong and willing to help us, as he guides us through this difficult time of our lives.

Let us pray:

Jesus, keep us safe. Fear pervades our lives and gives us too many reasons to worry. We see danger every day, and we have experienced the pain it causes. But, you have promised to be our refuge, our shelter and our peace. Even when the storms rage, we know that in your arms we are truly safe. Let us trust you fully, believing that your promises are not empty. You have given us hope, and we cling to that and claim it. Jesus, keep us safe. Amen.

Stay safe, God bless each of you!

