

Thought for Today: August 12, 2008

Psalm 125 (NASB)

**Those who trust in the Lord
Are as Mount Zion, which cannot be moved but abides forever.
As the mountains surround Jerusalem,
So the Lord surrounds His people from this time forth and forever.
For the scepter of wickedness shall not rest upon the land of the righteous,
So that the righteous will not put forth their hands to do wrong.**

**Do good, O Lord, to those who are good
And to those who are upright in their hearts.
But as for those who turn aside to their crooked ways,
The Lord will lead them away with the doers of iniquity.
Peace be upon Israel.**

It is a whole lot easier to trust in God when we feel safe and protected. As long as we are experiencing calm seas and pleasant breezes, it is comfortable to recline, close our eyes, and appreciate God's goodness. We live according to plan, we can agree with this psalmist who feels safe and secure in Jerusalem. One of the greatest of God's blessings is the sense of security and assurance that God gives His children. Christians—blessed to know Christ as one who has come and is coming again—can feel safe with God. We know that evil cannot overcome the Lord, and He has promised to protect those who remain in His camp. This should motivate us to stay close to Him.

Sometimes, however, we find it hard to trust in God. There are times that challenge our sense of security, and those times may even propel us toward the precipice of disbelief. When the seas get choppy and the winds begin to howl, we should know that we are not the first to cry out to God and ask if He's aware of the storm. Even the Apostles felt fear and anxiety at times, but I believe they learned their lessons and grew in faith.

Part of our growing faith is based on the belief that God is just. This psalmist has an expectation that God will be good to those who are good and that He will punish those who leave His camp. That is a fair expectation based on what God has told us in the past. We know that people who choose the crooked paths seem to have more fun. They are often idolized and envied, but God will execute justice someday. When His justice appears, we will not want to be in the camp of the evildoers. So we should be discerning before we call upon God for justice. If we are upright in heart, then His peace will be upon us. If, however, we have turned away from Him to follow our own desires, then we face the awful prospect of standing before God as His enemy.

Our only hope, our only security, and our only peace are found in God alone.

May His peace be upon us,
Patrick Barber