**iConnect Sunday School Class—Researched and taught by Ron Kocher**

**With gratitude to Ron and appreciation to class participants.
Ted**

**5/24/2020**

Peace be with you.

**And also with you.**

**Thou art my lamp, O Lord: and the Lord will lighten my darkness. —II Samuel 22:29**

**The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer…. For by thee I have run through a troop: by my God have I leaped over a wall. - II Samuel 22:2, 30**

Nearly identical to Psalm 18, this chapter records David’s song of praise to God for His power and protection. It is considered a warrior’s “victory song,” and alludes to escape from King Saul (see v. 1).

**Deuteronomy 5:11 Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.**

**Deuteronomy 6:24 The Lord commanded us to do all these statutes, to fear the Lord our God, for our good always, that he might preserve us alive, as it is at this day**

**Proverbs 30:5 Every word of God is pure: he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him**

**Proverbs 3:5, 6 Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths**

**II Kings 4:38 Elisha came again to Gilgal: and there was a dearth in the land; and the sons of the prophets were sitting before him: and he said unto his servant, Set on the great pot, and seethe pottage for the sons of the prophets.**

Famines are noted several times in First and Second Kings. This one is believed to have resulted from a drought rather than from a siege or another cause. “The sons of the prophets” refers to a guild or society of prophets, not unlike a trade association. Elisha is portrayed as leader of this large prophetic community. Scholars have not been able to determine the specific poisonous gourd shredded into the pot in this account (see vv. 39, 40), but agree that meal or flour would not have neutralized the poison. Elisha’s addition of meal (see v. 41) is symbolic of divine power.

seethe: boil

pottage: thick soup or stew

**Psalms 17:5, 7 Hold up my goings in thy paths, that my footsteps slip not…. Shew thy marvellous lovingkindness, O thou that savest by thy right hand them which put their trust in thee from those that rise up against them.**

**Proverbs 18:10 The name of the Lord is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe.**

Commentators note that the tower image illustrates a specific kind of safety, one that elevates God’s people above trouble and danger. The Hebrew word rendered safe (sāgab)—also signifying high or exalted—underscores this concept.

**Psalms 143:1, 8 Hear my prayer, O Lord, give ear to my supplications…. Cause me to hear thy lovingkindness in the morning; for in thee do I trust.**

**II Peter 1:1, 2 Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ. Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord.**

Here the writer is speaking to Gentiles—not those considered “chosen,” but those who gained their faith through the inclusive teachings of Christ. “Like precious,” translated from the Greek word isotimos, means equal in honor. It was used to describe foreigners who were accorded the citizenship rights of natives.

According to one source, the term rendered knowledge in this verse (Greek, epignōsis) alludes to more than simply knowing about something—it portrays full discernment. In this case, he suggests, it could be called “the master-science of life.” He continues, “The other sciences may bring new skill, new knowledge, new abilities, but the master-science, the knowledge of Jesus Christ, alone brings the grace men need and the peace for which their hearts crave.”

**Acts 9:36–38 Now there was at Joppa a certain disciple named Tabitha, which by interpretation is called Dorcas: this woman was full of good works and almsdeeds which she did. And it came to pass in those days, that she was sick, and died.... And forasmuch as Lydda was nigh to Joppa, and the disciples had heard that Peter was there, they sent unto him two men, desiring him that he would not delay to come to them.**

Peter’s leadership, preaching, and healings are highlighted in the first half of the Acts of the Apostles. His first healing (with John) was of the lame beggar at the gate of the Temple in Jerusalem (see Acts 3:1–8). The healing of Tabitha—the last of Peter’s healings mentioned in Scripture—is the first recorded cure of such magnitude performed by one of Jesus’ disciples.

When raising Tabitha, Peter addresses her directly, speaking as Jesus had done when he raised the dead (see Mark 5:41; Luke 7:14; John 11:43). At other times, Peter identifies the healing power of the Christ, saying, “In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk” (Acts 3:6) and “Jesus Christ maketh thee whole” (Acts 9:34).

It is while he is in Joppa that Peter receives the vision to open the doors of Christianity to everyone (see Acts 10:9–16).

**Psalms 91:1 He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.**

The message of divine protection in Psalm 91, according to one commentator, provides a direct response to the plea for God’s care in Psalm 90 (see vv. 12–17). Another scholar says of Psalm 91, “By virtue of the soaring energy of its trust in God it leaves behind every earthly fear, every human doubt and all inhibiting considerations.”

**Psalms 91:1, 11 He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty…. For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.**

**Isaiah 12:2 Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid.**

**Psalms 119:89, 117 For ever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven…. Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe.**

**Psalms 121:8 The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore.**

**Psalms 36:7 8 How excellent is thy lovingkindness, O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings.**

**Psalms 36:9 With thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light.**

Spiritual ruggedness emerges from testing times. In climbing a mountain, we develop more of what it takes to go on climbing mountains. Like those biblical people, we do gain in spiritual strength and ruggedness as we face tough challenges with an understanding of our real and indestructible relationship to God, divine Life, Spirit.

The more we mentally, prayerfully get a sighting on our relationship to God, divine Life, as His perfect expression, the more we can bring our living into line with spiritually based thinking. This kind of thinking doesn’t cower, doesn’t follow the crowd when the crowd denies God’s all-power and omnipresence. One who is spiritually rugged stands firm, even if it means standing alone with God.

As we claim and then exercise our God-bestowed spiritual ruggedness, we will find in increasing degree that we’re able to tackle successfully challenges we had thought were too big for us. And we’ll find we have what it takes to triumph.

**The** **Lord** **bless** **you** **and** **keep you; the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face toward you and give you** **peace.**