

“THINK ON THESE THINGS”

Philippians 4:8

A Refuge In Time of Trouble

By David Dann

How will we handle troubled times? The inspired psalmist, King David, writes, ***“But the Lord shall endure forever; He has prepared His throne for judgment. He shall judge the world in righteousness, And He shall administer judgment for the peoples in uprightness. The Lord also will be a refuge for the oppressed, A refuge in times of trouble. And those who know Your name will put their trust in You; For You, Lord, have not forsaken those who seek You”*** (Psa. 9:7-10, NKJV).

In the midst of a seemingly unending pandemic, ongoing political turmoil and strife, and an increasing level of uncertainty regarding the future, it is important to understand that God’s people have a refuge in times of trouble. As the psalm points out, the Lord Himself serves as the place of shelter and protection for His people (v. 9).

Please consider the ways in which Psalm 9 highlights the fact that the Lord is a refuge for His people in times of trouble.

First, the Lord will endure. In contrast to the wicked, who are eventually punished and destroyed, David writes, ***“But the Lord shall endure forever”*** (Psa. 9:7). Unlike an elected official who may be in power for a few years, or even an earthly king who may reign for the duration of his lifetime, the Lord endures forever. He retains His position of ultimate authority and never turns it over to another. ***“Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; And let them say among the nations, ‘The Lord reigns’”*** (1 Chron. 16:31). He can never be voted out of office or lose His position of authority and control. The Lord is a refuge in times of trouble because He endures forever.

Second, the Lord will judge. David writes, ***“But the Lord shall endure forever; He has prepared His throne for judgment. He shall judge the world in righteousness, And He shall administer judgment for the peoples in uprightness”*** (Psa. 9:7-8). From an earthly perspective, it may seem as though the wicked are simply getting away with their wicked schemes and will never be held accountable for their actions. However, nothing could be further from the truth. The Lord will judge the world and ***“will render to each one according to his deeds”*** (Rom. 2:6). The apostle Paul writes, ***“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad”*** (2 Cor. 5:10). The Lord is a refuge in times of trouble because He will judge the world.

Third, the Lord will save. David, writes, ***“The Lord also will be a refuge for the oppressed, A refuge in times of trouble. And those who know Your name will put their trust in You; For You, Lord, have not forsaken those who seek You”*** (Psa. 9:7-10). The Lord has the ability to provide salvation and deliverance for those who put their trust in Him. He has provided forgiveness of sins and the gift of eternal life in His Son, Jesus Christ (cp. Eph. 1:7; Acts 2:38; 1 John 5:11). While He has not promised to keep us from every trial and difficulty this world may bring, He has issued this promise: ***“Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him”*** (James 1:12). The Lord is a refuge in times of trouble because He is able to save His people.

Jesus said, ***“Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light”*** (Matt. 11:28-30). The Lord never promised to remove all of this world’s troubles, but He does offer rest and refuge to all those who come to Him. Is the Lord your refuge in times of trouble? ■

Consistency

By John Edwards

Consistency is defined as *“steadfast adherence.”* One who is consistent is stable, steady, dependable and reliable. To be constant and regular in one’s diet and exercise program, for example, is to have consistency. To have a level of performance that varies greatly in quality over time, to change and deviate, to be up and down, on and off, is to lack consistency. Consistent or inconsistent: which are you?

IN KEEPING GOD’S COMMANDMENTS. We may keep some of God’s commandments some of the time, but consistency demands that we keep all His commandments always. *“O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always...”* (Duet. 5:29).

IN ATTENDANCE. Those who are present at every service of the church may be said to have consistency in their attendance. Others who are absent from time to time are marked by inconsistency in attendance. When the doors are open, can you be counted on to be in attendance? *“Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another...”* (Heb. 10:25).

IN INVOLVEMENT. There are some who take an active part in the worship and work of the church, on all occasions. And there are those who you never know if or when they will participate. They may lead singing today (and really bellow it out), and not be heard from again for weeks! *“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord...”* (1 Cor. 15:58).

IN BEHAVIOR. One qualification of elders is *“of good behaviour”* (1 Tim. 3:2). Older women are to *“be in behaviour as becometh holiness”* (Titus 2:3). Is there consistency in your behavior? Were you good and holy yesterday? Will you be good and holy tomorrow? Are there times when you are not good and holy? Do you act the same way? Are you unchanging in nature?

IN THE HOME. For children to develop into stable and steady adults, they need to be brought up in an environment of consistency in the home. Do you treat your wife/husband in a consistently loving manner (Eph. 5:22-33; Titus 2:4; 1 Pet. 3:7)? Are you, as a mother/father, consistent in the application of rules, discipline and the like? *“Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it”* (Prov. 22:6).

IN DRESS. The Bible teaches men and women to be modest in apparel. *“In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety...”* (1 Tim. 2:9). Are you always adorned in modest apparel? One way we show reverence for God in the assembly of the saints is in dress (Ps. 89:7). Do you do your best to dress appropriately and respectfully at all times. Some may wear a nice suit or dress at one service, and then come in blue jeans at another. Why the difference? What has changed?

Let’s work on our consistency. Can you be more consistent? ■

No Time for Bible Reading?

How much time does it take to read from Genesis to Revelation? If you would read the Bible at a standard pulpit speed (slow enough to be heard and understood), the reading time would be seventy-one (71) hours. If you would break that down into minutes and divide it into 365 days, you could read the entire Bible, cover to cover, in only 12 minutes a day. Is this too much time to spend reading about God? ■

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Service Times — Sunday: 9:00 & 10:00 AM; 6:00 PM — Wednesday: 7:00 PM

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