

A “Cave” Meditation

“When my spirit was overwhelmed within me, then You knew my path. In the way in which I walk they have secretly set a snare for me...there is no one who acknowledges me; refuge has failed me; no one cares for my soul”. (Psalm 142)

In previous Psalms we have been considering prayer in the context of normal circumstances, the common lot of all saints. Prayer is a perpetual business of the people of God. They pray! It is the spiritual language of the soul toward their Maker, Redeemer, and Source. We now turn our attention to a prayer which David prayed when he was in a cave, hiding from Saul, when things took on the garb of unparalleled darkness and hopelessness.

“Caves” are also the common lot of God’s people. Whoever we are, and in whatever circumstances God may have ordained us to live, there are times when we live David’s cave days. They are characterized in the cry of his soul during this period.

The spirit, it seems, is utterly overwhelmed. No one could have informed and prepared David for the desolation he now feels. Regardless of how much truth we have learned, how glorious past experiences, the closeness of communion with Christ and with the saints, the spirit now, it seems, lies slain in the dust.

God has not been taken by surprise in this eventuality. In fact, He was a careful and meticulous Overseer when wicked men were laying the snares in the very path He had ordained for us to walk. Although we may not sense His presence or care at this time, we will find it helpful to remind ourselves that, this too, is part of His care for us.

We are now shut up to God as no other time. We cannot comfort ourselves in the love of the saints for, we are “in the cave” alone. No one else is in there with us. In fact it seems that no one is even acknowledging our desolation, grief and pain. Although we may be temporarily hidden from our enemy’s eye in the cave, we cannot stay there. It is no refuge for our soul. And it seems that none among the living cares for our souls.

Here, in the cave, alone, defenseless, abandoned, and hopeless we shall find the purest and most exclusive expressions of our faith in the Living God:

“I cried out to You, O Lord: I said ‘You are my refuge, My portion in the land of the living.’ Attend to my cry, for I am brought very low; Deliver me from my persecutors, for they are stronger than I. Bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise Your name;”

A confession of pure faith out of the hopeless, despairing loneliness of the Cave:

“The righteous shall surround me, for you shall deal bountifully with me”

So long as God is our refuge and portion, despite the cave, we shall never, never, ever, be left alone. We have joined that great multitude of witnesses who ever live to give testimony of the faithfulness of the Living God. -C. M.