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BIBLICAL REFLECTIONS

Our Rock

Just a Thought · Deuteronomy 32:31 · 1 Corinthians 10:4

By John L. Wheeler

“For their rock is not as our Rock; our enemies are by themselves.” (Deuteronomy 32:31, ESV).

“and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual Rock that followed them, and the Rock was Christ.” (1 Corinthians 10:4, ESV).

“Our Rock.” There is assurance in those two words. Moses declares that the things others trust cannot be compared with the God of His people. Paul identifies the spiritual Rock who sustained Israel in the wilderness: “the Rock was Christ.” (1 Corinthians 10:4, ESV).

The people needed water they could not provide for themselves. Their need brought their dependence into view. We, too, need what only Christ can give. We cannot cleanse our own hearts, produce righteousness by our own strength, or become like Him apart from His continuing work within us.

Yet recognizing our need and submitting to Him are not always the same thing. We may acknowledge our weakness while still insisting upon our own way.

Jesus speaks these solemn words:

“And the one who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; and when it falls on anyone, it will crush him.” (Matthew 21:44, ESV).

In its setting, this is a warning concerning the rejection of Christ, the cornerstone. As we consider it alongside the prayer of David, we can also reflect upon the brokenness involved in submitting ourselves to Him.

“Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones that you have broken rejoice.” (Psalm 51:8, ESV).

David’s prayer looks beyond brokenness to restoration. He asks for cleansing, a clean heart, a renewed spirit, and the restoration of the joy of God’s salvation. He brings his need to the very One whose dealings have brought him low.

There is a lesson here for our sanctification.

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We fall before Christ in submission, recognizing that we need Him and depend upon Him. We yield our pride, our excuses, and our insistence upon directing our own lives. We acknowledge that His judgment is true and His ways are right, even when His work exposes something we would rather leave untouched.

This surrender is not confined to the beginning of the Christian life. As we walk with Him, we continue to discover places where self-will must yield. We learn to trust His wisdom above our understanding and His strength above our ability. Our Rock remains sufficient as our dependence upon Him deepens.

But Scripture also calls Christ “a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense” (Romans 9:33, ESV). First Peter 2:8 speaks of those who “stumble because they disobey the word.” (1 Peter 2:8, ESV). The One upon whom we are called to depend can become the One we resist when we refuse His word.

Will we submit to Him, or insist upon our own way?

Romans 9:33 also gives this assurance: “whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.” (Romans 9:33, ESV). There is security in trusting Christ. We can bring our need before Him without pretending to possess strength or goodness of our own.

Ephesians 2:20 describes God’s people as built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, “Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone.” (Ephesians 2:20, ESV). He establishes the building and gives it its direction. Together, we are being built into a dwelling place for God through the Spirit.

Our submission, then, has a purpose. He is shaping us to belong in the house He is building. The breaking of our self-sufficiency makes room for a life of dependence, obedience, and fellowship with Him.

With David, we may pray that what He has broken will rejoice. We can entrust ourselves to His sanctifying work because we know whose hands hold us.

Their rock is not as our Rock.

Our Rock is Christ.

Just a thought

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