

Sunday, April 11, 2010

Text: Psalm 118:14-29 **Rescued From the Edge**

Key Verse: "The Lord is my strength and my song; he has become my salvation." Psalm 118:14 NIV

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For someone as wary about the edge of a cliff as I am, Psalm 118:13 communicates well. "Pushed back and about to fall" does not sound like a good thing to me. "About to fall" is bad enough; add "pushed back" and it feels pretty much like over the edge.

That's where the psalmist picks it up at verse 14, saying that at just the right time the Lord brings strength, a song and salvation. One person's life is rescued from the edge, and the whole community goes crazy in celebration. And why not!

It's worth noticing that the testing on the edge was well within the purview of the Lord. In fact, the psalmist in peril as much as says that the experience was the Lord's severe chastening—not fatal but too close for comfort for sure.

Has that ever been your story? During the early months of the current U.S. economic depression, my mind took me to the edge of worry at best and unhealthy fear at worst. I laid awake at night with a churning stomach and whirring mind. I watched hard earned retirement funds go away. It felt like a precarious edge. The dream had been to slow down my work-a-day world in a few years and to be freer to invest my life in a slower pace and less stressful ways and in ministries more closely matched to my core gifts and passions. Worry had gotten hold on me. What if we lost everything? What if there would be no rescue? Would we find strength to get through? Would there be a melodious song again, rather than the discords of anxiety?

The promises of the Psalms saved the day. "The Lord is my strength and my song; he has become my salvation." The eyes of my soul needed to be redirected from falling retirement balances to the Lord and his right hand.

A rescue from the edge of the precipices of our lives, whether small or great, is a good thing. God provides those, and we need to recognize them and respond with praise. But those are really only glimpses of yet another rescue—one of epic proportions. The biggest deliverance is what we experience when the Lord becomes our salvation. When we experience Jesus himself as the cornerstone of spiritual redemption, then we have been snatched from the edge of a cliff like no other.

The Lord has done this and it is marvelous in our eyes.