

- 3) He will be with him in trouble.
- 4) He will deliver him (i.e., rescue him) and honour him.
- 5) He will give him long life.
- 6) He will show him His salvation (i.e., deliverance, perhaps eternal).

Conclusion: When life's road becomes steep, bumpy and full of stones, and it often does, do not stumble and fall. Do not give up and turn from God. Instead, follow the advice God gives us in this Psalm. 1) Hold God's hand as you climb. 2) Trust God's omnipotence. 3) Live so that you can claim God's promises.

Remember, the bumps are what you climb on!

Song: Sound the Battle Cry! **413**

Stepping Stones

Under the Shadow of the Almighty

15 January 2023 PM – Psalm 91 – Stepping Stones – Scott Childs

Introduction: In his book, *THE BUMPS ARE WHAT YOU CLIMB ON*, Warren Wiersbe tells this story. "A little boy was leading his sister up a mountain path and the way was not too easy. 'Why, this isn't a path at all,' the little girl complained. 'It's all rocky and bumpy.' And her brother replied, 'Sure, the bumps are what you climb on.'" p.9

If you are a Christian, you are climbing the road of the Christian life. Paul called it pressing toward the mark (Php 3:14). Jesus said that such a road would be narrow and confined (Mt 7:13-14). Yes, travelling will be difficult at times. We will encounter many rocks and bumps along life's way. They come in a host of forms including troubles, problems, losses, heartaches, setbacks, deaths, sickness, and hardships. If we are not careful, we will trip over the obstacles, or be tempted to turn back and give up the climb. However, the Lord wants to help us turn those stumbling blocks into stepping stones. We must remember the words of that little boy, "the bumps are what you climb on."

In Psalm 91:11-12, we read, "**For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.**" God gives this promise (and many others) to those who abide under the shadow of the Almighty (v.1).

Transition: Here are some tips gained from this Psalm that can help us use the bumps in life as stepping stones.

To help us use the bumps in life as stepping stones, we must ...

1. Hold God's Hand as We Climb (v.1-2)

a. God is a qualified guide.

- 1) He is the Most High, the Supreme. None is higher.
- 2) He is the Almighty, the most powerful. None is greater.
- 3) He is the LORD – Jehovah, the self-existent, eternal Being.
- 4) He is my God, my divine sovereign.
- 5) He sees your path from beginning to end. He knows the best way to navigate the difficult places. He has successfully travelled the path before you. (Hebrews 2:18)

"For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted."

b. God's presence gives comfort.

- 1) He is a secret place of hiding. The enemy, the devil, cannot find you when you are in God's secret place.
- 2) He is a shadow to cool the heated soul during the heat of trials.
- 3) He is a refuge from danger. He is a shelter in the time of storm. He will protect us from the devil's plots. The book of Job assures us that Satan can do nothing to us except what the Lord permits for our good (Job 1:12; 2:6).
- 4) He is a fortress of safety. He is a stronghold that no enemy can break through.

❖ *The better we know God, the easier we will cope with the trials of life.*

To help us use the bumps in life as stepping stones, we must ...

2. Trust God's Omnipotence (v.3-13)

It is important for us to keep in mind that God sees the stones in our pathway from a different perspective than we often do. Events that we may view as burdensome "stones", God may view as stepping stones to higher ground. The Psalmist assures us here of God's omnipotent care, but later in verse 15, He promises, **"I will be with him in trouble."** God is not going to remove every stone from your pathway, but if you abide close to Him, He will protect you from Satan's evil plots.

a. His care is always sufficient.

- 1) He is able to deliver from danger (v.3).
- 2) He is able to cover with protection (v.4).
- 3) He is able to shield and protect (v.4). God's **truth** is our shield and buckler against the lies of Satan. (Ephesians 6:14) **"Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;"**
- 4) He is able to calm our fears (v.5-6).
 - a) During terrifying nights
 - b) During battles and break ins
 - c) During pandemics and disease
 - d) During natural disasters

- 5) He is able to protect us from death (v.7-8). **Illustration:** Dr. Ron Brooks in Vietnam.

b. His care excels for those who dwell with Him.

The key here is the word **habitation** (i.e., dwelling). This is for those who dwell together with the Most High. We must never extract Bible promises from their Biblical context.

- 1) He will keep evil and plagues from them (v.9-10).
- 2) He will charge His angels to keep them (v.11-12). Satan quoted this as he tempted Jesus. (Matthew 4:6) **"And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone."** Because Jesus **was dwelling together** with the Father, He did not foolishly take advantage of this promise.
- 3) He will give them victory over harmful beasts (v.13).

To help us use the bumps in life as stepping stones, we must ...

3. Live so we can Claim God's Promises (v.14-16)

a. God is speaking to the one who loves Him.

- 1) **Because** he has set his love upon God ... because he has known God's name (v.14). This is not talking about God's love for you, but your love for God. One lexicon suggests that the phrase "known my name" speaks of "a sweet aroma that is carried on the wind." ^{AHLB} If that be the case, it speaks of one who knows the sweet smell of God's presence.
- 2) These are promises to those who not only dwell together with God, but who love Him dearly and who know Him intimately. **May that by my passionate goal and yours!**
- 3) **Therefore**, because he loves God, God has promises for him.

b. God gives him several sure promises.

- 1) He will deliver him (i.e., cause him to escape) and set him [securely] on high (v.14) above life's dangers.
- 2) He will answer him when he calls (v.15). **"He shall call upon me, and I will answer him."** Spurgeon asks, **"Were there ever words fuller of consolation than these?"**