

1CORINTHIANS (continued)

HAPPY NEW YEAR -2015

MY 2015 YEAR VERSE: It has been both a joy and a privilege to choose a year verse on January 1st and write it on correspondence for that next year....I started this about (40) years ago....sometimes a verse would jump from the pages of God' Word and sometimes it was almost at the end of that year before I realized why I chose it....I begin each lesson year with an explanation: so here goes....**Psa. 18:2**

BACKGROUND: Psalms are really songs...when I read them I usually don't put them to music...but we should...the writer is identified and some times they are unknown...this psalm was written by **DAVID...at a time of great stress** and uncertainty...personally, this Christmas season was like that **for me...happy times and sad times all rolled together as one....it is difficult at times to sort it all out...so we begin a new year with an emphasis on HOPE AND GLORY....a hope that is far more certain than anything we know and always working toward the goal of God's glory which we can know positively for those of us who are believers....it has been well said, "Jesus is both the goal and the way"**

This psalm is based on 1 Sam.22:20-23; 23:4....David was being pursued by king Saul, yet he pens this hopeful song...he cries out to the Lord and he knows the Lord hears (Psa.18:6)...what follows in this verse are (8) word pictures of significance....here they are:

MY ROCK: This image of a rock pictures the solid truth of God's Word...not some person's suggestion, opinion, or lie...but the Lord Himself....that means that I have a perfect standard of behavior that is determined by God for my best benefit...it doesn't get any better than that for me...it also means that I don't have to worry and wonder how He will react to the rules I keep because it is His **wisdom and not my knowledge (or collection of facts)**...(Heb.4:12; Psa.61:2-5)

1CORINTHIANS (continued)

MY FORTRESS: This image portrays safety...I know that He is a safe place in my life....and if He is a fortress, He will also fight for me and defend me when I am obedient to His Word...love is one thing, but **obedience is the key that opens every door....your love is proved by your obedience (1 Peter 1:13-14 - notice it says "because I am holy - not as I am holy") - He is the safe place and I am behind the wall when the enemy comes...**

MY DELIVERER: This speaks to me of being rescued...imagine all the times when you need someone to "come to your rescue"...the best rescue of all is from the penalty of eternal death and separation from the Lord Himself...we are **children of the resurrection (Lk.20:36)**

MY GOD: The personal pronoun is significant to me...it is personal, because He is near and dear to me....He sees me as an individual....I am not just a number in a crowd of people...when I pray, He hears my voice and knows my name...oh the blessedness to say that "I am His, and He is mine"....

MY STRENGTH: Sometimes I feel like "my get up and go has got up and gone"...I want to go and do but I am exhausted and tired....there are (3) things necessary to strengthen others...we must have the love to do it, the power to do it and the opportunity to do it (Phil.4:10-13)

MY SHIELD: This picture reminds me of a **buckler...it is a small, round shield that affixes to the left arm and is brought across your organs to protect them...**it can be brought to its purpose very quickly...sometimes in conversations you feel overwhelmed....and it is in those times, you can picture a buckler that is brought across quickly and protects your speech and thinking..

MY HORN OF SALVATION: There are several uses of a "horn" in the Word...first of all, it is the horn of an animal that is used to blow for attention or a warning...maybe there will be a time that I can cast seed and say something quickly or give my testimony...

1 CORINTHIANS (continued)

MY STRONGHOLD OR TOWER: You can hide or distance yourself within a fortress, but a tower you can climb...it not only gives you distance and height to get you higher than a situation, but it also gives you a view or perspective that you can't see when it is a part of other matters on the ground....rising above a situation, sometimes gives you a different point of view....we call them "big picture people"only a small percentage of the world viewers have it....

If David was penning a song to help him trust the Lord in the face of his enemies....what are our enemies today?

OUR ENEMIES TODAY: There are no doubt long lists of enemies in our lives today even when we are believers....here are a few: fear, anxiety, poor esteem, doubt, discouragement, criticism, and being alone or abandoned....yes, you can feel lonely in a crowd....

HOW DO WE OVERCOME THEM?: Believe in God's Word (what He says, He means and He means what He says); Prayer, the leading and teaching of the Holy Spirit; Intercession of others and their counsel; lessons learned within the circumstances themselves (sometimes by trial and error)...that a-ha moment....

Is choosing a year verse something that you would like to do this year?

POINTS TO PONDER: God may not promise a comfortable journey but He does guarantee a safe landing....

NEXT WEEK: 1 Corinthians 9

- . what seems to be the general theme of this chapter?
- .list the word pictures that Paul uses to defend his authority...
- .what does verse 16 mean?
- .what is the choice Paul has made?
- .what is the closing example ? What is the difference in the crowns?
- .why does Paul beat his body? What does the phrase "the walk and the talk have to match" mean to you?