

Thursday, February 18

Today's Reading: Matthew Chapter 2

Today's Devotional Message is by Pastor Paul Baehmann

"After the wise men were gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, "Get up! Flee to Egypt with the child and his mother. Stay there until I tell you to return."
Matthew 2:13

We live in a world that at times is not very safe. Even when Jesus was a baby, He wasn't aware of it but people were already trying to kill Him. Did God's protection come in the form of a grand miracle? No, God simply told Mary and Joseph to run, flee to Egypt. He could have made it easy for Mary and Joseph. All He had to do would have been to surround them with a band of angels so that Herod's soldiers couldn't have gotten to the baby, but God chooses to force them to be involved in struggle. So they have the fearful task of fleeing to a strange country, not really knowing where they're going, where they're going to stay, what trouble they're going to get into before they get there, only knowing that they have to go if they're going to save their little boy's life.

We believe in God's protection, but that doesn't mean that He will make life easy for us. He certainly didn't make it easy for Mary, Joseph and Jesus. Why do you suppose He does that? I believe He has good reasons for it, some we might not be aware of and some we might not understand, but we can be sure that whatever He does, it is done because He loves us so much. It is important for you in your life. How true it is that our times of greatest growth usually come in our times during which we have struggled greatly. You see God is trying to help us develop into our full potential as a human being.

It is very important when we are going through difficult times that we don't give up. Continue at such times to trust in your God. Stay in the struggle, knowing that He is there with you, and will not forsake you; and just as He eventually brought Mary and Joseph back home, so He will bring your difficult time to an end too. When God brings our troubles to an end, that's when we feel His loving arms surrounding and protecting us. What we need to remind ourselves of, is that God has His arms around us even when we are in the middle of our troubles.

Prayer: We thank and praise You O God for your loving presence in our lives. Help us especially when we face difficult times to remember Your constant presence and love. We ask this in Jesus name. Amen