

Confidence

Psalm 11

In the Lord I take refuge;
how can you say to my soul,
 "Flee like a bird to your mountain,
for behold, the wicked bend the bow;
 they have fitted their arrow to the string
 to shoot in the dark at the upright in heart;
if the foundations are destroyed,
 what can the righteous do?"

The Lord is in his holy temple;
the Lord's throne is in heaven;
his eyes see, his eyelids test the children of man.
The Lord tests the righteous,
 but his soul hates the wicked
 and the one who loves violence.
Let him rain coals on the wicked;
 fire and sulfur and a scorching wind
 shall be the portion of their cup.
For the Lord is righteous;
he loves righteous deeds;
 the upright shall behold his face.

Happy New Year!

What will this New Year bring?
What will it bring *for you*?

We don't really know.
There will be the expected and the unexpected.
The good and the bad.

The joyous and the sad.

There will be times you thank and praise the Lord, and times, as the Psalm says, when **His eyelids test you**; when it seems as if His eyes are closed to you. Life in this world is uncertain and there are times when our foundations are shaken - when it seems as if nothing is firm and nothing is secure. What can we do at just such times?

Well, the psalmist points us to what cannot be shaken; the foundation that is firm and secure: **The Lord is in his holy temple; the Lord's throne is in heaven**. Or in other words, when everything in this world or in your life is falling apart, you have a refuge, a place to go. **In the Lord I take refuge**.

For **the Lord loves the righteous**. Which means not those who are "good people" - the righteous are those who believe Him and His promises and are righteous because they receive His righteousness by grace through faith. And **He loves them**, which means not just that He has warm feelings for the righteous, but acts for them, fights for them, and saves them.

That doesn't mean bad things won't happen to you this year; that 2018 won't be a challenging year. It means that you have a place to go; a safe place. As the psalmist rightly says, the wicked have their bows set and aimed at the righteous! Especially the evil one, the devil. We will mess up, too. We don't know what this New Year will bring. *So will the Lord come through for you?*

The answer to that question is the cross; the cross of Jesus. For there it looked as if everything had fallen apart, there were no foundations left at all, and the wicked had won. But the reality was quite different than that. In fact, what looked foundation-less became the cornerstone! The rock on which we can build our lives. The wicked and wickedness did not win. After the cross the Lord arose victorious. And He still is.

So this New Year, 2018, **take refuge in the Lord** - in His love, His forgiveness, His rock-solid faithfulness, and His victory. When things are dark He is your

light. When You are shaken He is your confidence. When you are weak He is strong.

Dear Jesus, thank You for Your steadfast love for me. You went to the cross for me! So I know You will be my refuge now and forever. Help me to trust and believe even when the world is a dark and scary place. And may I always remember that I am righteous not because of what I do, but because of what You have done for me. Thank you for that and every gift You will give me this year. Amen.