

FOOTING

When we visited friends in Tennessee recently, we were given the grand tour. We saw Lookout Mountain from the inside and out. We went on the Ruby Falls cave tour and drove to the top of the mountain to view the scenery and learn about its place in Civil War history. In the cave, the walkway was uneven and slippery in places, but there was always a handrail or nearby rock one could use to steady himself. At the summit of the mountain, in one place our host wanted us to see a specific site that could only be seen by stepping out on a rocky outcropping. I stepped out, just a bit apprehensively, to see where he was pointing. After standing there a few minutes, with my feet rocking back and forth from the unevenness of the rocks, and seeing nothing but air all around me, I had to tentatively reach for my friend's arm before I felt comfortable turning around to return to the path.

Last night I read Psalm 18 and was struck by several references to footing. David wrote that God made his feet like the feet of a deer and set him secure on the heights (v.33). Deer are not as noted for sure-footedness as mountain goats, but they do sometimes live in alpine environments and can run fast and jump both high and long. The last thing I would have wanted to try atop Lookout Mountain was to run or jump. Yet Scripture says no matter how rocky or steep the road we must climb, He makes us secure there.

A few verses later David says to God, "You gave a wide place for my steps under me and my feet did not slip" (v.36). Given that David has already proclaimed God to be his Rock (v. 2, 31), it is encouraging to know that this Rock on which we also stand is solid, broad, and immovable. No matter how narrow our physical path may be, there "is a wideness of God's mercy" – to quote an old hymn – at our disposal.

Still later, as David is recounting how he pursued and overtook his enemies, he says, "they fell under my feet" (v.38). I doubt that he meant it literally, that he walked on their bodies, but that they were utterly defeated, never to rise against him again. We also can be assured that the enemy of our souls lies defeated before us. He was defeated once for all at the death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ. And he is defeated every time we walk in faith through whatever adversity we may face. As Paul wrote to the Romans, "The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet" (Romans 16:20).

Every step we take trusting in God, is spiritually secure, amply graced, and ultimately victorious. The grand tour that is our lives may take us places we don't want to go, through circumstances that tax us to the limit, fraught with risks that humanly we would never take. But God, our Rock, is there. Stand on Him and walk assured!