

A SERIES OF DEVOTIONS BASED ON PAUL'S LETTER TO THE CHURCH IN ROME

ANCHORED TO THE ROCK

Romans 9:32-33 "They (Jews) stumbled over the stumbling stone. As it is written: "See, I lay in Zion a stone that causes people to stumble and a rock that makes them fall, and the one who believes in Him will never be put to shame."

Here in Arizona, hiking is a popular recreational activity. Thousands of miles of hiking trails take hikers to many beautiful places to view God's awesome creation. In addition to the peace and tranquility hikers experience, they also derive much needed exercise.

As with many activities, hiking also has its challenges. The hiking trail is not always smooth or level. It can take you to breathtaking elevations and into deep canyons. The one challenge that most all hikers experience is the rock embedded in the trail. The rock that is most aggravating is when it barely sticks up above the ground, seems to be loose and harmless. But, as you walk when your toe comes against it, it does not budge. It causes you to trip, perhaps fall and worse yet injure yourself.

Today's devotional verses use this rock to teach a spiritual lesson. The rock here in Romans 9 is Jesus Christ. For the Jews and for all who believe they can keep God's Law perfectly to please Him, Jesus is like that rock or as Romans 9 says, He becomes a "stumbling stone" and can cause them to fall.

For those who believe in Jesus as their personal Savior, He is the "Rock of Ages." As the hymn writer puts it, "On Christ the solid rock I stand, all other ground is sinking sand." Or as Jesus taught, it is important your life is anchored on a solid rock (Jesus) thus keeping you safe and secure in your spiritual journey until you reach your heavenly home.

Romans 9 says, "... the one who believes in Him (Jesus) will never be put to shame." 1 Peter 2:6,8 says that Jesus is your corner stone. ... the one who insures your life is safe and secure. He draws you to be anchored upon Him through the waters of Baptism, the bread and wine of the Lord's Supper, and the gospel. As the hymn writer says in verse 2 of Rock of Ages (LSB 761) "Not the labor of my hands can fulfill Thy Law's demands. ... Thou (Jesus) must save, and Thou alone." "On Christ the solid rock you stand, all other ground is sinking sand."

Prayer: Be for me, dear Jesus, the solid rock upon which you provide an immovable foundation to keep me secure in the faith Your Spirit has given me even to life everlasting. Amen.

My hope is built on nothing less Than Jesus' blood and righteousness;

No merit of my own I claim But wholly lean on Jesus' name.

Refrain: On Christ, the solid rock, I stand; All other ground is sinking sand.

When darkness veils His lovely face, I rest on His unchanging grace;

In ev'ry high and stormy gale My anchor holds within the veil. Refrain:

His oath, His covenant and blood Support me in the raging flood;

When ev'ry earthly prop gives way, He then is all my hope and stay. Refrain:

When He shall come with trumpet sound, Oh, may I then in Him be found,

Clothes in His righteousness alone, Redeemed to stand before His throne!

Refrain:

(LSB 575)