

## Devotional Blog – Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> January 2021

When you hear or read the word “fortress” what do you picture in your mind? Maybe you visualise one of the many castles or forts that are scattered around our countryside, that you have visited on your holidays or on a day trip.

Most of them are found on high ground so that those inside had a good view of the surrounding area and therefore able to spot any potential invaders. These structures were built to last and many are still completely intact, if a little weather beaten.

The walls of such buildings are extremely thick in order to withstand enemy attacks and by and large were very successful in keeping intruders at bay. They would also, in many cases have a lookout tower, which was the highest part of the building and gave a terrific view of the area. Many of these castles and forts are now tourist attractions and a tour around them gives us an insight as to what life was like in a bygone era.

The dictionary definition of “fortress” is – *A military stronghold* It was a place of safety that an army could retreat to after a long day on the battlefield.

The word fortress is often used in sporting circles. It describes a ground where the home team rarely loses. Take Anfield, the home of Liverpool, for example. Liverpool have gone a staggering 68 league games without defeat. Their last time they lost at “fortress” Anfield was way back on 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2017!!

It is certainly a stronghold as visiting teams almost sense defeat before they turn up.

The days of using forts and castles as places of protection in times of war are long gone, but we are involved in a spiritual battle and are in constant need of protection. The Psalms contain several verses describing God as “our” fortress. For example: -

**Psalms 18:2** The Lord is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer, my God is my rock in whom I take refuge. He is my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.

**Psalms 31:2** Be my rock of refuge a strong fortress to save me

**Psalms 62:6** He alone is my rock and my salvation; He is my fortress, I shall never be shaken.

The walls of fortresses were built to withstand attacks from the enemy and could not be shaken. They were built on firm foundations, unlike the foolish man who built his house on the sand.

If our lives are built on the firm foundations of Jesus Christ we can say with the Psalmist that we shall never be shaken, even at a time of a global pandemic and the turmoil that has brought to our lives, because we are found within the stronghold of His protecting arms.

Amen

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