

The Secret Place

Psalm 91:1 “He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will abide in the shadow of the Almighty.”

My son wanted the whole family to play hide-n-seek for his 15th birthday. This was a complete labor of love on my part, because the thought of running around in the dark on two acres was a bit unnerving.

The moon was bright that summer evening and to the naked eye, I was a sitting duck. It was only a matter of time before one of those keen teenagers found me. As I looked to my right, the light of the moon hit one of our garbage cans just right and cast a shadow in the already dark night. I moved over to the silhouette of the can and positioned myself in the security of its shadow. I was safe.

We played a few rounds of hide-n-seek and each time I ran to my secret hiding place. It served me well and kept me from being discovered by those who were seeking to tag me and take me hostage.

We're not sure who the author of Psalm 91 is, but we know he needed a hiding place. An environment of terror, destruction, and pestilence lurked around every corner (Psalm 91:5-6). What I find fascinating is God didn't take the Psalmist out of this evil environment, even though He could.

We live in a world that can be scary, hostile, and filled with bad news. It's at those times we feel like we need to be rescued from the terror of what we see on the news, and maybe even hurtful words from people we associate with. Even though God may not take us out of the frightening circumstances we face, He protects us in the midst of it (Psalm 91:3-4).

If we take a look at all of the verbs that show what God does as we abide in the shadow of His protection, you will see He: delivers, covers, and gives His angels charge over us.

There are plenty of examples in scripture that show us evil and dark situations that God did not take His people out of, but covered them with His wings of protection. We read about the Hebrew boys in the fiery furnace. You couldn't get anymore evil than Babylon at that time in history, and instead of keeping the Hebrew boys from the furnace, God kept them in it (Daniel 3:25).

God parted the waters of the Red Sea while the Egyptians followed close behind (Hebrews 11:29). He shut the mouths of lions while Daniel was in the lions den (Daniel 6:21). Peter and John were thrown into prison and delivered by angels in the night (Acts 12:11).

And why does God do all of this? Because of the opening verses in this Psalm, "He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High will abide in the shadow of the Almighty." If we trust in Him and dwell in His presence, He will cover us with the shadow of His wings.

How does knowing who God is help you when the terror by night and arrow by day surround you?

The answer is found in the secret place. That is where we are close to Him. We will never know the secret things of God unless we are willing to abide in the secret place. It requires sitting at his feet and resting in His presence no matter the circumstance we find ourselves in.

It is interesting that all throughout this Psalm, the Psalmist declares all that God does, but at the end, God declares the why. Why should we not fear the terrors of night or the arrows by day? (Psalm 91:5-6). Because God says we have put our love on Him and know His name (Psalm 91:14).

The Psalmist mentions four different names for God. First, He mentions the Most High God, Elyon (Psalm 91:1). He is above all, exalted above all and is creator of all. Second, He is the Almighty, Shaddai (Psalm 91:1). He is enough and sufficient to meet every need. Third, He is Lord, Yahweh (Psalm 91:2). Yahweh is the name for God mentioned in Exodus 3:14 when God tells Moses He is, 'I AM.' And fourth, He is God, Elohim (Psalm 91:2). He is the Triune God and contains all strength and power.

When we know His name and trust in His name, we can be confident of His deliverance from the snares of our enemies. We can call upon Him and He will answer us because we know His name, meaning we understand His power, strength and ability (Psalm 91:14).

God does all of the delivering and we take refuge in His wings. It begins in dwelling in the secret place and abiding in His shadow. We have only to rest in who our God is and watch as He shows us His salvation (Psalm 91:16).

Prayer: Lord, we thank You because You never leave us nor forsake us. You promise to be with us when fear surrounds us on every side. We can abide in the shadow of your wings when our enemies lay snares for us and call on your name when we don't know where else to go. You are our shelter through every circumstance we face. We can trust You will cover us with Your wings and shield us from all harm. We will look to You because You alone are God and there is no one else who can deliver. In Jesus' name. Amen.