

Living Under The Shadow Of The Almighty

Psalm 91

Introduction: 1) It is the one psalm used and quoted by Satan when he tempted the Lord Jesus, Israel's Messiah, in the wilderness (Matthew 4:6). This should tip us off that perhaps there is more to Psalm 91 than only a psalm of wisdom or deliverance for the child of God. I believe the devil knew this psalm was about the Christ!

- 1) Psalm 91 uses titles of God that go back to the times of the patriarchs ("Most High" in Genesis 14:18-20 and "Almighty" in Genesis 17:1; 28:3).
- 2) There is a clear connection with Psalm 90 (the psalm of Moses) and Psalm 91 (the prayer of 90:13-17 is answered in 91:16!).
- 3) The rare Hebrew word for dwelling (*maon*) is found both in 90:1 and 91:9.
- 4) The Psalm loudly echoes the language of the Mosaic Covenant in Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 27-28.

<i>Mosaic covenant</i>	<i>Psalm 91</i>
Not afraid (Lev. 26:6)	verse 5
Chase thousand/ten thousand (Lev. 26:7-8)	verse 7
God's dwelling (Lev. 26:11)	verse 9
Beasts removed or let loose (Lev. 26:6, 22)	verse 13
Pestilence (Lev. 26:5; Deut. 28:21)	verse 3
Boils, diseases of Egypt (Deut. 28:34, 59)	verse 10

- 5) Only Christ perfectly responds in full faith and complete confidence in the Almighty. It is Christ who trampled underfoot the serpent (v.13) at the Cross (Romans 16:20) and thereby made it possible for Psalm 91 to be real for us.

Belcher says, "Christ's faithfulness ensures that we will experience the fullness of the covenant blessings in Psalm 91" (p.61). Now in Christ I enjoy the promises of this psalm as a foretaste of that which I will enjoy in full and complete measure in His kingdom.

Transition: Therefore, what is life like, in Christ, as we live under the shadow of the Almighty? How should we respond to such a wonderful God?

I. Trust the Lord to be your Savior

91:1-2

- Psalm 91 is anonymous, but timeless in its comfort and encouragement for all who trust in God (v.2).
- The names of God and the verbs of action paint a beautiful picture for the one who trust in the Lord for deliverance and salvation (v.16).

1) Abide under His shadow

91:1

- The psalmist addresses the one who dwells in the secret place (*NIV, NASV*, "shelter") of the Most High (*Elyon*).
- Dwelling in his shelter, we abide under the shadow of the one now identified as "the Almighty" (*sadday*).

2) Trust in His security**91:2**

- Here we see the personal name of our divine Savior, “Lord” (*Yahweh*) and His general designation “God”, also make intimate by the personal pronoun “my”, thus in Hebrew, *elohay*.
- He is the Most High, the Almighty, the Lord, my God. He is my shelter, my shadow, my refuge, my fortress. What an awesome Savior is the Lord I trust.

II. Trust the Lord to provide your safety**91:3-13**

Having established who the Lord is, the psalmist now addresses what the Lord does. In 11 magnificent verses filled with powerful imagery, we are informed concerning the multifaceted nature of the safety that our Lord provides for His children. The personal pronoun “you” is prominent, occurring 19 times. It is also singular. They were for Jesus. They are for each of us.

1) Let him keep you from fear**91:3-6**v. 3

What: The Lord shall deliver (cf v. 14, 15) you.

From: 1) The snare of the fowler (the bird catcher).

2) The perilous pestilence (*NIV*, “deadly pestilence”).

v. 4

How: 1) He will cover you with His feather (a zoomorphism).

2) Under His wings you shall take refuge (a zoomorphism).

3) His truth shall be your shield and buckler (*NASV* “bulwark”).

vs. 5-6

Result: 1) You shall not be afraid of the terror by night (times of darkness).

2) You shall not be afraid of the arrow that flies by day (attacks in broad daylight).

3) You shall not be afraid of the pestilence (v.3) that walks in darkness.

4) You shall not be afraid of the destruction that lays waste at noonday.

- There is no limit in time or scope to His protection. Big or small, natural or supernatural He is on our side. We have no reason to fear. Troubles and trials may come, but He will deliver.

Transition: Let Him keep you from fear.

2) Let Him keep you from falling**91:7-8**

- Using once again Hebrew parallelism, we are informed that the ratio may be 1 out of 1000, or 1 out of 10,000; it does not matter. God will take care of His own and “defeat” (implied) we not come near. It may appear, as at Calvary, that evil has won and good has lost. Such a perspective fails to see with the eyes of faith and to remember “the rest of the story” is yet to come. He will keep us from falling now and forever. Jude 24-25 says it so beautifully.

3) Let Him keep you from failure**91:9-13**

- Vs. 9 picks up on the theme of vs. 1-2, with the repetition of “Lord” and “Most High”, refuge and dwelling place.

- Vs. 10
What: No evil shall befall you.
Nor shall any plague come near your dwelling.
 - Vs. 11
How: For He (the Lord) shall give His angels charge over you.
Why: To keep you in all your ways (per v. 9!) There is supernatural angelic watchcare for God's children.
 - Vs. 12
What: In their hands they shall bear (lift) you up.
Why: Lest you dash (strike) your foot against a stone.
 - Vs. 13
What: You shall tread upon the lion and the cobra.
The young lion and the serpent you shall trample underfoot (cf. Genesis 3:15; Romans 16:20).
- We trust the Lord we do not test Him (Matthew 4:1-11; Luke 4:1-13).

Under His Wings

Text: William O. Cushing

Under His wings I am safely abiding, Tho the night
deepens and tempests are wild; Still I can trust Him, I
know He will keep me, he has redeemed me and I am His child.

Under His Wings, what a refuge in sorrow! How the heart
yearningly turns to His rest! Often when earth has no
balm for my healing, There I find comfort and there I am blest.

Under His wings, O what precious enjoyment! There will I
hide till life's trials are o'er; Sheltered, protected, no
evil can harm me, Resting in Jesus I'm safe evermore.

Under His wings, under His wings, Who from His love can sever?
Under His wings my soul shall abide, Safely abide forever.

III. Trust the Lord to give you satisfaction

91:14-16

These final 3 verses are something of a divine oracle, prophetic pronouncement or declaration. 6 glorious blessings are showered on us by the Lord resulting in spiritual satisfaction now and forever. Two are found in each verse.

1) The Lord will deliver you.

91:14

We love Him. His response: I will deliver (*NIV*, rescue) him.

2) The Lord will exalt you.

91:14

I will set him on high (exalt). Why? He has known (*NIV*, "acknowledged") my name. To acknowledge His name is to honor Him. We honor Him and amazingly,

He honors us.

3) The Lord will answer you. 91:15

We call on Him in prayer because He is our God in whom we trust (v. 2), the one who delivers us (vs. 3, 14, 15) from any and every conceivable danger. His response: I will answer him.

4) The Lord will be with you. 91:15

This final phrase of v. 15 is a precious promise indeed.

- Trouble comes: 1) He will deliver us and 2) He will honor us. To be with me is enough. To deliver me is more than I could ask. To honor me is too much to comprehend. (cf. Romans 8:38-39).

5) The Lord will bless you. 91:16

The ending of Ps. 90:13-17 finds its complement and answer in Psalm 91:16.

6) The Lord will save you. 91:16

- Jonah 2:9 reminds us that “salvation is of the Lord.” The psalmist informs us that God will show us His salvation, amplifying what it means to be delivered from trouble and satisfied by the Lord.

There is a safe and secret place
Beneath the wings divine
Reserved for all the heirs of grace,
O! Be that refuge mine!

The least, the feeblest there may
Hide
Uninjured and unawed;
While thousands fall on every side,
They rest secure in God.

The angels watch them on their way,
And aid with friendly arm;
And Satan, roaring for his prey,
May hate, but cannot harm.

They feed in pastures large and fair,
Of love and Truth divine;
O child of God, O glory's heir,
How rich a lot is thine!

A hand almighty to defend,
An ear for every call,
An honoured life, a peaceful end,
And Jesus crowns it all!
Henry Francis Lyte, 1793-1847