

Psalm 91:1–16

MPS: The Lord Promises His protection for His people

Psalm 91:1–16 (ESV) *1 He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will abide in the shadow of the Almighty. 2 I will say to the LORD, “My refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust.” 3 For he will deliver you from the snare of the fowler and from the deadly pestilence. 4 He will cover you with his pinions, and under his wings you will find refuge; his faithfulness is a shield and buckler. 5 You will not fear the terror of the night, nor the arrow that flies by day, 6 nor the pestilence that stalks in darkness, nor the destruction that wastes at noonday. 7 A thousand may fall at your side, ten thousand at your right hand, but it will not come near you. 8 You will only look with your eyes and see the recompense of the wicked. 9 Because you have made the LORD your dwelling place— the Most High, who is my refuge— 10 no evil shall be allowed to befall you, no plague come near your tent. 11 For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways. 12 On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone. 13 You will tread on the lion and the adder; the young lion and the serpent you will trample underfoot. 14 “Because he holds fast to me in love, I will deliver him; I will protect him, because he knows my name. 15 When he calls to me, I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble; I will rescue him and honor him. 16 With long life I will satisfy him and show him my salvation.”*

OPEN

- It was a beautiful Sunday afternoon, 5 women are praying for something specific... that their missionary husbands would 1. Reach the people group they felt the Lord calling them to and 2. That the Lord would protect them as they made contact with this unreached people group.
- One year later, one of the wives wrote an article in CT dated Jan 7, 1957. She said God answered both those prayers...See, it was Elisabeth Elliot who wrote that article. It was her husband Jim Elliot and 4 others who were speared to death by the Aucas tribe in Ecuador.
- This is confusing: How could she say God answered the second part of the prayer?
- The protection God gave looked nothing like the safety they had pictured. “They were protected from that most fearful of all dangers, disobedience.” in the deepest sense, they were protected—kept from the evil one, kept faithful to the end, and used by God to open a door for the gospel that would eventually reach the very people who killed them.

The Lord promises His protection for His people.

- And today we are going to hold that promise in one hand and the hard realities of a fallen world in the other—
 - the accident
 - the illness
 - the senseless act
 - the losses that can make us wonder if the promise still stands.
- We will see that God's promise is not a guarantee of a trouble-free life, but something far better: a rock-solid assurance that He is with us, for us, and working all things for our ultimate good.

The Lord promises His protection for His people.

That is the great declaration of this psalm.

1 His protection for His people and 2 His promises for his people

1. His protection for His people. (1-13)

a. God's people say, "He is my God."

***Vs 1-2** He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will abide in the shadow of the Almighty. **2** I will say to the LORD, "My refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust."*

- Look at the verbs, 'dwells' and 'abide.' Neither of those words mean 'to visit.' It means to live with, to never leave, to remain, to move in.
- "Look at Joshua. As a young man, he learned to linger in the presence of God. After Moses met with the Lord in the tent of meeting, the Bible says Joshua 'would not depart from the tent' (Exodus 33:11). He made God's presence his home.
- Years later, when Moses sent twelve spies into Canaan, ten came back terrified of the giants and fortified cities. But Joshua and Caleb stood fearless. They declared, 'The Lord is with us! Do not fear the people of the land... their protection is gone, but the Lord is with us' (Numbers 14:9).
- Where did that confidence come from? From years of abiding in the secret place. Because Joshua had learned to dwell in the shelter of the Most High, he could look at overwhelming odds and say with rock-solid assurance: 'We can take the land — the Lord will protect and provide.'"
- Those who draw near to God can have peace in Him no matter how difficult their circumstances.

- Look at the two names for God here:
 - **Shelter Most High (El Elyon** — sovereign ruler over all) and
 - **Shadow Almighty (El Shaddai** — all-sufficient provider and protector).
 - Together they say: The God who rules the universe is personally committed to you.
 - This is the power of God we can be confident in.
- The psalmist doesn't just believe this — he declares it: "I will say..." Confession strengthens faith. Application: When fear rises, speak these words out loud.
- We can be confident He is able to protect us! And we his people belong to Him.
- Saul vs David — the Lord YOUR God vs The Lord is MY shepherd. "return with me, that I may bow before the LORD your God"
- Is God yours or someone else's?

b. There will be dangers in our lives (because of the fall)

***Vs 3-6** For he will deliver you from the snare of the fowler and from the deadly pestilence. **4** He will cover you with his pinions, and under his wings you will find refuge; his faithfulness is a shield and buckler. **5** You will not fear the terror of the night, nor the arrow that flies by day, **6** nor the pestilence that stalks in darkness, nor the destruction that wastes at noonday.*

- These images cover every kind of danger — hidden, sudden, natural, human, and supernatural. Yet the promise is not "no danger will ever touch you," but "you will not fear" and "He will deliver/cover you."
- Beautiful imagery: God as a mother bird spreading pinions (strong wing feathers) over her young. His faithfulness (not our performance) is the shield.

c. He sends the help we need (ultimately a Redeemer)

***Vs 7-13** A thousand may fall at your side, ten thousand at your right hand, but it will not come near you. **8** You will only look with your eyes and see the recompense of the wicked. **9** Because you have made the LORD your dwelling place— the Most High, who is my refuge— **10** no evil shall be allowed to befall you, no plague come near your tent. **11** For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways. **12** On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone. **13** You will tread on the lion and the adder; the young lion and the serpent you will trample underfoot.*

- This is soldier/war imagery – which we can all identify with – we weren’t just born into this world, but into a war.
- Satan tempts Jesus
- **Matthew 4:5–7 (ESV)** *5 Then the devil took him to the holy city and set him on the pinnacle of the temple 6 and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written, “ ‘He will command his angels concerning you,’ and “ ‘On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.’ ”*
- Satan will twist truth and tell lies to you in order for you to NOT trust God – to cause you to doubt, Doubt if God can, if God cares, if God love, if he means what he says about protecting us. (Prosperity gospel)
- Maligned by satan here – and the same goes on today. If the devil can convince you the Lord is supposed to keep you from all harm, that sets the stage for disillusionment
- He wants to create cynicism within you. SCREWTAPE LETTER
- Our greatest danger is not the accident, its eternity separated from our Lord.
- He leaves out vs 13 *the serpent you will trample underfoot*
- God sends exactly the help we need — sometimes angels, sometimes people, sometimes grace to endure.

2. His Promises to His people (vs 14-16)

Notice the change in the voice – its now the voice of the Lord speaking to the Psalmist and by virtue of being the word of God – speaking to us.

Vs 14-16 *“Because he holds fast to me in love, I **will** deliver him; I **will** protect him, because he knows my name. 15 When he calls to me, I **will** answer him; I **will** be with him in trouble; I **will** rescue him and honor him. 16 With long life I **will** satisfy him and show him my salvation.”*

Six beautiful “I will” promises:

1. Deliver
2. Protect
3. Answer when called
4. Be with in trouble (not always from trouble)
5. Rescue, honor,
6. satisfy with long life, and show salvation

God's greatest pledge is not a pain-free life but His unwavering presence and final salvation. When it feels like protection failed, remember: He is with you in the trouble, and He will show you His salvation.

CONCLUSION:

Application

- 1) Dwell in the shelter (trust + habits of grace).
- 2) Pray for protection (it's biblical and effective).
 - a. Phil 4 and Jesus in garden
 - b. All the protection we have no idea about
- 3) When trials come, submit like Jesus: "Not my will, but yours."
 - a. **God will either give you what you ask in prayer or give you what you would have asked if you knew everything God knew.**
- 4) Rest in the fact that you are never outside God's care.

The Lord promises His protection for His people.

QUESTIONS FOR GROUPS:

1. The psalmist says, "My refuge and my fortress, my God..."
How would you describe the difference between knowing about God and being able to honestly say, "He is my God"? Where do you currently find yourself on that spectrum?
2. Elisabeth Elliot said God answered their prayer for protection, even though her husband and other missionaries were killed. How does that challenge or reshape the way you think about God's protection in your own life—especially in seasons of loss, illness, or unanswered prayer?