

FINDING MY SECRET PLACE

Meeting God in the Psalms: Psalm 91

October 24, 2021

*He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High
will rest in the shadow of the Almighty.
I will say of the LORD, "He is my refuge and my fortress,
my God, in whom I trust."*

Psalm 91:1-2

Reading Psalm 91:

- A. My profession of faith: God is my "secret place" (vv. 1-2)
 - B. How I will experience God's presence and protection (vv. 3-8)
 - A'. Thinking about my faith: My covenant God is also "Most High" of creation (vv. 9-10)
 - B'. How I experience God's supernatural protection (vv. 11-13)
 - C. God's promise of salvation (vv. 14-16)
1. Psalm 91 pairs with Psalm 90 to prepare God's people for their wilderness experience
 2. Look for hints of this psalm's Christological "sieve"
 3. Be ready to ask the "Word of Faith" question
 4. Listen to the three voices in this psalm of trust
 5. Watch for the different names of God

Trusting in the wilderness faithfulness of God

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

Psalm 91:1-2

1. These four names of God take us from creation to covenant
2. This psalm is the experience of a pilgrim people
3. The "fortress" is where David found refuge from Saul (2 Samuel 22:2, 24:23; Psalm 31:3)

The first cycle of God's benefits

- ³ *Surely he will save you from the fowler's snare
and from the deadly pestilence.*
- ⁴ *He will cover you with his feathers,
and under his wings you will find refuge;
his faithfulness will be your shield and rampart.*
- ⁵ *You will not fear the terror of night,
nor the arrow that flies by day,
nor the pestilence that stalks in the darkness,
nor the plague that destroys at midday.*
- 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 observe with your eyes
and see the punishment of the wicked.*

Psalm 91:3-8

1. This is a very personal experience of God's *'emet* faithfulness
2. Problem: Is the eschaton realized or inaugurated? Are these benefits for all Christians now?
(These are Pastor Elly Achok Olare's thoughts on this question. See his full response below.)
 - Jesus is the one who steps on the serpent – we read this psalm through the Jesus lens
 - the testimony of Scripture and history is that God saves through not from
(see Psalm 23; Romans 8; 1 Peter 4:12-13, 5:10-12; Jeremiah 29:10-12; Lam. 3:21-23)
3. Key question: In our season of anxiety, how am I experiencing the refuge of God?

The second cycle of trust and benefits

- ⁹ *If you make the Most High your dwelling—
even the LORD, who is my refuge—*
¹⁰ *then no harm will befall you,
no disaster will come near your tent.*
¹¹ *For he will command his angels concerning you
to guard you in all your ways;*
¹² *they will lift you up in their hands,
so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.*
¹³ *You will tread upon the lion and the cobra;
you will trample the great lion and the serpent.*

Psalm 91:9-13

1. “If” might better be translated “because” (see ESV and NKJV versions)
2. God’s supernatural protection requires a supernatural perspective (see 2 Kings 6:17)

God gets the final word

- ¹⁴ *“Because he loves me,” says the LORD, “I will rescue him;
I will protect him, for he acknowledges my name.*
¹⁵ *He will call upon me, and I will answer him;
I will be with him in trouble, I will deliver him and honor him.*
¹⁶ *With long life will I satisfy him and show him my salvation.”*

Psalm 91:14-16

1. We are learning more about God’s *hesed* love

⁷ *The LORD did not set his affection on you and choose you because you were more numerous than other peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples. ⁸ But it was because the LORD loved you and kept the oath he swore to your forefathers that he brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you from the land of slavery, from the power of Pharaoh king of Egypt. ⁹ Know therefore that the LORD your God is God; he is the faithful God, keeping his covenant of love to a thousand generations of those who love him and keep his commands.*

Deuteronomy 7:7-9 (see also Deuteronomy 10:4-16)

2. God keeps this promise by sending Jesus

Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle and set apart for the gospel of God— ² the gospel he promised beforehand through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures ³ regarding his Son, who as to his human nature was a descendant of David, ⁴ and who through the Spirit of holiness was declared with power to be the Son of God by his resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord. ⁵ Through him and for his name’s sake, we received grace and apostleship to call people from among all the Gentiles to the obedience that comes from faith. ⁶ And you also are among those who are called to belong to Jesus Christ.

Romans 1:1-6



Resources for the Psalms

Please be sure to have a copy of the [Bible Project's poster](#) on the Psalms.

I appreciate the bibestudytools.com study of Psalm 87 in the “Christ-Centered Exposition Commentary” series. I’ve attached this study to my notes.

Dr. [Ron Allen has a wonderful study](#) of Psalm 87 in “Biblioteca Sacra”.

James E. Smith’s *Wisdom Literature and Psalms* (College Press, 1995) has been a very helpful resource. The *Expositor's Bible Commentary* (Zondervan, 1991) has a helpful commentary on the Psalms.

I can see Dr. Ron Allen’s influence in the study notes on the Psalms in the *Nelson Study Bible* (Thomas Nelson, 1997). This is a NKJV text Bible which gives a wonderful new translation to read.

Spurgeon’s “The Snare of the Fowler” sermon on this text is at <http://www.romans45.org/spurgeon/sermons/0124.htm>

Reformed Blogmatics has an interesting take on Psalm 91 and prayer at <https://www.scottrswain.com/2020/03/19/prayers-for-a-time-of-pandemic/>

John Samson’s blog has a wonderful interview with Pastor Elly Achok Olare at <http://effectualgrace.com/2017/03/07/psalm-91-and-the-word-of-faith/>