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Psalm 91

(2019)

Bible House of Grace contains an easy to read New and Old Testament commentary full of spiritual treasures and pearls, complete with an insightful resource guide illuminating God's love and grace.



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Bible
at Home

Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man, as to such I neither claim perfect knowledge or perfect understanding.

Psalm 91.

Topics.

- The LORD is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust.
- Under God's wings you will find refuge and His faithfulness a shield.
- A thousand may fall at your side, ten thousand at your right hand.
- God will command his angels to guard you in your ways.
- Whoever holds fast to God in love and know his name He will deliver.

FOR INFORMATION: concerning people, places and the meaning of words see the title: "Map Locations and People of the Bible," and the title: "Bible Dictionary" on Website Menu.

INTRODUCTION

Psalms are songs and prayers offered to God by the nation Israel, they cover the range of human emotion, expressing praise, faith, victory, sorrow, despair, depression, frustration and the troubled heart of a mourner. They contrast the righteous with the wicked, and include the wisdom and the treasure of God's word. Psalms were written at the beginning of the 15th century BC and probably collected in their final form in the 3rd century.

BOOK FOUR (PSALM 90-106)

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PSALM 91:1-2

The LORD is My Refuge and my Fortress, My God, in whom I Trust.

- **Psalm 91:1-2:** He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will abide in the shadow of the Almighty. ²I will say to the LORD, "My refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust."

Contained within the language of this Psalm are two applications: -

1. To the daily life of anyone who trust God and has made Him their refuge and fortress.
 2. To God's faithfulness to keep for eternal life those who trust God and have made Him their refuge and fortress.
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PSALM 91:3-4

Under God's wings is Refuge and His faithfulness a Shield.

- **Psalm 91:3-4:** For he will deliver you from the snare of the fowler and from the deadly pestilence. ⁴He will cover you with his pinions, and under his wings you will find refuge; his faithfulness is a shield and buckler.

This does not mean that those who make the LORD the highest priority of their life, their most treasured desire and trusts their life completely to Him (in life or death, good or bad) will live a charmed life and never suffer any troubles, sickness, grief or hardships, but it does mean God will comfort and strengthen them through such things by His Spirit, His love

and His grace. It also means that no matter what suffering, trouble, sickness or grief may fall upon them nothing will stop them from inheriting eternal life and everlasting happiness. It means God will keep them for eternal life and for His treasured possession.

Faith more precious than gold: Peter said to the faithful under the New Covenant of grace that they have an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for them and are being guarded by God's power through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. He then goes on to say that even though they rejoice in this inheritance they may for a little while, if necessary, be grieved by various trials, so that the tested genuineness of their faith being more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire may be found to result in praise and glory and honour at the revelation of Jesus Christ. (1 Peter 1:4-7). These words of Peter clearly show that no matter how devoted and faithful a brother or sister maybe or how great the faith they may have is it does not act as a guarantee that they will be exempt from sorrows, sufferings and hardships and troubles while living in this fallen corrupted world.

PSALM 91:5-10

A Thousand Fall at your Side, Ten Thousand at your Right Hand.

- **Psalm 91:5-10:** 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.

At Mount Sinai the LORD through Moses told Israel if they obey His voice and keep His covenant, they will be His treasured possession and be to Him a kingdom of priests and a holy nation and all the people stood before the LORD at the foot of the mountain and answered together saying, "All that the LORD has spoken we will do." (Exodus 19:5-8). Contained in the covenant were the following blessings. Providing Israel did what was right before the LORD He would prosper their health, their land, their homes, their farms, their livestock and all they put their hand to do and make them the head of all nations. But the covenant also came with curses, if Israel broke the covenant and turned to other gods to worship them the LORD would bring to ruin their health, their land, their homes, their farms, their livestock and all they put their hand to and had established and they would become the tail of all nations and not the head. (The blessing and curses are in Deut. 28). This means that if Israel obeyed the covenant and remained faithful to God, He would bless their health and materialistically bless them in every other way possible. No enemy would ever defeat them and everything they did would abundantly prosper. But this covenant promise cannot be carried over to New Testament Christians since we have not entered into any such covenant with God or Him with us. God promises to Christians are spiritual, not materialistic He promises that He will judge the faithful in Christ according to Christ's righteousness and not their own righteousness and that if we abide in His Son the Lord Jesus Christ He will save us to eternal life and everlasting happiness despite our sinful dysfunctions and aberrations that dwell within and regardless of whether we adhere to ceremonial rites, holy days or keep religious customs and traditions as the faithful of the Old Testament had to. Jesus death and resurrection abolished the Old Testament Covenant of Law, which stated, "If Israel remained faithful and adhered to certain ceremonial rites, holy days, sacrifices etc., God, would bless their health and bless them materialistically and if they broke the covenant God would curse them. This covenant is obsolete now, God is doing a new thing and building a new spiritual global nation made up of Jews and Gentiles in Christ.

NOTE: this does not mean that God will not materialistically prosper Christians and bless what they do in this world, but it does mean He is not bound by any covenant promise to do so as He was to Israel under the Old Covenant of Law. However, it is general principal of God that those who do live a law-abiding life (Christians or secular) and do what is right and good will have success in life. Since God is not bound by any oath as he was in the Old Testament to materialistically prosper us it is right and proper that we pray that God would guide us and bless us in all that we do and give Him thanks for every blessing that does come into our lives.

A thousand may fall at your side, ten thousand at your right hand (v7) would literally apply to the nation of Israel if they remained faithful to the covenant, but it also carries the idea that God will keep in peace those who trust in Him (especially through the night) even though there is pestilence, wars, destruction, and evils all around them and can apply to the judgment seat of God. When those who have made God their refuge stand before Him and see the judgment of the wicked thousands will fall at their side while they themselves will be standing free from any sense of fear or terror because God's judgment to destruction will not come near them.

PSALM 91:11-13

God will Command His Angels to Guard You in Your Ways.

- **Psalm 91:11-13:** For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways. ¹²On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone. ¹³You will tread on the lion and the adder; the young lion and the serpent you will trample underfoot.

The fury of powerful kings and nations that are enemies to Israel are often portrayed as a lion because they are the king of beasts, fierce, have great strength and tear their prey apart without mercy. Young lions speak of nations that are rising up in power that also have the potential to be great and powerful enemies to Israel.

You will tread on the serpent and the adder: (v13) signify the most cunning, sly, devious and deadly of creatures as the following verses show. In the book of Job, Zophar speaking of the godless and wicked said:

- Their food is turned in their stomach; it is the venom of cobras within them. (Job 20:14).

In this context the serpent (cobra) refers to the wicked and the godless who speak words of flattery, charm, and deception to achieve their evil plan.

- They have venom like the venom of a serpent, like the deaf adder that stops its ear, (Psalm 58:4).

In this context the serpent refers to violent and wicked judges of Israel who no doubt twisted and perverted justice for their own gain. When rebuking the religious leaders of Jesus generation (the chief priests, scribes and Pharisees) Jesus said:

- You brood of vipers! How can you speak good, when you are evil? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. (Matt. 12:34)
- You serpents, you brood of vipers, how are you to escape being sentenced to hell? (Matthew 23:33)

Serpents speak of those who use flattery and charm to achieve their own selfish agendas. It especially applies to ministers and priests who twist and pervert the Scriptures to their own advantage and by their clever speeches use their followers as merchandise to line their own pockets with worldly riches.

You will trample all these underfoot: (v13) because God has commanded His angels to guard you in all your ways, many times God not only sent His angel before the armies of Israel to give them triumphant victory over their enemies, but also sent his angels to guide and lead them and to protect and comfort them. In the same way God surrounds the faithful with angels to comfort and keep them for eternal life. Treading on the lion and the serpent carry the idea that those who trust in the LORD will be safe among dangers. They may hear the roaring of the lion but it is as though his fieriness is restrained. They maybe amongst serpents but for them it is as though their poisonous tooth is extracted so that no matter what comes against the faithful nothing can destroy their salvation or rob them of their eternal inheritance.

In the glorious Kingdom age to come we are told:

- The nursing child shall play over the hole of the cobra (asp in KJV), and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den. (Isaiah 11:8).

Cobra, asps or serpents it matters not since they are all deadly poisonous. The symbolism here is that when Christ returns in glory to gather the faithful to him and establish God's Kingdom of righteousness, justice, joy and peace on earth even the fiercest of enemies will be harmless to the faithful in God's holy Kingdom.

PSALM 91:14-16

Whoever Holds Fast to God in Love He will Deliver.

- **Psalm 91:14-16:** Because he holds fast to me in love, I will deliver him; I will protect him, because he knows my name. ¹⁵When he calls to me, I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble; I will rescue him and honor him. ¹⁶With long life I will satisfy him and show him my salvation.

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It is interesting to notice that God does not say to those who hold fast to ceremonial rights, holy days and religious customs and traditions He will show them His salvation nor does He say to those who hold fast to doctrines of the Bible He will show them His salvation, but rather those who hold fast to Him in love He will show them His salvation. This is because God is love, John in his letters wrote:

- Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love. (1 John 4:8).
- God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him. (1 John 4:16).

Jesus said the second most important commandment to loving God with all our heart, mind and strength is:

- You shall love your neighbour as yourself. (Mark 12:28-31).

He went on to say that there is, no other commandment more important than these two commandments. The things that delight Christ are when those who belong to him are obeying his command: "to love your neighbour as yourself," (Matt. 22:39). To, "love your neighbour as yourself," means do not deliberately do harm to other humans. No sane person deliberately does things to inflict pain on themselves, loving others as you love yourself is not about feeling some warm and fuzzy emotion towards others, it is about not hurting others as you would not hurt yourself. James the brother of Jesus calls Jesus command, "love your neighbour as yourself," the royal law (James 2:8). The thing God hates the most is when we deliberately do harm to another person, physically, financially, sexually, emotionally or spiritually and the thing God loves the most is when we do-good to others. It is interesting to notice that the major crime that God points out in Noah's time and one of the main reasons for the flood was because of all the violence in the land.

- Micah wrote: “What the LORD requires of mankind is to do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with their God” (Micah 6:5-10).
- Isaiah says: “The LORD loves justice, hates robbery and wrong doing” (Isaiah 61:8).
- Jeremiah said: “Those who know God practise steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth, because it is in these things that God delights” (Jer. 9:24).

The great prophets Micah, Isaiah and Jeremiah clearly show the law is about doing-good to others and protecting them from harm and hurt. The spirit under-pinning the Ten Commandments, is love because each law protects another human from harm. In the book of Romans Paul states:

- Love does no wrong to a neighbour; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law. (Romans 13:10).

The spirit of the law is to protect the innocent from all types of harm and hurt. Those who belong to Christ aim to keep the law not to get saved, but because it honours God and brings a good testimony to the name of Jesus and the Christian faith and because it is the right and loving thing to do. They not only understand that righteousness that leads to eternal life is a free gift of God that comes through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and cannot be earned by self-effort, but also know that from the love of God dwelling within their heart and displayed on the bloodstained cross of Calvary they are called to live a lifestyle that honours the King and Saviour they worship and follow.

Jesus famous Sermon on the Mount: the constant theme throughout Jesus famous Sermon on the Mount is doing what is right before God by seeking the way of peace in all situations. Jesus calls Christians to treat people fairly and with respect, dignity, decency grace compassion, kindness, mercy and to be quick to forgive. This means living a life that honours God and the Lord Jesus Christ is about doing right to those in the church and those outside of it. This is the reason the message Jesus spoke on the mountain is referred to as, “The Famous Sermon” because the principals if followed not only by Christians, but by all humanity are the only way to peace (Matt 5). Based on the commandment, love your neighbour as yourself and the law it could be said that a wicked and evil person is one who deliberately and consciously denies the existence of God and deliberately does harm to other humans. For further information on Jesus Famous Sermon see: “Matthew 5” in, Commentary NT (ON WEBSITE MENU).

God will not only deliver and protect those who hold fast to Him in love and live this way and be with them in trouble (by His love and grace) and honour them, but will also satisfy them with His salvation (v15-16). They will make up the Lord’s treasured possession.

As the founder of Bible House of Grace, I would like to thank the many Christian scholars, commentators and theologians who have gone before me, and the many today, who have freely made available their works to enhance the knowledge of the Bible to all people worldwide. It is only with the help of these faithful writers that much of Bible House of Grace exists as it does today.
