

## **Psalm 91: Dwelling in the Secret Place of the Most High** **Do Not Fear COVID-19 - Reverse 19 and get 91.**

This is considered a Messianic Psalm and many interpreters believe it only applied to Jesus Christ during the 33 years he lived on earth. The Messiah lived under God's protection and nothing and nobody could harm him until he finished his death and resurrection. Jesus of Nazareth dwelt in the secret place of the Most High and enjoyed the protection of the Almighty like no one else ever has or ever will. The reason for believing this is a Messianic Psalm is Satan used this Psalm to tempt Jesus to sin (Matthew 4:1-11). Satan quoted Psalm 91:11-12. Satan used this promise as an invitation to disobedient arrogance - for the Son to disobey the Father. Jesus understood the promise as a request for help when it was most needed to fulfill His service for God and not self-advantage. Angels helped Jesus after this temptation (4:11) and when he prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane (Luke 22:43).

I disagree with limiting the promises in this Psalm to Jesus during his earthly ministry. If you are in Jesus Christ by faith, then it applies to you also. It is protection for you as you serve God and fulfill His purpose for your life. Until it is God's predetermined time for you to die, you are invincible

91 He who dwells in the shelter/secret place of the **Most High**  
will abide in the shadow of the **Almighty**.

<sup>2</sup>I will say to the **LORD**, "My refuge and my fortress,  
my **God**, in whom I trust."

4 names of God are used: Most High (Elyon - emphasizes God's sovereignty and preeminence), Almighty (Shaddai - the name that sustained homeless Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob), LORD (Yahweh - revealed to Moses), and "my God" (Elohim - Genesis 1:1 Creator of heavens and earth).

The shelter or "secret place" referred to the inner sanctuary of the Jewish temple. Confirmed by Psalm 27:4-5: *One thing I have asked from the Lord, that I shall seek: That I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord and to meditate in His temple. For in the day of trouble He will conceal me in His tabernacle; In the secret place of His tent He will hide me.*

The whole temple represented the ministry of Jesus Christ, especially the Holy of Holies with the Mercy Seat on the Ark of the Covenant (*background picture*). The Mercy Seat in the OT temple is now a Throne of Grace where Jesus Christ sits as our High Priest. Read Hebrews 4. If you have a personal relationship with Jesus

Christ then you are dwelling in the secret place/shelter of the Most High. The “shadow of the Almighty” is the place of protection.

Abiding in Christ is abiding in the “shadow of the Almighty.” We abide in Christ and His Spirit abides in us (John 14:17, 15:4-7). John 15:7: *If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.* Abide in Christ the secret place and ask for His protection.

The “secret place” in the New Testament is sitting with Christ in heavenly places. God raised Christ from death and seated Him at His right hand in the heavens far above all other rulers and powers and put all things under His feet (Ephesians 1:20-23).

By faith in Christ we are seated with Him in the heavenly places. Ephesians 2:4-6: *But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus...* So whatever is under Christ’s feet, under His authority, is also under our authority.

COVID-19 is under His feet and it’s under our feet in Christ.

<sup>3</sup> For he will deliver you from the snare of the fowler  
and from the **deadly pestilence**.

<sup>4</sup> He will cover you with his pinions,  
and under his wings you will find refuge;  
his faithfulness is a shield and buckler.

<sup>5</sup> You will not fear the terror of the night,  
nor the arrow that flies by day,

<sup>6</sup> nor the **pestilence** that stalks in darkness,  
nor the destruction that wastes at noonday.

The “snare of the fowler” is a trap set to capture a bird. The snare of the fowler refers to any trap set by Satan or his servants. God will deliver us from Satan’s surprise attacks. “Deadly” also means infectious and contagious.

The Hebrew word of pestilence (*deber* - noun) is derived from a root word (*dabar* - verb) that means “to speak a word or decree something.” The most interesting application of this etymological connection is speaking this Word of God and claiming its protection. Psalm 91 is the Word of God and a promise of protection and it will only be activated when you speak it over yourself and your household. Pray or recite/speak it over yourself and your household. The Jewish Talmud calls this psalm the “song of plagues,” for “one who recites it with faith in God will be helped by Him in time of danger.”

If you do not believe and say, “This is not really a promise of protection,” then it will not protect you. It’s not a promise and it will be useless to you. You will not benefit from God’s promise. You must believe it and speak it. **Verse 2: I will SAY to the LORD, “My refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust.”**

24-7 Protection: <sup>5</sup> *You will not fear the terror of the night, nor the arrow that flies by day,* <sup>6</sup> *nor the pestilence that stalks in darkness, nor the destruction that wastes at noontime.* Arrow = pestilence. It flies in the air and it sticks on door handles. The pestilence stalks in the darkness means we do not know where it comes from or how it is transmitted - at least when this was written. Now we have the technology to see it, but it still moves mysteriously and seems to infect some people out of nowhere. The pestilence is a “destruction that wastes” or sickens and causes death. **The main idea is around-the-clock protection. Night and day in v.6 and midnight and noontime in v.7.** Psalm 91 is a promise that God will deliver His people from any deadly pestilence that becomes a pandemic.

<sup>7</sup> A thousand may fall at your side,  
ten thousand at your right hand,  
but it will not come near you.

<sup>8</sup> You will only look with your eyes  
and see the recompense of the wicked.

<sup>9</sup> Because you have made the LORD your dwelling place—  
the Most High, who is my refuge—

<sup>10</sup> no evil shall be allowed to befall you,  
no plague come near your house.

There’s another application of the Hebrew word for pestilence (*deber* - noun) and its root word (*dabar* - verb) that means “to speak a word or decree something.” Here’s the point: A plague is decreed in heaven and not mere coincidence. In other words, if God speaks into existence a pestilence as punishment (v.8: *for the recompense of the wicked*) it is not to hurt His servants. It is to accomplish His purpose of judgment.

Jesus predicted pestilence as a sign of the end times (Luke 21:11; Matthew 24:8 the beginning of birth pains) and the pale horse (4th seal kills 1/4) in Revelation 6:8 is the fulfillment of it. / Note: Certain features of this COVID-19 make it seem like a punishment. The atheist CCP covered it up. The nations most affected are part of China’s “belt and road” plan: Italy, Islamic Iran, South Korea (a cult church brought it to S Korea), and then godless Europe. Since God directs plagues it may be a punishment for godless nations and also a TEST for all believers.

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

True believers in Christ have angelic protection. Angels cause plagues according to God's command: 1 Chronicles 21 "David's census brings pestilence." But they also protect servants of God from plagues.

How many angels are there? There are angels in the OT & the NT serving God's servants. Hebrews 12:22-24: <sup>22</sup> *But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering,* <sup>23</sup> *and to the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect,* <sup>24</sup> *and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.*

Is "social distancing" protection? When does social distancing become fear and not faith?

**Verse 3.** *Surely he shall deliver thee from the deadly pestilence.* The English nobleman Lord William Craven lived in 18th-century London when a terrible plague raged. As the deadly pestilence claimed more lives, his Lordship, to avoid the danger, resolved to go to his seat in the country. His coach and six were accordingly at the door, his baggage put up, and all things in readiness for the journey. As he was walking through his hall with his hat on, his cane under his arm, and putting on his gloves, in order to step into his carriage, he overheard his black servant, who served him as his coachman, saying to another servant. "I suppose, by my Lord's leaving London to avoid the plague that his God lives in the country, and not in the city." The servant said this in the simplicity of his heart, as really believing a plurality of gods. His comment, however, struck Lord Craven very sensibly, and made him pause. "My God," thought he, "lives everywhere, and can preserve me in town as well as in the country. I will even stay where I am. The ignorance of that servant has just now preached to me a very useful sermon. Lord, pardon this unbelief, and that distrust of thy providence, which made me think of running from thy hand." He immediately ordered his horses to be taken from the coach, and the baggage to be taken in. He continued in London, was remarkably useful among his sick neighbors, and never caught the infection. ~*Whitecross's Anecdotes*

Example: Charles Spurgeon and the London shoemaker who posted Psalm 91 in his shop window as the Asian cholera plague ravaged the city in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Some say this is not an absolute promise for every believer in every circumstance. I say it is as a promise of protection from pestilence but not persecution. Believers are persecuted all over the world. *For example:* Bibles for Mideast missionaries were beaten, chained in a cattle stall for three days, and left to die without food and water. Jesus healed them. The whole village repented and believed in Christ when their cows died and the man who instigated their beatings was killed in a car crash.

<sup>14</sup> “Because he holds fast to Me in love, I will deliver him;

I will protect him, because he knows My name.

<sup>15</sup> When he calls to me, I will answer him;

I will be with him in trouble;

I will rescue him and honor him.

<sup>16</sup> With long life I will satisfy him

and show him My Salvation.”

Our only protection in this world is to dwell in the secret place of the Most High. How do we dwell and abide? The OT answer in this Psalm is twofold:

First, know His names. Four of God’s names are given in verse 1: Most High (Elyon - emphasizes God’s sovereignty and preeminence), Almighty (Shaddai - the name that sustained homeless Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob), LORD (Yahweh - revealed to Moses “I Am who I Am”), and “my God” (my Elohim - Genesis 1:1 Creator of heavens and earth). Know = Experience. Experience God’s names and trust Him.

Second, hold on tight in love. Love is a relationship. If you love someone then you will do whatever you can to protect them from harm. But your power to protect is limited. God’s power is not. That’s what this Psalm declares. This loving relationship is pictured as a mother bird protecting her babies. Take refuge under God’s wings (*the wings of the angels on the Ark of the Covenant*). Verse 4: *He will cover you with his pinions, and under his wings you will find refuge; his faithfulness is a shield and buckler*. Pinions are the outer feathers of a bird’s wings that repel rain and wind. Underneath are the soft feathers that provide warmth.

The NT answer to how to dwell and abide is a relationship with the Father through the Son, Jesus Christ, who sits at His right hand. The Psalm concludes “With long life I will satisfy him and show him my salvation.” The Hebrew word for “salvation” is the name Joshua (*Yeshua*) which is also the name Jesus. The Father will show you His salvation, His *Yeshua*, who is Jesus. Will we trust God or give in to fear?

\*Everyone SAY it together: “My refuge and my fortress, my **God**, in whom I trust.”