**Psalm 91 – God our loving protector**

**The World we live in today:**

* An atmosphere of increasing ‘lawlessness’, uncertainty and fear (Matthew 24:12)

-Seattle political street protests this week: woman threatened with open blade knives in her car on I -5 Freeway off-ramp in downtown Seattle.

-Police policy: don’t enforce the law … vandalism, disruption results.

-Citizens are being encouraged to make provision for their own safety:

(Firearms sales and self-defense training is up / Prayer too).

-Sex trafficking right here @ Bellevue Mall: there was a time when boys & girls could ride their bicycles safely in the streets & parks.

* Growing up in RSA during Apartheid era:

-Black on black violence was rife, and white women especially felt unsafe in the community: The tension and fear very often was ‘tangible’.

-When a popular black leader was assassinated we stood on the edge…

* More than ever, we need to be aware of God’s protection promises in Ps 91.
* We will consider the **7 names of God** found in this Psalm.

-Remember, a name speaks of that person’s character & actions.

**He Who Dwells in the Secret Place**

***Psalm 91:1***

*“He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High
Shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty”.*

* ‘Dwelling in the secret place’:

-To ‘dwell’ means to settle down and make your home.

(Implies ‘rest’ and a ‘seated’ position **Vs** ‘standing’).

 -In our context since Christ:

**Ephesians 2:6**

*and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,*

* ‘Secret place’:

-Speaks of ‘closeness & intimacy’ with God.

 (Noah in the ark of safety while storms all around).

-Jesus walked in close intimacy with His Father and enjoyed protection:

**Matthew 4:28-30** *(– after His first sermon)*

*28 And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath,**29**And rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill on which their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong.**30**But he* ***passing through the midst of them*** *went his way,*

* Two names of God are introduced in this first verse:

-Most High: ‘Elyon’ – the ‘possessor of heaven & earth’.

-Almighty: ‘Shaddai’ – the ‘all sufficient one’.

* See our problems from the **perspective** of the secret place, close to our Father:

-When God is so big / the problem becomes so small.

-It depends on where you are ‘seated’: hop up into & stay in Father’s lap.

**The power of your words**

***Psalm 91:2***

*I will say of the Lord, “He is my refuge and my fortress;
My God, in Him I will trust.*

* ‘I will say’ – key operation of faith.

‘I’: personal / ‘will’: involves choice / ‘say’: release through words not just thoughts

* Faith has a voice: what we truly believe we will be prepared to say.

EG. **Romans 10:9**

*that if you* ***confess with your mouth*** *the Lord Jesus* ***and believe*** *in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved*

* Speaking God’s promise is the ‘essence’ or ‘spirit’ of faith.

EG. **2 Corinthians 4:13**

*And since we have the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, “I believed and therefore I spoke,” we also believe and therefore speak,*

* Jesus showed us the way: ‘the power of words’

-He spoke to the storm to be still.

-He spoke to the sick to be healed.

-He spoke to the dead and commanded them to rise.

* Two more names:

-Lord – Yahweh / Jehovah (Covenant relationship)

-My God – Elohim (God of power)

* ‘My refuge…my fortress’ in things small & big too.

-In Israel today: bombs / rocket bunkers / Iron dome defense

-Hamas shoots them from Palestine and can reach as far as Jerusalem.

 (Like from Tacoma to Everett)

**Psalm 127:1** *Unless the Lord builds the house, They labor in vain who build it;*

*Unless the Lord guards the city, The watchman stays awake in vain.*

(Or the nation)

**Final Take away today:**

Being sure in the midst of potential danger

***Psalm 91:3***

*Surely He shall deliver you from the snare of the fowler
And from the perilous pestilence.*

* ‘Surely’ – not ‘maybe’ or ‘sometimes’ or ‘if you’ve been a good person’.

-What you **are not** sure of will be stolen from you.

-What you **are** sure of will benefit you.

-As we have our faith built up in the certainty of God’s protection in the midst of a dangerous world, we will enjoy the benefits of our faith: