

J.J.

THE LORD IS MY SHELTER
Psalms 91 (Part 6)

ANNOUNCEMENTS :

- December 6 Baptism
- Pray for Maita
- Journey to Bethlehem
- Call Jannette Batangan for Samaritan's Purse

INTRODUCTION:

Today, we are talking about one of the greatest fears of men and why we shouldn't fear and what do we need to do about it.

According to a recent survey just released recently by Chapman University in October 2015, one of the top fears is about their personal future e.g. dying, illness, running out of money or unemployment.

Story : And to a lot of people, one of their biggest fears is to lose their livelihood. A dear friend of mine has been out of regular work for a couple of years. She has found enough temporary work to stay afloat, but it has sometimes been a week-to-week challenge to pay the bills.

As we were talking the other day, she said to me, "I am walking through my worst fear. I can't explain it, but somehow each time I think I'm at the end of my finances, something comes through. I think that God is teaching me to trust in Him. It isn't easy, but I'm walking through what I feared more than anything—losing my career and livelihood. Somehow, through it all, I'm finding God."

- Anne Benefield, Geneva Presbyterian Church

INTRODUCTION :

Psalms 91

*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."*

*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,
⁶ 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.*

Pray

Study Outline:

- I. STAYING IN THE LORD'S SHELTER
- II. SAFETY IN THE LORD'S SHELTER
- III. SERVANTS IN THE LORD'S SHELTER
- IV. SALVATION IN THE LORD'S SHELTER

I. STAYING IN THE LORD' SHELTER

For every promise there's a premise

II. SAFETY IN THE LORD'S SHELTER

1. The Lord will keep us safe from the devil's plans.
2. The Lord will keep us safe from the deadly pestilence.
3. The Lord keeps us safe with his love.

What is the result of the Lord's safekeeping?

- We will not fear.
- We will not fall.
- We will not fear.

*⁵ You will not fear the terror of night,
nor the arrow that flies by day,
⁶ nor the pestilence that stalks in the darkness,
nor the plague that destroys at midday.*

In these two verses, we will see The Four Greatest Fears of Man and if you trust in the Almighty God, you will never have to fear them again.

1. We need not fear the Unknown

⁵ You will not fear the terror of night,

2. We need not fear Physical Harm

nor the arrow that flies by day,

3. We need not fear Pestilence.

6 nor the pestilence that stalks in the darkness,

Etymology : pestilence “deber” cattle-disease

We have to remember that cattle include what you call domesticated animals that are quadrupeds of oxen, sheep, goats, horses, mules, donkeys, camels and etc.

- **They were the primary means of livelihood during that time**
 - used to plow the land for planting
 - used for trade because they were used as a means of transporting goods
 - used for food

So cattle means livelihood to the people in the Old Testament.

In the Old Testament, the more cattle you have means you are wealthy. Some examples in the Bible.

Genesis 13:2 And Abram was very rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold. (KJV)

Job 1:3 He owned 7,000 sheep, 3,000 camels, 500 teams of oxen, and 500 female donkeys. He also had many servants. He was, in fact, the richest person in that entire area. (NLT)

That’s why pestilence means a lost of wealth or livelihood.

Illustration : If you remember the dream of Pharaoh that Joseph interpreted

Genesis 41: 1 When two full years had passed, Pharaoh had a dream: He was standing by the Nile, 2 when out of the river there came up seven cows, sleek and fat, and they grazed among the reeds. 3 After them, seven other cows, ugly and gaunt, came up out of the Nile and stood beside those on the riverbank. 4 And the cows that were ugly and gaunt ate up the seven sleek, fat cows. Then Pharaoh woke up.

Joseph’s interpretation :

25 Then Joseph said to Pharaoh, “The dreams of Pharaoh are one and the same. God has revealed to Pharaoh what he is about to do. 26 The seven good cows are seven years, and the seven good heads of grain are seven years; it is one and the same dream. 27 The seven lean, ugly cows that came up afterward are seven years, and so are the seven worthless heads of grain scorched by the east wind: They are seven years of famine.

Now the verse says , we need not fear

pestilence that stalks in the darkness,

Etymology : stalks “halak” walk; manner of life

Darkness “ophel” darkness

So it means,

- it's a fact of life that livelihood can be taken away anytime (stalks)
- and most of the time we won't even see it coming!!! (darkness)

We know that and that's why to a lot of people that's their number one fear.

Important : And that's the reason why people want to be wealthy or want to win the lotto. They're thinking if they have enough money, they won't be afraid anymore of their future!!!

There's nothing wrong with being wealthy but what's the danger in wanting more and more of it, they have put their trust in money instead of God.

The problem with putting your trust in money is that money goes away quickly or can be taken out anytime.

Matthew 6:19 Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal.

In Psalm 73, when the Psalmist was getting envious of the rich and yet wicked, he describes them

*Psalm 73 :12 This is what the wicked are like—
always free of care, they go on amassing wealth.*

Until he realized from the point of view of God, he knows that putting trust in wealth and forgetting about God is a dangerous thing.

*17 till I entered the sanctuary of God;
then I understood their final destiny.
18 Surely you place them on slippery ground;
you cast them down to ruin.
19 How suddenly are they destroyed,
completely swept away by terrors!*

And if you think wealth brings happiness, you are dead wrong. Look at what this very successful men said :

"I have made many millions, but they have brought me no happiness"--John W. Rockefeller.

"I am the most miserable man on earth"--John Jacob Astor. (first multi-millionaire in the U.S.)

"I was happier when doing a mechanic's job"--Henry Ford.

"Millionaires seldom smile"--Andrew Carnegie.

Look at what Jim Carrey said :

"I hope everybody could get rich and famous and will have everything they ever dreamed of, so they will know that it's not the answer".

IMPORTANT : What people have forgotten that their source of livelihood comes from God.

Psalm 50:10 for every animal of the forest is mine, and the cattle on a thousand hills.

You see this? If you have cattle on a hill or two hills, you are already wealthy but God owns the cattle on a thousand hills which means there's no end to his provision.

That's why one of the things that God says to His people when they are experiencing provision not to forget about Him.

Deuteronomy 8: 17 You may say to yourself, "My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me." 18 But remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth,...

IMPORTANT : Now God is saying, if you dwell in Me, you need not fear lack of provision!!!!

Matthew 6:33 But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

You see this again, if we put God first, serving Him and following Him, He will not only give you all the things that you need but even more than that.

and all these things will be given to you as well.

In short, he will give you more than what you need and what you need AS WELL!

Luke 6:38 Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you."

One of the things that has given me assurance if I follow and trust in the Lord is

*Psalm 37:25 I was young and now I am old,
yet I have never seen the righteous forsaken
or their children begging bread.*

*26 They are always generous and lend freely;
their children will be a blessing.*

Now the question is, how do I dwell in the Lord so I need not fear for lack of provision :

The practical steps :

1. Praise the Lord for His provision.

Deuteronomy 8: 10 When you have eaten and are satisfied, praise the Lord your God for the good land he has given you. 11 Be careful that you do not forget the Lord your God

Illustration : One of the things that I never compromise with my family when we are all together at home is we eat in the dining table together. We do not start eating until everyone is seated. The kids know that. Why? It's because we make sure as head of the family I lead a prayer of thanksgiving! It's because what I want my kids to remember that the food on top of the table doesn't come automatically, it is because of the goodness and love of God that we can eat. And the love of God is steadfast and reaches to the skies!!!

2. Trust the Lord for His daily provision.

That's why Jesus said, this is how we should pray :

*Matthew 6: "Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
10 your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
11 Give us today our daily bread.*

Illustration : In the Old Testament, God sent manna from heaven because the Israelites were complaining. But here was His instructions

Exodus 16:4 Then the Lord said to Moses, "I will rain down bread from heaven for you. The people are to go out each day and gather enough for that day. In this way I will test them and see whether they will follow my instructions.

God was teaching the Israelites that He will provide for their daily needs so they need not worry, complain or grumble!

3. Return to the Lord a part of His provision

Malachi 3: 8 "Will a mere mortal rob God? Yet you rob me.

"But you ask, 'How are we robbing you?'

"In tithes and offerings. 9 You are under a curse—your whole nation—because you are robbing me. 10 Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this," says the Lord Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it. 11 I will prevent pests from devouring your crops, and the vines in your fields will not drop their fruit before it is ripe," says the Lord Almighty.

By God's grace, from a personal standpoint, there are 3 spiritual disciplines I have resolved to do early on in my Christian life and like what Paul said, if there's something you should follow about me as I follow Christ., this is what I urge you to follow.

- **Read the Bible**

I do not start any major activity in the morning without opening my Bible and reading a chapter from God's Word (usually from Psalms and then a chapter from a book in the Old Testament and in the New Testament)

- **Kneel down and pray**

Monday to Friday, this is what I do. Mondays, I call it "Thank You Mondays". I don't kneel down to ask because I always ask and there's nothing wrong with asking. But just to make sure I remain grateful, when I kneel down and pray on Monday, it's all "thank you." I thank God for the bed, for the house, for the roof on top of my head, for the good health of the family, for saving me from a problem and etc.

- **Give tithes**

I not only give tithes because there's a promise. I know God will always fulfill His promise. **But it's a sort of discipline for me to remember that what I have earned has come from God and He will always provide for me and save me and my family.**

The reason I do this because early on, I heard what Chuck Swindoll said something like this, that people will say to the Lord, "Lord I give you my entire life, use me." And then the Lord will say, "Really? You will give me everything? Even your wallet?"

And that got me convicted, the reason I give tithes is because in a practical way, it's showing to the Lord I trust Him. "Words are empty."

We say we trust the Lord and we can't even return to him a part of what He has provided for us. It's not because God needs it. **YOU NEED IT AND FOR GOD TO SHOW YOU HOW GREAT HE IS!!!**

I have seen that several times in small and big ways but the latest one was what happened last year. I have told you several stories like when Chicay was pregnant. When Chicay was sick and my boss assuring me that I will always have a seat in the company and all my leaves were pre-approved. In short, I can take a leave anytime if I need to take care of my wife and I will always have a job. And then of course, I'm only a 9 to 5 one income earner. I wasn't a pastor of the church yet and by God's grace we got a house.

But as Spurgeon said, "Stale experiences are poor food" It means, any old experience doesn't fill us that much.

And God has shown His big provision again last year.

Story : Some of you know that I have worked for this company here in Canada, got promoted, everything was going well until I got a new boss. I got this new boss when Chicay was out of her cancer already. This new boss didn't like me. We have a term in Tagalog, he thinks I'm sinuswerte that I got promoted. He doesn't know we call it God's favor.

No extra charge for this : If you have someone who is making life difficult for you, here's what Zig Ziglar said,
"There will always be people in your life who treat you wrong. Be sure to thank them for making you strong."

But he can't touch me because my team's sales were skyrocketing until last year, we had several months that our sales was really down and it gave him a chance to give me a reason to kick me out. So he gave me 3 months. You have to remember that when I got him as a boss, I started looking for other jobs and it seemed like no one even got my resume'. But I was so afraid that I would lose my job now anytime without any job in sight. I was thinking I hope he fires me so I can get my remuneration. But still even if I get my remuneration, I was afraid. I went to the HR VP herself just to pour out my feelings. When I got to her office, she was talking on the phone and she was surprised to see me and she knows what's happening to me and my boss. And she said, "Jerry I know what's happening and I know you're looking for a new job but whatever happens, don't resign. Trust me, don't resign." I cried my heart out to her and said, "I'm just afraid to lose my job because I have a family to feed. But she kept on repeating, "Whatever happens don't resign even if you get another job before you get fired." And she told me, "Don't tell anyone or she will lose her job." I thought what she was going to do is prevent me from getting fired (which she cannot do because that's the call of my boss).

What happened next is after a few days is I got interviewed and the new job gave me an offer letter already. So I thought that was already God's answer. Little did I know God wanted to surprise me more. So I went to the HR VP and told her, I already have an offer letter. But she said, "Jerry, I told you, don't say no to the offer letter but also don't resign." So that's puzzling to me. She gave me a stern warning again not to tell anybody she told me or else she will lose her job.

But what happened is the boss took out my papers and said he will not fire me anymore. So I said to myself, what's the use that I'm still here and won't resign when I already have an offer letter to this new company. So I said to Chicay, I will already resign.

So I typed my resignation letter that night and the following morning was determined to hand it in already and then sign my new offer letter.

But while I was going to work, I always listen to 99.5 but this particular sermon by Chuck Swindoll, he was shouting, "Wait! You need to wait. You must learn how to wait." I know God was telling me personally, "Wait." So I didn't bother and printed out my resignation letter but I won't give it until I tell the VP of HR. She wasn't in the office but she went out to look for me and when she found while we were walking in the hall, she gave me a tissue paper and told me there's something in my nose but in hindsight I just know that she was asking me to cover my mouth because there are cameras in the office and they don't want those cameras to see my lips moving. So while talking, I

already told her that I will resign and she got mad at me and said, "Jerry, I told you to wait and not resign." You're gonna get me in trouble." I told her when should I resign. She just looked at me and said, "Wait!" So that was very clear I had to wait and talked to my wife about it and she said, "It's clear the Lord is telling us to wait."

It's because here's what's going to happen next. Remember I told you when I got into her office, she just put down the phone and then she saw me. It's because the SVP in the States informed her that the Board of Directors in of HQ (remember, this is a billion dollar company in the U.S., top 100 in the Fortune company) said to her that they will transfer all of our department's operation to Costa Rica and will have to let go of all 60 people which will include my boss. And of course, when they do that they have to give us renumeration (money for our years of service). If I resign before that, I won't get anything.

So the following day came when the VP from the States came and announced it first to us the managers at 8:30 a.m. All of the managers where shocked and I was the only one who was shouting and praising the Lord from my inside when I heard the news. All of them were called to HR and assigned to a person to discuss their renumeration. The VP for HR picked me and talked to me and said, "Now you see what I didn't want you to resign and told you to wait." Then he discussed my renumeration which is Tech Data is going to give me 6 months pay and you have to remember I already have an offer letter from the new company. (Perfect timing since Zak needs money for his university) At 11 a.m., when they told the news to the rest of the 60 people, people became shocked, angry, mad and some were crying but I was the only one who was smiling and praising the Lord from the inside but of course, I had to act in such a way that this is all news to me. I remember what the VP told me before I left her office, "Jerry, you know the quote "Nice guys finish last? That's not true."

You know why it happened, it's because GOD IS TRUE TO HIS PROMISE!!!

10 Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this," says the Lord Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it. 11 I will prevent pests from devouring your crop

The only thing that will prevent this is not believe God's Word because of our lack of trust and faith in Him.

But remember when you dwell in the Lord, we need not fear pestilence!

He loves you, He cares for you, He is faithful to you, He wants to bless you. Just always remember to dwell in Him. Remember if you are a Christian, GOD IS YOUR FATHER! HE WILL PROVIDE FOR YOUR DAILY NEEDS.

Matthew 6: 25 “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? 26 Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?”

God said He will take care of all your needs according to His riches and glory.
If you are with God, we need not fear pestilence.

4. We need not fear Plagues
nor the plague that destroys at midday.

S.G.D.