

Psalm 91

There is a secret to living in peace. Much of it has to do with being at peace with yourself. We tend to consider our circumstances and challenges as determining factors for our peace of mind. Actually, peace has more to do with the proximity of our thoughts to God. We can chase the things that draw our attention in this world; until they dump us out in the middle of nowhere. If we can just settle down, and walk with God, our perspective will change dramatically. Everything in this world is like a drug. It hypes you up; and then it lets you down. Some people chase money, fame, accomplishment, etc... They will eventually find themselves slaves to their own commitments.

Being in relationship with God is the only way to find eternal life and abundant joy. The closer that you get to God, the better it gets. As we mature in our faith, we learn to stay closer and closer. The outside threats essentially drive us to safety in God's arms.

Read Psalm 91:1-2: Getting saved is by far the most important goal. Once we are saved, our next goal becomes getting to know God better. We need to become more adept at *practicing his presence* and finding greater intimacy with his Spirit. A new believer will be focused on the battle of personal sin. A more mature believer will focus more on listening to God; and cultivating conversation.

I write to you, little children, Because your sins are forgiven you for His name's sake. I write to you, fathers, Because you have known Him who is from the beginning. (1 John 2:12-13)

The Word of God is called scripture; and it is also a name for Jesus. God's word is our map to heaven. God's name is his character and personality.

For You have magnified Your word above all Your name. (Psalm 138:2)

Nothing else matters if we do not get saved. Once we are saved; we need to understand the writer of these precious words. That involves seeing God's intent and motivations. That can only come by familiarity. Like any relationship; there must be time together, two-way communication and activities together to build a relationship. The demonic forces will try to make you too busy or distracted to sit still and listen to God. Just remember that God is not a God of confusion. If you are experiencing anxiety and depression it is not from God. God brings peace of mind (know your enemy).

You are My friends if you do whatever I command you. No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you. (John 15:14-15)

This life is loaded full of characters and events designed to build our faith. Consider going on a journey with Jesus. If your journey is dangerous; you are going to not stray too far from his side. The evil in this world keeps us closer to his side. In a sense, the threats of the evil one push us closer to God. Even the most evil moments are to God's advantage. There is no scenario where God does not win. Even the cross was the greatest victory of history.

Read Psalm 91:3-6: This is a fallen world. That is not just because of the curse from Adam's rebellion. It is also a prescriptive medicine to heal us spiritually. We are so disconnected from our spiritual health, that we need physical *bumpers and warnings* which require that we reconnect with God. Our [plans get disrupted for a good reason. If we were 100% successful in all that we did we would not make time for anybody. We have to be in need of each other to be tolerable and merciful.

These verses describe us as hiding under the feathers of a mother eagle, or standing behind God's shield. Our pride and self reliance needs to get broken every day. I am a very self-reliant person by nature. That is probably why I run into so many setbacks. Satan does not want to strengthen us. He wants to weaken us. Regardless, he is still an unintentional coach. Here are some hazards that draw us back to God.

The Fowler

Satan is a very successful hunter of men's souls. Here he is described as a bird trapper. A fowler is a type of trapper, who specializes in catching certain types of birds. We can be compared to wild turkeys; who have some survival techniques. A wild turkey was a highly desirable and tasty catch for former generations.

The best hunters do a lot of pre-season scouting. The target turkeys are watched from a distance; until a blind can be set up close by. There is a lot of time spent in observation. Satan becomes an expert on our motivations and methods and patterns. He is a student of our lives and preferences. The best turkey hunters take their time to assess the total situation. What time do they go for water? What time do they roost? What time and where do they feed, nest and breed? What is their daily pathway? Do the more

experienced birds let the young ones go on ahead; while they wait behind? Calls and lures have been developed over centuries of refining and testing. Camouflage is also key. Do not make the hazard obvious to your prey. Producing the most-convincing and best-quality decoys is critical. Some situations for decoy types call for Jakes and other situations call for hens. Like us, these birds are driven by desire and envy. We are ridiculously easy to predict and capture by a skilled hunter. This is why God tells us to stay by his side.

Perilous Pestilence

There are natural disasters, seemingly happenstance things like war, famine and disease, and other things that can rock our world. Jesus promised us that these things are to be expected. Our plans frequently get dashed. There is a lot of *Murphy's Law* in our world.

These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.” (John 16:33)

God wants to bless us, but not fall in love with this world. Adam and Eve demonstrated that man can choose the world over God; even under the best circumstances. A time is coming when everything is going to fall apart.

But know this, that in the last days [a]perilous times will come: 2 For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, 3 unloving, [b]unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, 4 traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, 5 having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away! (2 Timothy 3:1-5)

All said, this is not our home. It is better to see through all of the world's allurements now; than to stake our eternity on it.

Terror of Night

We have a natural fear of what comes next. The bible describes us as sheep. Things can easily startle us. God offers peace of mind, as we stay close to him.

I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly. “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep. (John 10:10-11)

Fiery Arrows

Another peril of the demonic force in this world is described here as an arrow that flies by day.

...above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. (Ephesians 6:16)

The shield of faith protects the heart and the central mass of the vital organs. Satan shoots arrows at our heart all of the time. Do you recall being on a high; and being excited about your life...and then to get a splash of cold water, and a swift kick in the shins? Did you ever feel shot down out of the sky, while you were still savoring an accomplishment? What happened? Did you blame your family, friend or co-worker for ruining your day? Did that poor soul, who is not a good driver, incur your wrath? Welcome to the demonic play book.

If you are upset, depressed, anxious, afraid or disappointed you are not likely to draw anyone to Christ...or even be a Good Samaritan. You are more likely licking your wounds and rehearsing your developing grudge. Satan is thrilled to set us up to attack each other. Once it becomes personal it is *game-over*. The demons spend their days weakening our resolve; by building expectations of failure. That is why we need to charge forward with good works and honoring God; even in the face of humiliation (even if we look like the village idiot). Why, because God is watching the test. Besides; 95% of it is only playing out in our imagination.

Read Psalm 91:7-16: Being a follower of Christ does not mean that we will live in a bubble. We are protected; but we live in the middle of the craziness of this world. We see this in the book of Job. Satan is pacing around Job and his holdings, looking for an opportunity to bring it all down; but God has a wall of angels around him.

Then the Lord said to Satan, "Have you [g]considered My servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and [h]shuns evil?" 9 So Satan answered the Lord and said, "Does Job fear God for nothing? 10 Have You not [i]made a hedge around him, around his household, and around all that he has on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. (Job 1:8-10)

Similarly, Elijah's servant saw that the King of Syria surrounded their city, with intent to destroy Elijah. In reality, God had a much bigger army present to protect them.

Therefore the heart of the king of Syria was greatly troubled by this thing; and he called his servants and said to them, "Will you not show me which of us is for the king of Israel?" 12 And one of his servants said, "None, my lord, O king; but Elisha, the prophet who is in Israel, tells the king of Israel the words that you speak in your bedroom." 13 So he said, "Go and see where he is, that I may send and get him." And it was told him, saying, "Surely he is in Dothan." 14 Therefore he sent horses and chariots and a great army there, and they came by night and surrounded the city. 15 And when the servant of the man of God arose early and went out, there was an army, surrounding the city with horses and chariots. And his servant said to him, "Alas, my master! What shall we do?" 16 So he answered, "Do not fear, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them." 17 And Elisha prayed, and said, "Lord, I pray, open his eyes that he may see." Then the Lord opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw. And behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha. (1 Kings 6:11-17)

We do not see God's angels protecting us. We just see ourselves in the middle of the hazard. We take it for granted that things just work out. We get used to the fact that every day comes to a logical end; and everything works out.

There is a correlation between my relationship with God and my deliverances, being set in honorable positions, having prayers answered, protection from trouble, better health, and eternal life.