

AMAZED BY GOD'S PROTECTION

(Psalm 91)

I. The place of protection (Psalm 91:1-2, 9).

- a. The only place one receives the protection of God is by being in the presence of God.
- b. Notice the terms that describe this nearness to God:
 - i. He that dwells in the secret place of the most High.
 1. The secret place of God is mentioned several times in the Psalms (Psalm 27:5; 31:20 for example).
 2. It is a reference to the closest place one can get to God.
 3. It is the idea of God allowing someone special to Him into the innermost part of His house, if He had one.
 4. It carries the idea of an intimate friendship and closeness.
 - ii. He shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.
 1. Numerous references can be found to hiding in the shadow of God's wings, the shadow of God's hand, or just the shadow of God Himself.
 2. The only way to be in the shadow of something or someone is to be near.
 3. One writer said, "This is an expression which implies great nearness. We must walk very close to a companion, if we would have his shadow fall on us".
 4. So, to enjoy the benefits of the shadow of God, which is just a descriptive phrase, for God doesn't cast a shadow (James 1:17), we must be incredibly near Him.
 - iii. He is my refuge.
 1. The idea of refuge is shelter.
 2. God is a place of shelter in times of trial.
 - iv. He is my fortress.
 1. This is the idea of a stronghold.
 2. The only reason a fortress is needed is because of enemies.
 - v. In verse 9, you have made the Lord your habitation.
 1. This is taking up residence in God.
 2. There is present in the life of this person a great desire to be constantly near God.
- c. This same thought is seen in the phrase "in Christ".
 - i. We put Christ on in baptism (Galatians 3:27).
 - ii. We have a great desire to be near Christ, so we willingly hide ourselves in Him.
- d. John repeatedly, talks of abiding in God (1 John 3:24; 1 John 2:6).

- e. This lets us know that the place of protection is only in God.
 - f. If we want God's protection in our lives, we must be in Him and remain there.
 - i. The words of John about abiding or dwelling in God show continual action.
 - ii. We keep on abiding or keep on dwelling in God.
- II. The promise of protection (Psalm 91:3-13).**
- a. The Psalmist then began to write, by inspiration, of the various ways in which there is the promise of protection.
 - b. He first mentions the snare of the fowler.
 - i. A fowler was one who caught birds.
 - ii. Satan is the one trying to catch us and his ways are much like those of one who catches birds.
 - 1. The fowler worked in secret as Satan does.
 - 2. The fowler changed his traps and methods as Satan does.
 - 3. The fowler would often entice the birds with something pleasurable or beneficial, just as Satan does.
 - iii. God is shown to protect us from this.
 - c. We are protected from the noisome pestilence.
 - i. The word "noisome" is translated perverse, calamity, and other words that show destruction.
 - ii. Newer translations have "deadly pestilence".
 - iii. This is the idea of protection from things that kill or destroy.
 - d. Fear is a constant companion of many people.
 - i. There are too many phobias to mention.
 - ii. One in the presence of God need not fear anything that can harm.
 - iii. The Psalmist points out nothing that hurts by day or night, in darkness or in light, needs to be feared.
 - iv. Violence, pestilence, or death itself is not to be feared.
 - e. Verse 7 lets us know that no matter what happens to those around us, we will not fall to those things while in the close relationship with God.
 - f. Instead of falling prey to those things, we will live to see the reward of the wicked.
 - g. Two avenues of our protection are revealed to us in this text.
 - h. The first is back in verse 4 – God's truth is our shield and buckler.
 - i. A shield was used as a defense against arrows, spears, and swords.
 - ii. The word buckler is term that was used to describe the armor worn by a soldier in battle.
 - iii. It was all that surrounded him in terms of this armor.
 - iv. God's truth, which is His word, is said to represent the shield and armor of a soldier.

- v. This shows us the absolute importance of studying and coming to know God's word.
 - vi. We are told we have armor as Christians (Ephesians 6:11f).
 - vii. The armor we possess comes from a knowledge and application of God's word in our lives.
 - viii. This tells us that knowing God's word is a source of our protection.
 - i. The second is in verse 11 – God's angels.
 - i. The angels are given a charge to help those who abide in God, who have made God their habitation.
 - ii. I cannot tell you how this is done, but I can tell you how it is not done, and that is, it's not done miraculously, because that would violate other plain scriptures such as 1 Corinthians 13 and Ephesians 4.
 - iii. The New Testament teaches that angels are involved in the lives of Christians as well (Hebrews 1:13, 14).
 - iv. Again, I don't know how it is done, but I do believe it is in conjunction with the providence of God.
 - v. I do believe that Acts 20:32 is a verse that describes this as well.
 - j. Something very important must be kept in mind.
 - i. These verses sound as if the one who abides in God's presence will never suffer any harm.
 - ii. No disease, no death even.
 - iii. We know such is not the case.
 - iv. David or Moses, whichever was the human penman, both suffered death.
 - v. Bad things happened to both of them.
 - k. The protection given by God to those abiding in His presence is of a spiritual nature, not a physical one.
 - i. Although, I will say that those who obey God's word tend to be safer than those who don't.
 - ii. The diseases caused by sin don't affect the Christian quite as often as those outside of Christ.
 - iii. This is true generally, but not all the time.
 - l. Those who truly stay with God, loving Him so much that they never leave Him, can't be harmed spiritually by anything (Romans 8:35-39).
 - m. Death is welcomed by one in God, because it ends the earthly struggles and leads to the bliss of being in God's physical presence.
 - n. Sickness is not a problem because it reminds us of the frailty of our human bodies and increases our desire for the heavenly body.
 - o. So the promise of protection is spiritual in nature and for the one abiding in God.
- III. The personal guarantee of protection (Psalm 91:14-16).**
- a. This Psalm is interesting because the pronouns change throughout it.
 - i. Some believe this indicates a changing of speakers.

