

DON'T WASTE YOUR ISOLATION – PART 2

The number of cases and deaths continue to rise. The markets continue to tank. Our (right) concern about being infected continues to rise. Running doomsday scenarios in our minds is happening more often. God is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust, and he will deliver me from the snare of the fowler and from the deadly pestilence.

One of these things is not like the other! Were you tracking with the first four? Surprised by the last? Psalm 91 is a passage deserving of our attention in these fluid and surreal times. Gather your family, open your Bible, and let's encourage one another. I've made just a few comments and asked a few questions to help you discuss and apply Psalm 91 with your family. After you do so, spend time in prayer together with these truths in mind.

"He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will abide in the shadow of the Almighty. I will say to the LORD, 'My refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust'" (Ps. 91:1-2).

1) What 4 names are used for God and what do they tell us about Him?

2) Notice the psalmist's statement of faith in v. 2. Can you make this sweeping statement about your trust in God and his provision? If not, why not, and how can you move closer to this kind of trusting faith?

"For he will deliver you from the snare of the fowler and from the deadly pestilence. He will cover you with his pinions, and under his wings you will find refuge; his faithfulness is a shield and buckler. You will not fear the terror of the night, nor the arrow that flies by day, nor the pestilence that stalks in darkness, nor the destruction that wastes at noonday. A thousand may fall at your side, ten thousand at your right hand, but it will not come near you. You will only look with your eyes and see the recompense of the wicked. Because you have made the LORD your dwelling place--the Most High, who is my refuge--no evil shall be allowed to befall you, no plague come near your tent. For he will command his

angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways. On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone. You will tread on the lion and the adder; the young lion and the serpent you will trample underfoot" (Ps. 91:3-13).

Notice the change in audience beginning in v. 3: the psalmist moves from "I" (v. 2) to singular uses of "you" (vs. 3-13). These verses are directed at each individual believer, including you, who dwells in the shelter of the Most High! The Psalm has in mind God's people in war, fighting against those not faithful to Yahweh, trusting in Him, abiding in His shadow. The promise to the faithful is that they will be protected from God's wrath as He fights against His enemies (v. 8). These are not blanket promises that those faithful to God, trusting in Him, abiding in His shadow, will never suffer any of these harms. We learned through our study of Revelation that sometimes faithfulness to God and His word will lead to suffering, even to death. But we also learned that we are definitely secure in His arms, even in death. and nothing can separate us from our eternal dwelling place, the place where "The dwelling place of God is with man. God will dwell with (us) and (we) will be his people, and God himself will be with (us) as (our) God. He will wipe away every tear from (our) eyes, and death shall be no more (nor coronavirus!), neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away" (Rev. 21:3-4).

3) What fears are you and your family facing, and how do these verses help you navigate these fears, whether experienced at night or in the day (vs. 4-5)?

4) Satan misuses Ps. 91:11-12 to tempt Jesus in the wilderness. How does Jesus' rebuke of Satan (Matt. 4:5-7) help us navigate our actions during this coronavirus crisis with wisdom and trust but not bravado and foolishness?

"Because he holds fast to me in love, I will deliver him; I will protect him, because he knows my name. When he calls to me, I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble; I will rescue him and honor him. With long life I will satisfy him and show him my salvation (Ps. 91:14-16).

The voice changes in these verses and God is now speaking. Speaking directly to you. How glorious are the promises of God, promises of love and protection and presence and satisfaction!

5) What are the 3 phrases that describe you, one who dwells in the shelter of the Most High?

6) How do you exercise these actions in the midst of our current coronavirus challenge?

7) What are God's 8 promises to you when you hold fast to him in love, trust in Him whose name you know, and call to Him?

8) How do these specific promises bring you strength, wisdom, peace, and joy, even during this international pandemic?

Spend time as a family praying together with the truths of Psalm 91 in mind.
