

# Abounding Grace Christian Church

## A Study of Psalm 91 – Part 3

### I. Exposition.

A. Verse 3 – “Surely He shall deliver you from the snare of the fowler *and* from the perilous pestilence.”

1. “...and from the perilous pestilence.” – The word “pestilence” is also found in verse 6 and means; “plague, pestilence, disease, a pandemic occurrence of sickness and death”<sup>1</sup> So, the psalmist is saying that those who “dwell in the secret place of the Most High and abide under the shadow of the Almighty” (verse 1), will be delivered from the “perilous” disease, sickness, plague and pandemic. This, like so many other Scriptures, is another confirmation that sickness and disease are enemies which we can believe God for deliverance from.

2. Healing was part of God’s covenant with Israel. (**Exodus 23:25; Psalm 103:1-5; 107:20**).

“If you diligently heed the voice of the LORD your God and do what is right in His sight, give ear to His commandments and keep all His statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you which I have brought on the Egyptians. For I am the LORD who heals you.” - Exodus 15:26

3. Healing was prophesied by Isaiah to be part of the Messiah’s substitutionary work – **Isaiah 53:4-5**.

4. Healing for the body is part of the Redemptive work of Jesus Christ.- **Hebrews 8:10; Matthew 8:16-17; I Peter 2:24; Galatians 3:13 (cf. Deuteronomy 28:15-68.)**

B. Verse 4 – “He shall cover you with His feathers, And under His wings you shall take refuge; His truth *shall be your shield* and buckler.”

1. “He shall cover you with His feathers, And under His wings you shall take refuge...” – This is a metaphor concerning protection. Peggy Joyce Ruth writes:

“When you picture A magnificent flying bird, it is usually not a chicken that comes to mind. I’ve never seen a chicken pictured in flight; many eagles, but no chickens. We quote the scripture from Isaiah 40:31 that talks about being borne up on the wings of eagles or with wings like eagles. There is a difference, however, between being ‘on’ His wings and being ‘under’ His wings. This promise in Psalm 91 is not elaborating on the flying wing, but on the sheltering wing. One indicates strength and accomplishment, while the other denotes protection and familiarity. When you picture the warmth of a nest and the security of being under the wings of the nurturing love of a mother hen with chicks, it paints a vivid picture of the sheltering wing of God’s protection that the psalmist refers to in this passage.”<sup>2</sup>

2. “...His truth *shall be your shield* and buckler.” – The psalmist now uses a military metaphor which probably goes more with the verses that follow rather than with what precedes it.<sup>3</sup>

a. The word “shield” means; “large shield (*covering whole body*)”<sup>4</sup>

b. The word “buckler” means; “rampart, bulwark, wall, i.e., a defensive wall that protects a defender”<sup>5</sup>

c. What is like a “large shield” and a “defensive wall”? “His truth”! Many modern translations translate this word “truth” with “faithfulness.” William Mounce gives the following definition: “**faithfulness, reliability, trustworthiness; truth, what conforms to reality in contrast to what is false; ‘the book of truth’ is a reliable book...**”<sup>6</sup> Jesus, in what some call His “**High Priestly Prayer**”, said to the Father as recorded in **John 17:17; “Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.”** So, it’s the faithful, reliable and trustworthy Word of God that becomes our “shield” and “buckler”.

<sup>1</sup> William D. Mounce, *Mounce’s Complete Expository Dictionary of Old & New Testament Words* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2006), 918.

<sup>2</sup> Peggy Joyce Ruth, *Psalm 91: God’s Shield of Protection*, (Lake Mary, FL: Creation House Publishers, 2007)

<sup>3</sup> John Goldingay, *Baker Commentary on the Old Testament: Wisdom and Psalms, Psalms*, Vol. 3: 90-150 (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008)

<sup>4</sup> Francis Brown, Samuel Rolles Driver, and Charles Augustus Briggs, *Enhanced Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977), 857.

<sup>5</sup> James Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains : Hebrew (Old Testament)* (Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997).

<sup>6</sup> Mounce, 896.

d. **What are some of the Benefits of Living by Truth or, in accordance with God's Word?**

- 1) You'll live in Freedom. – **John 8:31-32.**
- 2) Truth will be a trusted Guide in your life. – **Psalm 43:3.**
- 3) Obeying the Truth will help you have a Great “Run” – **Galatians 5:7.**
- 4) The Truth will sanctify you (set you apart). – **John 17:17.**
- 5) You'll be able to Recognize Deception - **II Thessalonians 2:1-13.**

C. Verses 5-7 – “**You shall not be afraid of the terror by night, Nor of the arrow that flies by day, Nor of the pestilence that walks in darkness, Nor of the destruction that lays waste at noonday.** A thousand may fall at your side, And ten thousand at your right hand; **But it shall not come near you.**”

1. Four things we're not to be afraid of:

- a) “...**the terror by night...**” – The word “**terror**” means; “**dread, terrifying, unfitting for action**”<sup>7</sup>  
The idea of “**night**” may denote the idea of surprise, or things you don't see coming!
- b) “...**the arrow...by day...**” – Speaks of warfare. We are in battles but, through Christ we don't have to be afraid. In **Ephesians 6:16** tells us to “**above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one.**” These “**fiery darts**” represent trials and other attacks of the enemy. (cf. **I Peter 4:12-14**).
- c) “...**the pestilence...in darkness...**” – “**pestilence**” is the same Hebrew word as found in **verse 3**.
- d) “...**the destruction that lays waste and noonday...**” – The word “**destruction**” can sometimes also mean “**plague**” or “**pestilence**”. It also means; “**a state or condition of utter ruin from a normal state**”<sup>8</sup>
- e) When we're walking close to God, we don't have to be afraid of anything. **See Psalm 34; II Timothy 1:7.**

2. “**A thousand may fall at your side, And ten thousand at your right hand; But it shall not come near you.**” – Even if you see people falling all around you, whether it be through pestilence, tribulation or other attacks of the enemy, don't let it get you into fear, thinking the same will happen to you! Stay close to Him!

D. Verse 8 – “**Only with your eyes shall you look, And see the reward of the wicked.**” – Many times God's people are subject to the attack of the wicked, but God says that we will be observers of their judgment (cf. **Psalm 37:34; 54:7; 58:10**).

E. Verse 9 – “**Because you have made the LORD, who is my refuge, Even the Most High, your dwelling place,**”

1. This verse is reiterating the conditions of the promises of protection. Notice the phrase, “...**you have made...**” This indicates that the choice is ours. The name “**LORD**” again is **Yahweh** or **Jehovah** meaning; “**God as the covenant-making God; God as Savior and Redeemer.**” The word “**refuge**” is the same word as we found in **verse 2** which again means; “**shelter: from rain and storm or, from danger**”<sup>9</sup>
2. We must also make “...**the Most High**” our “**dwelling place**” if we're going to be able to claim these promises. Remember from **verse 1**, the “**Most High**” is a name for God meaning; “**supreme God**” or “**most loved God.**” We could add, “**pertaining to a high status, implying awe and splendor**”<sup>10</sup> The words “**dwelling place**” is a different word than was found in **verse 1** but means about the same. So, we could ask the question; “**Where do you dwell?**” In other words, what or who do you put as the “**Most High**” in your life? What, or who takes priority in your life over God? We must always remember that the promises of God are conditional, though His love is unconditional.

<sup>7</sup> Richard Whitaker et al., *The Abridged Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew-English Lexicon of the Old Testament: From A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament by Francis Brown, S.R. Driver and Charles Briggs, Based on the Lexicon of Wilhelm Gesenius* (Boston; New York: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1906).

<sup>8</sup> James Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains : Hebrew (Old Testament)*

<sup>9</sup> Richard Whitaker et al., *The Abridged Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew-English Lexicon of the Old Testament: From A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament by Francis Brown, S.R. Driver and Charles Briggs.*

<sup>10</sup> James Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains : Hebrew (Old Testament)*