

The Adversity Gospel Psalm 91 CCH Sermon for Livestream on 3rd May 2020.

- V1 say together! (take shelter in God and you'll find Safety!)
- This is a
 - **WONDERFUL** Psalm:
 - Believers through the ages found wonderfully comforting in great trials
 - I did personally (malaria mosquitos and small scorpions) of Latin America 1994.
 - Perhaps you have experience of praying it in tough times.
 - **CLEAR** Psalm:
 - V1 again. **Principle** sets up for Ps: *Take Shelter in God and you'll find safety.*
 - Then there's 3 sections all of which back up the basic message
 - **RELEVANT**
 - One of few places in Bible talks great dangers, specifically disease v6. A COVID19 Psalm!
 - It's a good "refuge Psalm" in our 4 part series.
 - Recap x3....But **HARD TO BELIEVE!**
 - It just doesn't seem true.
 - V9-10. NO HARM?!
 - Elisabeth Elliot wrote book about the story of her husband **Jim Elliot** under title from v1
 - "In the shadow of the Almighty".
 - He was missionary speared to death by the tribespeople of Ecuador trying to reach!
 - Hardly "no Harm"!
 - And as we face Coronavirus, can we claim that Ps91v10 true for us?

- How do you read this Ps (and any Ps)? (We all come to the Scriptures with lenses....)
 - **OPTIMISTIC Lenses?**
 - Believe that God is real and can heal today?
 - That the Scriptures should be named and claimed.
 - Perhaps not as brash as TVevangelist [Kenneth Copeland](#)
 - (who on livestream, blew the wind of God on covid 19 to destroy it)
 - But that you have confidence in a promise like v10 to be directly applicable to you today?
 - **PESSIMISTIC lenses?**
 - Any confidence building up in the whole Christian project dries up when see prayer like this,
 - esp when we know that Christians have died of Covid (perhaps those that prayed like this).
 - **REALISTIC lenses?**
 - These can't be so much about immediate safety now, that's "prosperity gospel"
 - But rather must be about eternal safety in heaven.
 - The rescue here is ultimate beyond this life.
 - Trouble is doesn't read like that and speaks of physical threats like arrows, sickness, snakes.
 - Well can I suggest another lens **CHRIST FIRST** lens.
 - WHO? ▲ Mother at school Gate- "Charles!"- not talking to you! 3 in my class. S'one else.
 - If you have NIV check out footnote v14. Mine says "That is probably the king".
 - I've put 8 reasons on the "dig deeper" sheet available on website why read this Ps re J
 - Should be the way we read all the Psalms (Jesus: in the Ps about him- Luke 24:44).
 - Just 3 for now.
 1. This is an "individual Psalm"- spoken to one person all the way through.
 2. Some language of victory in eg v13 looks bigger than what we might face: kingly
 3. Satan picks up this Ps and throws it at Jesus in his temptations telling him to throw himself off the Temple if he really is the "Son of God", ie Messianic King of this Ps.

- Not saying not for us, come to us with even stronger encouragement.
 - But who is the I, YOU, HE?
 - Jesus first.
- So point out a few things from each section for Jesus first, then for us.
- V1 PRINCIPLE: *Take Shelter in God and you'll find safety*
- **1) PERSONAL SECTION v2**
 - Here's a person who has made God alone his place of safety.
 - A King who truly trusts God.
 - And who can lead his people to safety.
 - Jesus absolutely did this, and so we can piggyback onto him and find the safety he found.
 - *In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to him who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverence. Hebrews 5:7.*
 - ▲ Russian doll: extra safety inside.
 - In Christ in God.
 - In fact 4 different names for God here.
 - Most High
 - Almighty – El Shaddai
 - The LORD- his personal loving name
 - My GOD.
 - Jesus took shelter in God. We too as we commit to Christ with these words commit to same safety.
- **2) PRACTICAL SECTION v3-13**
 - Massive list of scenarios in which God will keep the one who trusts him absolutely safe.
 - One writer calls it a “comprehensive insurance policy!”
 - V3 Fowler- an enemy trying to catch him
 - V3, 6 pestilence (dictionary defines= a fatal epidemic disease).

- V5 Warfare arrows v5.
 - V10 no disaster.
- Total absolute security. Even when all around you are falling. V7.
- Like a WW2 film, where see people dropping at either side, but hero keeps moving through bullets.
- Now Charlie. Here's where your "first Jesus" theory falls down.
 - Jesus wasn't kept safe, he died on the cross!
 - But there were times he walked away from danger.
 - Certainly satan's temptations in the desert
 - Sometimes he walked through a crowd who were intent on throwing him off cliff!
 - And yes though he did face the cross, God delivered him with the resurrection and ascension.
 - He alone faced the machine gun fire but was alone in walking away from it.
 - God raised him from harm!
 - You see though Jesus didn't need to throw himself off the Temple (Matt 4) which was what Satan told Jesus to do with this Psalm.
 - (This Ps is I think only part of scripture with dubious quality of being quoted by devil!)
 - We will look at it more in life groups.
 - He did have angels looking after him in Gethsemane
 - But he didn't need to throw himself off a tower to prove he was the Messianic Son of God of Psalms.
 - At the cross he proved himself to be the great serpent crusher promised in Genesis (v13)!
- And this is so helpful for us!
 - We take refuge in Jesus, as we were told to do at the opening of the Psalms: Ps 2
 - And we will be absolutely safe.
 - Sometimes from death....Sometimes in death.
 - But certainly from all that will truly harm us.
 - Maybe he will heal us from Covid. Maybe he will take us through death like Jesus and into new heavens.

- **3) PROMISE SECTION (v14-16)**

- Here the speaker moves to be God speaking directly to the person who is trusting him.
- What we call an oracle.
- And it's a wonder
- ▲ People talk about "Triple lock" on pensions!
- In Jesus we have a triple lock in these 3 sections
 - Cos when he takes the principle of v1 and makes it personal v2
 - God makes it practical through all the experiences of life
 - And then he adds a triple lock with 8 or 9 promises at the end.
- When you are on your death bed and Satan reviews your life and throws your sin in your face, and says you don't deserve to go to heaven. What do you say?
- You say I don't deserve it. I'm a sinner guilty of great rebellion.
 - But I've put my trust in the promises of God.
 - And in the

And God has saved his son from death because F loves son, and here son loves Father.
And in Christ I too am loved and so I claim the promise of the gospel.
Whoever dwells in the shadow of the most High will rest in the shadow of the almighty.
Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.
- And you want proof that the prosperity gospel is wrong, that you won't necessarily get healed if you touch the screen?
 - V15. I will be with him **IN TROUBLE**. PROTECTION.
 - Sometimes Jesus saves us FROM TROUBLE (v3) PREVENTION.
- He can save you from COvid19. Sometimes it's protection in trouble. **Adversity gospel!**

- So as we close, what a great Psalm a great Psalm of Security.
- (take shelter in God and you'll find Safety!)
- In its Bible context it's not a promise of complete immunity
 - It's a promise of total security
- (as Pablo Martinez shares in a website I've put on dig deeper).
 - Faith does not guarantee the absence of trial (v15)
 - But it does guarantee victory over those trials.

- What are you frightened of right now?
 - Your finances post lockdown.
- That's why the Christian response to Covid19
 - Is not to spend every moment of lockdown looking at our **FINANCES**
 - As if security lies in our pension or job prospects
 - Not to look at our **CLEVERNESS**
 - In fixing the problems we face at the moment in our own strength
 - Not even worrying about DEATH
 - Because God carried him through that and will carry us through that with him.
 - **BUT ON JESUS!**
 - But by PRAYER that we might know Jesus better, and find HIM to be our refuge.
 - And SCRIPTURE where we see Jesus in action.
 - Focus on HIM! And find great safety and comfort
 - In HIM and in the refuge he perfectly takes in God.