

SHELTER

Copy and paste Psalm 91 here.

According to Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary, the definition of *dwell* is *to remain for a time, to live as a resident, to keep the attention directed.* With this in mind, psalm 91 had new meaning for me. I read it yesterday, skimming hurriedly across the words. Today I re-read it. A light bulb came on! Dwell. Stay there! Not just physically, but mentally. Where do you dwell? Where does your heart lie? Where does your head lie? Most important, where is your soul most of the time?

You see, I had a rough day, two days, actually, and it's not over yet! I'm in the throes of a "character-building opportunity." My mind has been spinning, my feathers ruffled, my soul has not rested. Back to psalm 91. Today the words offered me hope, comfort, and direction. Isn't that what we all need in times of conflict and distress? The situation remains, but now I feel stronger and I know what to do today, rather than spinning and ruffling. Personally, I don't like the spinning and ruffling stuff, it's exhausting, especially for more than a few minutes at a time. And my hair gets real messed up, too! I sat in the bleachers watching the last part of the basketball game my daughter was cheering for and wanted to hide as I wondered what people must be thinking of me, what a mess I was! Oh who cares? I'll look better next game (another one today) and have a great story of triumph to share about why I appear so much more collected this time (I'm standing on that one, Lord!). I'll share it with you first...

Here's how it works. I started with the word *dwell* . For the past two days, I have dwelled in upheaval. Sure, I thought about God and His power to help me and I prayed about it, but I didn't do all of my part. It was the next part, *rest in the shadow of the Almighty* . I did not rest! I spun and ruffled, whew! I called my pastor, my friend, I walked the dogs, I rode my horses... all the while trying to comfort myself, clear my head, and get some "fresh air." What I needed was God's Word. Psalm 91 nourished my soul today. Today I will rest. I will remember and even write down these important directions, so together, we can find our way to refuge.

The first turn you make is straight to the "shelter." Have you ever felt or been told that you were "out there?" Ever been caught out in the rain? I don't know about you, but I head for shelter. God will cover and protect you, all you have to do is ask. *Luke 11:10 For everyone who asks, receives, he who seeks, finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened.* So there is a way in and an open door. *Ps. 91:4 He will cover you with his feathers, and under his wings you will find refuge; his faithfulness will be your shield and rampart.* I found that shelter when I dwelled on his Words this morning. It wasn't enough just to call the pastor and pray. I had to get in there and spend some time with Him!

So the next step is to go IN the shelter. Stay there until the storm is over. I can't necessarily stay in my prayer corner (which is actually a comfy corner of my couch) all day, but I can write his words on an index card and carry them with me all day for quick reference as I strive to memorize them, hiding them in my heart. *Ps. 119:11 I have hidden your words in my heart that I might not sin against you.* This is sort of like a spiritual GPS so I can get back in the shelter from wherever I happen to be, because shelter is good when you're in a storm. I like the part about covering with feathers (nice and fluffy like my down pillow) and being under his wings. Rather than flapping mine, I can rest under His! They're bigger and stronger, eh? Mine are tired.

The psalm goes on to describe how in the shelter, you will not fear, you will observe others falling at your side, and wicked get punished. If you make God your dwelling, no harm will befall you, no disaster will come near your tent, and his angels will guard and lift you up. It even mentions your feet... that you will not strike your foot against a stone, and you will tread upon lions and serpents. I think that means he will guide your path and the enemy will be on the bottom of your shoes.

“Because he loves me,” says the Lord, “I will rescue him; I will protect him, for he acknowledges my name.” There is a cost. The admission ticket to the shelter is love and acknowledgement of God. Everyone can afford that, it’s about allocation. *Mat. 6:24 “No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money.* So love God or love money. Choose to be “out there” or under his cover. No dollar amount is given here. The issue is where you spend your love. The **shelter** is where you spend your love.

“He will call upon me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble, I will deliver him and honor him. With long life will I satisfy him and show him my salvation.” That sounds like a nice place to dwell. When I call out for God, I want to hear him, I’m looking for answers. I don’t want to be alone in my troubles, I want deliverance, and I prefer to come out of it in honor rather than disgrace, with a long satisfying life that ends in salvation. Only in his shelter. I’ll stay there.

Lord I thank you for your shelter, for the shadow of your protection, the comfort and lift of your feathered wings in my storm, and the answers you will provide as I call out to you. The victory is all for your glory.