

UNDER THE CANOPY

Finding God's Protection Under The Canopy (a defense, a covering of God's divine love and protection.)

Isaiah 4:5-6 NLT

[5] Then the Lord will provide shade for Mount Zion and all who assemble there. He will provide a canopy of cloud during the day and smoke and flaming fire at night, covering the glorious land. [6] It will be a shelter from daytime heat and a hiding place from storms and rain.

Psalms 91:1-7 ESV

[1] He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will abide in the shadow of the Almighty. [2] I will say to the Lord, "My refuge and my fortress, my God, in

*whom I trust.” [3] For he will deliver you from the snare of the fowler and from the deadly pestilence. [4] He will cover you with his pinions, and **under his wings you will find refuge**; his faithfulness is a shield and buckler. [5] You will not fear the terror of the night, nor the arrow that flies by day, [6] nor the pestilence that stalks in darkness, nor the destruction that wastes at noonday. [7] A thousand may fall at your side, ten thousand at your right hand, but it will not come near you.*

We live in a fallen world that struggles with the effects of sin on a daily basis. We witness natural disasters, sickness and diseases. Injustice, inhumanity, and falsehood, discord and corruption seems to make the headlines in the

media. (*Matthew 24:6 NKJV*
[6] And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.

Matthew 24:7 NKJV
For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places.)

However, did you know there is a place in God—a secret place—for those who want to seek refuge? It is a literal place of physical safety and security that God is referring to. That is what Psalm 91 is all about—shelter!

I am sure every one of you can think of something that represents security to

you. During our visit to Kenya, we stayed at my mums house most of the time. One of the things I noticed with most homes in her suburb is the extent of security measures the residents had put in place due to risks of burglary in that area. Eg.massive concrete and electric perimeter fences, security cctv and alarm systems, very intimidating guard dogs and security guards not to mention the private security firms that monitor the residential properties.

I remember my younger brother showing me cctv footage of burglary and mugging incidents that happened literally meters away from my mums house while we were sound asleep at night.

I couldn't help but reflect on how the promises of Psalm 91 were quite evident during our entire visit.

The secret place is a literal place, but it is also conditional! In verse one of Psalm 91, God lists our part of the condition before He even mentions the promises included in His part. That's because our part has to come first. In order to abide in the shadow of the Almighty, we must choose to dwell in the shelter of the Most High.

The secret place is a place where we dwell, not visit occasionally.

During a game drive through the national park, we witnessed a lioness stalking a gazelle and was about to make a kill. We had been instructed by

our tour guide to remain in our vehicles throughout the drive. Our safety was conditional.

I heard a story of how an asian man stepped out of his vehicle to take close photos of a lion in a game reserve. Unfortunately, this man paid the price of his unwise decision with his life because he was attacked and mauled to death by the lion.

The writer of Psalm 91 had faith that the almighty God was his protector would carry him through all of life's dangers and fears as he dwells in God's presence.

During one of the road trips we took in Kenya, We began the journey with prayer

as a family. We came across various serious road accidents that had occurred due to wreckless driving but the Lord preserved our lives throughout the entire time.

This experience reminded me of *Psalm 91:7 which says "a thousand may fall at your side, ten thousand at your right hand, but it will not come near you."*

Isaiah 25:4 ESV

*For you have been a stronghold to the poor, a stronghold to the needy in his distress, **a shelter from the storm** and a shade from the heat; for the breath of the ruthless is like a storm against a wall,*

When we dwell in God's presence, this a picture of how we should trust God—

trading all our fears for faith in Him, no matter how intense they may be. By entrusting ourselves to His protection and pledging our daily devotion to Him, we acknowledge that He will keep us safe.

Proverbs 18:10 NKJV

*The name of the Lord is a strong tower;
The righteous run to it and are safe.*

When we submit to the Lord, we access the benefits of protection that can only be found under the canopy of His presence.

Psalms 121:1-8 ESV

[1] I lift up my eyes to the hills. From where does my help come? [2] My help

comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth. [3] He will not let your foot be moved; he who keeps you will not slumber. [4] Behold, he who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep. [5] The Lord is your keeper; the Lord is your shade on your right hand. [6] The sun shall not strike you by day, nor the moon by night. [7] The Lord will keep you from all evil; he will keep your life. [8] The Lord will keep your going out and your coming in from this time forth and forevermore.

Psalm 121 expresses assurance and hope in God's eternal protection, day and night. He watches over us like a sentinel or shepherd, alert to danger and ready to help with our needs. Nothing diverts or deters him. We are safe. We

receive God's caring and untiring watch over our lives. *(Psalm 23:1 ESV[1] The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want .[4] Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.)*

Don't wait until you're faced with trouble to declare protection over your life. Use this personalised declaration of Psalm 91 to unleash the power of God's protection in your life.

Prayer

Heavenly Father,

I thank you for your divine protection over my life, my family and every MAGH member. Your arms of faithfulness are a shield keeping us from harm. Your

massive arms are wrapped around us protecting us. Help us to dwell in Your presence because we find shelter, rest and protection from harm under the canopy of Your presence.

Psalm 91 Declaration

Because I dwell in the shelter of the Most High, I will find rest in the shadow of the Almighty.

This I declare about the Lord: He alone is my refuge, my place of safety; He is my God, and I trust Him.

He will rescue me from every trap and protect me from deadly disease. He will cover me with His feathers and shelter me with His wings. His faithful promises

are my armour and protection.

*I am not afraid of the terrors of the night
or the dangers of the day. I am not afraid
of the disease that stalks in darkness or
the disaster that strikes at midday.*

*Though a thousand may fall at my side
or 10,000 die around me, these evils will
not touch me.*

*I make the Lord my refuge. The Most
High is my shelter. That's why no evil will
conquer me, and no plague will come
near my home.*

*His angels are protecting me. Because I
trust in His Name, He rescues me and
protects me. When I call on Him, He
answers me and delivers me. He is
always with me in trouble to rescue me.*

He gives me long life!

As men, we are the priests in our families and when we dwell in this secret place, our families will also be covered under the canopy of God's divine love and protection.

Testimonies

How have you experienced God's divine protection in your life?

