

# The Most High God



R. Suresh Johnson

## Introduction

Psalm 91 is one of the most revered, cherished and repeatedly read Psalms. It is a popular antidote for fear. It has powerful promises of divine protection. These are the commonly known facts about the Psalm. But the depth and width of the Psalm is much more. The train of verses of the Psalm is on two rails - one, protection and two, blessings. A well protected waste land is of no use. And, an unprotected fruit garden cannot be enjoyed. Similarly, divine blessings and protection are the twin ingredients of an abundant life which the Psalm is focused on. The protection revealed in the Psalm encompasses the protection of the body, heart and soul. The blessings promised here cover worldly, spiritual and eternal blessings.

Not only each verse but every single word with which this monument of Psalm is built is potent. A fuller understanding and an in-depth meditation of the Psalm, verse by verse, part by part and word by word shall make one's life greater and richer.

This book is not a commentary on Psalm 91. An effort is made here to show the reader that in this Psalm, there are greater life truths and glorious promises that cover every facet of life. As we

meditate more intently on this Psalm, new dimensions come to the surface. We can claim them and apply them to our life. This book stimulates and urges you to go forward in this direction and unravel the divine truths.

The Psalm says who God is, what is the relationship we enjoy with Him, what are the privileges of that relationship and the conditions for enjoying those privileges.

Many facts, views, insights, interpretations of many authors, preachers and commentators also have been used in this book. It has been my prayer while writing this book that every single word in it should energise the reader. It should transform your life. It should kindle the holy fire in your heart. This book will speak to you of the truths about who you are and what you are meant to be in God's plan. The book will enlarge your vision. This book will enable you to claim the protection and blessings promised with greater understanding and confidence.

## Psalm 91:1

*“He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.”*

### An Open Secret

The Psalm begins with a great note of encouragement. The Psalmist directs us to the secret place of blessing and protection. He enjoys making it an open secret. The Psalmist has no hesitation to reveal the source of the blessed life. He proclaims the secret to the entire world for there is a place for everyone there. There is everything that you and I need, now and forever.

The secret place is unraveled by anyone who seeks it sincerely and to everyone God chooses to reveal. Blessing rests on one's will to accept this simple secret. *Psalm 25:14* says: “The secret of the Lord is with those who fear Him.” The word ‘fear’ in fearing God is understood as holy reverence. *Matthew 11:27* says: “...nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and the one to whom the Son wills to reveal Him.”

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century there was a trader who wanted to transport some precious diamonds to a nearby port city. But the way to the port city was infested with robbers. So, he organised with great fanfare a convoy of armed horsemen to protect the horse drawn carriage with the diamonds, on its way to the port city. Just after the departure of the armed convoy, the trader put a simple horseman on a horse and placed the pouch of diamonds on the saddle of the horse and sent the simple horseman to the port city. As anticipated, the robbers waylaid the armed convoy with mightier force. They took the horse carriage deep inside the forest and they broke open the iron chest in it, after several hours of struggle. Oh! To their great disappointment, there was nothing inside the iron chest. In the meantime, the simple horseman had reached the port city with the diamonds without any trouble.

In the story, the robbers were carried away by the fanfare about the armed convoy. In this process, they missed out the simple horseman carrying the diamonds. Similarly people get carried away by human wisdom, worldly advice and self will. We miss the great truth – a simple thing.

Reverential fear of God is the key to discover a life of blessing, contentment and safety. To enjoy God's blessing, we must approach Him the way He wants

us to approach Him. Sincerity of purpose and obedience are the vital components of reverential fear of God.

At the time of birth of Christ, the three wise men came from a faraway place to worship the new born king. They were sincere. God chose to show them the place where baby Jesus was. He sent a star to guide them. The wise men followed the star and became wiser to worship the new born king. On the other hand, King Herod with all his power and resources, priests and astrologers could not locate the humble manger where the baby Jesus was lying, essentially a part of Herod's own kingdom. Again to the low and humble shepherds keeping watch over their sheep in the open fields, the angel revealed the place where the new born Jesus was lying. Thus, to king Herod it was an unraveled secret. To the wise men and the shepherds it was a guided tour, an open secret.

Like the great announcement the angel made to the shepherds two thousand years ago, the Psalmist announces to you, in this opening verse, the place of blessing. God has chosen to reveal the secret place of blessing to you.

Luke 2:10,11 "Then the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of

great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord.”

Soon after the historic announcement and the heavenly choir was over, the shepherds said to one another: Luke 2:15 “....Let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us.”

For the shepherds, to seek and worship the new born king was the first thing. Everything else was secondary. Yes, this is the moment we turn towards the secret place of blessing. “Let us now go.” Everything else shall be secondary. Like the shepherds, let us humble ourselves. The three wise men did not have any pretention of better knowledge of astronomy to lead them to the manger in Bethlehem. They moved as they were directed by the star. Now is the time to move.

### **The Most High**

**T**he name ‘the Most High’ or its equivalent Hebrew word ‘Elyon” focuses on the uniqueness of the Lord. He is the Supreme Being above all others. The name reminds us that He is the creator of heaven and the earth and the owner of all. He is the sovereign Possessor and Controller of all things.

The significance of the attribute of the Lord as the Most High will open the eyes of our understanding when we read the announcement made by the angel to Mary regarding the birth of Jesus Christ.

Luke 1:32 ...He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High (The World English Bible).

Luke 1:35 ...The Holy Spirit shall come upon you and the power of the Most High shall overshadow you and therefore the holy one shall be born from you and shall be called the Son of God (The World English Bible).

The birth of our Saviour Jesus Christ is the most significant event in the history of mankind. Promised by God, foretold by prophets and much sought after by mankind since the fall of Adam. The birth of this significance is announced to Mary, the virgin, that the child, the Son of the Most High, would be conceived by her by the power of the Most High. The miracle working power of the Most High would make her conceive the Son of God. The Most High is the only source of creative power. The power works wonders beyond the imagination and comprehension of human mind. It surpasses the realm of natural law.



God has several characters and His several names are reflective of these. Each name of God focuses on that character or nature of God. He revealed Himself by His various names according to the situation and the character He wants to emphasize.

The name Elyon, the Most High God, is revealed for the first time in the Bible in Genesis chapter 14. Here, Abram goes to war against five kings who had taken away Abram's brother and his people as captives and their wealth as loot. Abram was forced to immediately wage a war against well trained and well armed kings. Abram was least prepared and had very few people and that too untrained. In spite of all these, Abram wins the war and gets back all the people and the wealth. On Abram's victorious return from the war, the Bible records that the priest of the Most High brought blessings on Abram. At this point, Abram glorifies the Most High as the source of his victory. Abram does not want to take away even a small part of the glory that belongs to the Most High only. Let us look at what Abram says in Genesis 14:21,22; "Now the king of Sodom said to Abram, 'Give me the persons, and take the goods for yourself'. But Abram politely declined to take the goods and said to the king of Sodom, 'I have lifted my hands to the Lord, God Most High, the Possessor of heaven and earth.'"

oh! What a wonderful learning point for handling success in life. All credit and glory of the victory are given only to the Most High God who gives victory.

This is the first war and the first victory in war recorded for mankind. This is the only war waged by Abram. The war was to get back the people who were taken as captives and their wealth and blessings as loot. The source of victory is the Most High – Elyon. He is our victor today. Abram could win the war despite all odds against him because in chapter 12 of Genesis we read that he is undertaking the journey in obedience to God’s command. When we pursue His commands, victory and success follow us. We do not pursue success but put in our best and sincere efforts in pursuit of God’s command and success ensues.

Psalm 91 is all about trusting God in our battles in life. Yes, when the Most High is on your side, victory is yours. Satan cannot take away what God has given you.

In Daniel 4:34-37 King Nebuchadnezzar tells that he realises who the Most High God is on the following lines:

- God has dominion over all the inhabitants of the earth.

- God is supreme over the armies in the heaven, including the angelic hosts, the satan and the demons.
- God does according to His will.
- No one can question what God does.
- God's supreme authority is everlasting.

In our daily life, we are confounded by problems created by people who are much higher than us in organisational hierarchy, social set up, political order etc. This is like Abram having problems from a big team of kings and Daniel's friends facing the wrath of the mightiest king of their times. In such situations let us remember some of the truths that emerge in meditating Psalm 91:1, as follows:

The one who is in me is the Most High God. The Bible says that the One who is me is greater than the one who is in the world (I John 4:4). Psalm 47:8 says that our God is on the throne. He controls men and events. He decides who the victor is. His decision is final. He gives victory not on the basis of what a person has but to the one He decides to give victory. Our God has got His throne in the heavens and His kingdom rules over all (Psalm 103:19). There is none like Our God. He is unique without any comparison (Jeremiah 10:6). Our God is the Most High God. As much Our God is unique, you are also unique. You are not just a human being on

earth. Your name is entered in heaven (Luke 10:20). You are created in the image of God. (Genesis 1:27) Uniqueness is in your DNA.

You are born to rule (Genesis 1:28). Neither the satan nor the planetary movements determine the destiny of your life. Deuteronomy 4:39 says that the Lord Himself is God in heaven above, and on the earth beneath; there is none else. Our Most High God determines our destiny. We are empowered to overcome mightier forces (Deuteronomy 4:38).

Victory is both our right and privilege. Our victories in life are not dependent on our individual strengths or what we possess. Our victory is based on the covenant relationship with the Most High God.

### **The Secret Place**

**T**here are a few prominent places like the White House, 10 Downing Street, Taj Mahal etc but all of them pale into insignificance when the Psalmist reveals the secret place of the Most High God.

Psalm 27:5 “For in the time of trouble He shall hide me in His pavilion; in the secret place of His tabernacle He shall hide me; He shall set me high upon a rock”. Where is the secret place? The innermost part of the tabernacle, namely the Holy of

Holies, is the secret place. The holiness of the tabernacle protects us from the fury of the sins we have committed, protects us from the scorching heat of persecution, plots of men, problems of life, sickness and inward anxiety of mind. For the child of God washed by the blood of Jesus, the Holy of Holies, the innermost part of the temple, is straightaway understood as the heart of God, the innermost part of God. The secret place is the heart of the Most High God. Hallelujah!!

Are you delighted that Psalmist has straightaway, in the very opening verse, revealed the source of the blessed and protected life? Yes, the heart of the Most High God is the secret place. God's secret is revealed to the righteous (Proverbs 3:32). Let us eagerly look for more revelations.

### **Be a Resident**

**S**taying in the innermost part of God, the heart, reflects our continuous relationship with God. The word 'abide' in the verse refers to permanent submission to the rule of God in our life. This is in total contrast to a casual visitor who walks through the lobby. The privilege of protection and blessing is when we become a resident in the heart of God.

I John 4:15, “Whoever confesses that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, God abides in him and he is in God.” All those who accept Jesus Christ as the Lord and Saviour are residents of the heart of God. Oh! What a privilege!

### **My Turning Point**

**M**y wife and I were born in good Christian families but we were namesake Christians. After a while, my wife received personal salvation. Her born again experience was reflected even in her day to day life. At this point I realised that ‘salvation’ is something real and I also wanted to experience it. I started reading spiritual books. Also, I attended a few spiritual meetings. I was getting nearer to God, but could not accept Jesus Christ as my personal Saviour. What was between me and salvation was my smoking habit. I realised the obstacle but I could not overcome it. During that season, I happened to read I Corinthians 3:16 which says: Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? This verse made smoking repulsive to me. I realised I would smoke anywhere but not inside a church. Whereas, this verse says that I am the very temple of God. I realised that smoke cannot enter my body. That moment I gave up smoking and I accepted Jesus

Christ as my personal Saviour. In retrospect, I realise that if I had not gone through the born again experience at the age of 35, I would not have lived through the various calamities I came across subsequently. Life would not have been meaningful and exciting without abiding in Jesus Christ. I would have never experienced the overflowing abundance without being a resident in God. Salvation matters. Abiding in God makes the difference. 'Life will never be the same' is not a mere cliché with reference to salvation. It is my true experience of life. Become a Resident in God.

### **Almighty**

**W**hen we reside in the heart of the Most High God, the power of the Almighty God shines in our life. In Chapter 17 of Genesis, God revealed Himself to Abram as the Almighty God. This is the first time God revealed His nature to mankind as 'Almighty God' -- El Shaddai! God is appearing to Abram who is now 99 years old, nearly a quarter century after he was called by God and was promised a child. The promise has not yet materialised. This is the fifth time God appeared to Abram but the  $n^{\text{th}}$  time Abram longed to have his own child. It was a low point in the life of Abram who was struggling to continue to believe that God could still carry out His promise to

make Abram a father of many nations. Therefore, God revealed Himself to Abram as El Shaddai. By revealing the name, God is enabling Abram to understand that God is all sufficient to make Abram receive the promised child. The root word Shadeh means to pour out. Therefore, El Shaddai pours out blessings abundantly and continually. He is enough to us. We have everything in Him.

Abram would have been startled when He revealed Himself as El Shaddai – the Almighty God. At the age of 85, Abram tried to help God (in Abram’s own way) in making God’s promise of a child come true and the result was Ishmael. Abram later realised that it is not what God meant. Abram had nothing to boast of his power to achieve results. But when God revealed Him as Almighty God, Abram and his God appointed wife Sarah become parents of a God appointed promised child. When we read Matthew verses 1, 2 of chapter 1, we will realise that Jesus Christ is chronicled as a descendent of this child. This is the might of the Almighty.

What is the promise of God you are struggling to realise? Let us remember, once again, that our God is Almighty. He is sovereign. Isaac was born to Abraham and Sarah when it was humanly impossible for them to have a child. Only the might of the Almighty could make it happen. All the glory



went to El Shaddai when Isaac was born. Yes, when we put an end to our self efforts, the hand of the Almighty works in our life and the glory goes to God, God only.

The name El Shaddai, the Almighty, make us understand His omnipotence and His sufficiency. He is the strengthener and the satisfier in our life. He is all sufficient to protect us and bless us. Genesis 17:1 says “And when Abram was ninety nine years old, the Lord appeared to Abram and said I am Almighty God; walk before me, and be blameless.”

The second part of this verse is as revealing as the first part of the verse where God revealed Himself as Almighty God. ‘Walk before me and be perfect’ means “now live upto the vision you have had, the revelation I have given to you as the Almighty God. Live as if you had a God who is all sufficient. Right now you are not living like this. You are walking before Sarah, Hagar, circumstances, difficulties, limitations and infirmities. Change your walk.” Abram got the point. Abram lived accordingly i.e. lived with the assurance that God is able and the promise was fulfilled in his life. Glory! Right now you are also having the revelation that our God is all sufficient. Let the promises be fulfilled in your life.

With this revelation, Abraham's faith life strengthened. Abraham did not stagger at the promise of God. He was fully persuaded that God is able to perform what He promises. The secret of Abraham's faith life is now in realising that our God is a supernatural God. He is enough in Himself; self sufficient. Yes, He is sufficient for us. We have everything in Him. He is enough to secure all our happiness. Like Abraham and Sarah, let us realise that what God promises, God alone can give and would give.

One more dimension. There is tenderness in the name El Shaddai because the word 'Shaddai' comes from the Hebrew word for 'breast'. Just as a baby receives strength and nourishment from the mother, so also the children of the Almighty God receive all they need from the hand of God with tenderness, love and assuredness.

It is wonderful to sum up. When you are in continuous communion with the heart of God, the Creator and Controller of the heaven and earth, He protects and blesses you with tender care as well as unmatched strength.

## **Psalm 91:2**

*“I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress; My God: in Him will I trust.”*

### **Straight From The Heart**

**T**he Psalmist proclaims his relationship with God. He claims what God is to him. This relationship defines his rights and privileges in God. This enables him to view his life in the right perspective. He understands that he is a privileged person because of his relationship with God. The Psalmist is abundantly aware that he is a fully protected person. His life is secure. These words come out of this consciousness.

Matthew 12:34 says “.... out of the abundance of heart, the mouth speaks.” The heart is the root; words are the fruit. If God resides in a man’s heart, words of faith will come from his lips. For the right words to come out of our mouth, our heart must be healthy. A heart with God in it is the healthiest. A man who recites words of faith by simply memorising the good words in the Bible, without they coming from the heart, is like a parrot reciting a good Bible verse. The parrot does not mean what it recites because it does not come from its heart.

If the Psalmist simply stops saying “I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress ...”- it can be a mere recital of good intentions but in the last part of the verse, he emphatically opens his heart. All his words came from the heart when he says “in Him will I trust”. Oh! What a lovely heart. God resides in his heart and words of faith and praise come streaming from it. Every one of us should desire such a heart. Out of the abundance of heart, at every turn of event, we will speak words of faith and praise. Can you please say how God is related to you?

There were many ups and downs in the life of David. But his love for God and his faith in God were so constant that God called David as “a man after My own heart” (1 Samuel 13:14). Irrespective of circumstances, David loved God and words of faith and praise were streaming from his heart and lips. Besides delighting God, David’s words of faith have inspired billions and billions of people over the centuries. Many of us aspire to achieve certain goals in various aspects of our life. Such aspirations are good. And our greatest aspiration should be to have a heart out of which faith keeps streaming and to be called by God as a man or woman after His own heart! Let us aspire.

## He is My Refuge

“He is my Refuge”. This is one of the most meaningful announcements! God is not just a refuge but MY refuge. “He is my personal refuge. I have ready access to God, My refuge”, the Psalmist proclaims. In the same way, in Psalm 46:1-4, the Psalmist says “...God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble...” . The earth may shake. All those things that symbolise stability and security will shake when the earth quakes. But there is one thing that will not quake – a heart that believes that God is his personal refuge. It will not have a heart quake. ‘Come what may, I have a refuge that is absolutely safe. My refuge is my God’.

In those days, as narrated in Numbers Chapter 35, cities of refuge were created. As per the law then, when a person murders another, a relative of the murdered can avenge the death by murdering the murderer. However, when a person unintentionally kills another person, he can run into these cities of refuge. If found innocent on examination, he can live there safely until the death of the High Priest.

In Hebrews 6:18, Paul says that Jesus Christ is the real city of Refuge. He knows the following when he says so:

- Both Jesus and the cities of Refuge can be easily reached.
- Both Jesus and the cities of Refuge are open to all –not only to Israelites.
- Both Jesus and the cities of Refuge are the only way to save life.
- Both Jesus and the cities of Refuge provide protection only within their boundary. Going outside meant death.

But the great difference between Jesus and the cities of Refuge is that only innocent are protected in the cities of Refuge. But in Christ, even those who are guilty of sin but repent can find refuge. Remember the last time when you were in an emergency. To whom did you first go? Remember the last time when you were in imminent danger. What was your reaction? Remember the last time when you were gripped by fear. Where did you run?

Christ is our eternal refuge. When you are surrounded by danger or, when you are encompassed by fear or, when you are overwhelmed by sorrow, run to the Cross. Hide behind the old rugged Cross. No danger, fear or sorrow can consume you. Remember that God Almighty is your refuge. You are in safe hands. Our bank balances, worldly possessions and positions, spheres of influences and contacts may not be able to protect us in the moment

of crisis. But our God is a very present help in trouble. In distress, He is easily found.

God hides us during our distress but God does not like us to stay hidden. God hides us so that He helps us during the crisis. He strengthens us. He counsels us. This is not an escape but rejuvenation to overcome the battle.

A bold avowal 'I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge....' honours God. It inspires others to seek the same with confidence. Our senses may cause fear but our faith in our refuge chases away the fear and builds confidence.

### **My Fortress**

**W**e are used to saying: my car, my mobile, my laptop. But the Psalmist boasts of 'My fortress'. What a sense of assurance we get when we know that the moment we accept Jesus Christ as our Lord and saviour, a divine protective force surrounds us like a fortress. This fortress is not built by earthy brick and mortar but is made of heavenly power and grace. No earthy force or power can impregnate this fortress.

An incident narrated in II Kings Chapter 6 will enable us to open our eyes of faith and see the divine

protection around us. Here, the king of Syria wanted to capture Elisha, a prophet of God. So the Syrian king sent a great army of men, horses and chariots to capture Elisha, dead or alive. This army surrounded Elisha during night when he was sleeping. Early in the morning, the servant of Elisha went out of the house and he was mortally frightened to see a great army surrounding them. The terrified servant ran back to his master and said “Alas, my master! What shall we do?” With an assuring voice, the prophet replied, “Do not fear, for those who are with us are more than those who are against us”. The assuring words of the prophet did not enter the ears of the servant. Fear froze him. To convince the servant, Elisha prayed to God to open the eyes of the servant to see God’s protective force encompassing them. And the Bible says “Then the Lord opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw. And behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.”

The servant of Elisha thought that he and his master were alone, unguarded, unarmed, and unprotected. That is why he was frightened. The prophet was cool and composed, in the face of apparent danger, because he was conscious of the greater army surrounding him with a charge to protect him.



Remember, you are not alone, asleep or awake, at home or far away. When your mind sees danger, listen to the voice of your spirit which says that the one who is in you, is greater than the one who is in the world. Superior force is on your side. Divine force is at your command. Heavenly force is a virtual fortress around you. Be assured. Stay assured.

Today, every government gives armed protection to ministers, VIPs and for many others who may be harmed by enemies or terrorists. The level of protection is categorised from ‘A Category’ to ‘Z Category’ and extended according to the threat perception and the status of the person being protected. In that sense, every child of God is very precious to God and may we say that the protection we get is ‘Cross category.’ i.e. divine protection of the highest order.

In the Book of Exodus, we read that the Israelites are slaves in Egypt and they cry to God for deliverance. God decides to deliver them and as a final decisive act of deliverance, ordains sacrifice of a lamb for each household. The force of destruction that would go through Egypt would pass over the houses that have the blood of the slain lamb sprinkled on the door posts. In all other houses, the first born would die. On the mentioned date, the Israelites sprinkled

the blood of the slain lamb on the door posts. Obviously, the Egyptians did not do so. And when the angel of destruction passed through Egypt, the first born of the Egyptian houses were killed. It did not matter whether it was the crown prince or a commoner. The palace with strong walls and security could not stop the angel of destruction from killing the crown prince. On the other hand, Israelites who were living in impoverished dwellings were protected by the blood of the slain lamb. There were no deaths among the Israelites. In I Corinthians 5:7 Paul says that Jesus Christ is the lamb slain for us. Yes, the blood of Jesus that was shed on the Cross is the protective fortress around us. So, we claim with faith and say 'victory in the blood of Jesus', the protective power of the blood of Jesus acts as a fortress around us. Praise be to God for His precious blood.

### **My God**

**M**any a times people use these words to express surprise. Oh! My God! But here the Psalmist uses this expression to praise God. The Hebrew word here is ---Elohim. In Genesis 1:1, the first verse of the Bible, it is written: In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. Hebrew word Elohim is used to mention God in this verse. Elohim is plural

which signifies unity in Trinity—the God, the Son and the Spirit. Elohim existed before the heaven and earth were created as mentioned in Genesis 1:1. Time signifies duration measured by the revolutions of the heavenly bodies. But prior to the creation of these heavenly bodies there could be no measurement of time. Thus, Elohim existed before the beginning of the earth and heaven. Oh! What a privilege to call this eternal Supreme Being as My God. Whenever our lips say GOD, let in the bottom of our heart feel that He is GOOD. My God is Good.

Let us join the Psalmist in expressing a universal truth that God is Good in a personal possessive expression as 'MY GOD'. Every time we say My God, we are honouring God, strengthening our relationship with God and expressing our fondness of God. We see tiny toddlers just picking up the first few words say “Dad” and “Mom” and what a great excitement it brings to the parents. Is not God our parent?

When we accept Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior, we get the privilege and confidence to look towards to the Creator of the heaven and earth and say ‘My God’. Prior to this unique relationship, He was the God. Our mind knew the existence of God. But after the unique relationship, our heart says My God. What a glorious transformation in relationship!

## **In God I Trust**

**T**he greatest and most admirable assertion made by the psalmist is: “In God, I trust”. This declaration sets him apart from the crowd that says: “In God also, we trust.” The Psalmist moves on to an altogether higher plane. It is the crux of his continuous and close relationship with God. He has set himself in an enviable position.

Prophet Jeremiah expresses the positive impact of trust in God and negative impact of unbelief in God and trust in man in a way no one can forget in Jeremiah 17:5-8: ‘Thus says the Lord: “Cursed is the man who trusts in man and makes his flesh his strength, whose heart departs from the Lord. For he shall be like a shrub in the desert, and shall not see when good comes, but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, in a salt land which is not inhabited. “Blessed” is the man who trusts in the Lord, and whose hope is the Lord. For he shall be like a tree planted by the waters, which spreads out its roots by the river, and will not fear when heat comes; But its leaf will be green, and will not be anxious in the year of drought, nor will cease from yielding fruit.”

There is no middle ground. Either we trust in God only or we do not trust in God. A man who trusts in God has a life of blessing. A man who does not trust in God leads a cursed life. Unbelief turns life into a parched wasteland. Trust turns life into a fruitful orchard. A believer's life is green and fruit bearing. A man who does not trust in God, will not have good things in life. His life will be like a shrub, outwardly appearing to be alright but we look into it, it will be stunted and withered. The man who trusts in God will not be anxious even in apparently adverse circumstances. He would rely totally on God to continue to prosper and bear fruit.

The emphatic message God gives us is: A man who trusts in God only is like a tree whose roots get supply of water throughout all seasons. Its leaves are always green. It bears fruit. Our lives can be like the tree portrayed here. Our life can be free of anxieties. We will continue to get fresh graces every new day.

A few other glorious verses in the Book of Psalms on trust in God are reproduced:

Psalm 5:11 "But let all those that put their trust in You rejoice; let them ever shout of joy, because You defend them..."

Psalm 20:7 “Some trust in chariots, and some in horses; but we remember the name of the Lord our God”

Psalm 34:22 “...none of them that trust in Him shall be condemned”

Psalm 40:4 “Blessed is the man that maketh the Lord his trust...”

Psalm 56:11 “In God, I have put my trust; I will not be afraid.”

Psalm 62:8 “Trust in Him at all times...”

### **Noah’s Trust**

**N**ow, let us turn to a man who trusted in God only in implicit obedience and how his life was greatly blessed.

In the 6<sup>th</sup> chapter of Genesis, God speaks to Noah His anguish about the wickedness of people. He tells Noah that He is going to destroy the people by means of a flood. He will cause heavy rains for forty days and forty nights. God instructs Noah to build an ark and gives all specifications for building the ark before the flood starts. Noah builds the ark. Noah was to take his entire family, animals, birds etc into the ark. Just seven days before the floods were to

start, God asks Noah to come into the ark. When the floods come, all living things were to be destroyed. Genesis 7:5 says “Noah did according to all that the Lord commanded him”.

Just place yourself in Noah’s position, not after the floods started but before the floods started. You would be surprised to know that the word ‘rain’ was beyond the comprehension of Noah, for according to Biblical experts, during the days of Noah, the earth was watered by dew only and not by rains. Since the creation of Adam, for the very first time, rain poured on earth only after the ark was built.

God told Noah the length, breadth, height and all other specifications of the ark and instructed him to build the ark. Nowhere in the Bible there is a mention that Noah was a shipbuilder or at least a carpenter at that. Let us have a look at the size of the ark. It was about 625 feet long, 104 feet wide and 62 feet high. You would be surprised to know that up to 19<sup>th</sup> century A.D, no other ship in human history was as large as Noah’s ark. The capacity of the ark was sufficient to carry goods brought by a freight train which is nearly 5 km long with 600 freight cars. Imagine the task set before Noah. He would not have understood how to go about the task.

While there were many accurate specifications about the ark, there was no mention either of the sails or how the ark was to be steered. No news about its destination also! Biblical experts say that Noah's ark was designed not to sail (for there was no shore to sail to) but to float upon waters (waiting for the water to recede after the floods).

There were many such things which Noah did not know. But he knew one thing. He knew that he can trust God. It mattered. This trust in God distinguished Noah. Everything else fell in place. There was no jigsaw puzzle. Trust in God, rest is God's.

If we could interview Noah today and ask him what was the toughest part in building the ark, probably he would say that the toughest thing was to overcome fellow neighbour's ridicule. His neighbours would have ridiculed him mercilessly. Noah would have been the subject of many jokes in those days. If there had been newspapers or TV media in those days, Noah would have hit the headlines in choicest expressions like: 'Noah's folly', 'Stupid Noah', 'Prophet of doom', 'Hallucinations of Noah' etc.

It is great to be religious when it is fashionable to be religious. To be a Roman in Rome is a smart thing.



It is easy to swim with the stream. It is fun to do something which is popular. But Noah obeyed God when no one else around him cared to listen to God. Noah stood out for God. It distinguished him. Noah honoured God by his trust in God. God honoured Noah. It saved him and his family.

Noah trusted God and therefore, he obeyed God. Obedience comes from trust and trust comes from our strong belief that God is able. In implicit obedience, he did all things God asked him to do. (Noah would have also enjoyed doing whatever he did. Daily he would have enjoyed building the ark as the Lord was making his efforts fructify on a day to day basis.)

The sources of destruction (rain) and protection, as mentioned by God were unknown to Noah. There was no precedence. Noah did not have the wherewithal, skill and ability to execute what God told him. Despite all these, Noah trusted God, God only, and he gave himself in the safe hands of God who thought, planned and executed things perfectly for Noah.

Children love the story of Noah. It is one of most sought after stories in vacation Bible schools for children. As adults also, we can enjoy the story of Noah in our lives. In our day to day life there are

many things, if we do trust in God only, which would be a blessing.

Today we do not ridicule Noah with phrases like ‘Noah’s folly’ but eulogies and envy him for his courage to trust in God. We talk of ‘Noah’s faith’. Some way when we trust in God today, we can certainly look back after several years and say “what we did trusting in God only has turned out to be the best. Trust God despite what the crowd says. Trust God even if it means doing what is beyond your comprehension. Our God is a God who speaks clearly. He plans and organizes before He speaks. Whatever He speaks come to pass. He sees the end from the beginning (Isaiah 46:10). In his safe and able hands we can entrust our life and walk in obedience.

### **What Do You Say?**

**T**he Psalmist says “I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress; My God, in Him I will trust.”

What you say matters a lot. It can make or break your life. It can make your life a heaven on earth or a living hell. Are you surprised? This is not an extension of theories in psychology. It is not an

attempt in 'auto suggestion' formula. It is scripture based. Read on:

Proverbs 18:21 "Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruit."

Matthew 12:37 "For by your words you will be justified, and by your word, you will be condemned."

Proverbs 10:11 "The mouth of a righteous man is a well of life."

Proverbs 15:4 "A wholesome tongue is a tree of life: but perverseness in it breaks the spirit."

Proverbs 15:23 "A man has joy by the answer of his mouth: and a word spoken in due reason, how good it is!."

Ephesians 4:29 "Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth...."

Proverb 12:25 "Anxiety in the heart of man causes depression; but a good word makes it glad."

Now, you are convinced that the Bible directs us to say the right word. The tongue is a potent organ. It can do and undo people. We must be the master of our tongue. The tongue must speak what we consciously decide to speak. The tongue cannot be

let on loose leash to speak whatever comes out. A horse is bridled so that it will serve its master and not go wherever the horse wants. The Bible says in James 1:26 that we must bridle our tongue.

The Bible say in Psalms 141:3 “Set a guard, O Lord, over my mouth, keep watch over the door of my lips.” The tongue is as powerful as a nuclear device. It can create and demolish relationships. When nuclear power is unleashed, it cannot be retracted. When words go out of mouth, it cannot be retracted. Again, in James 3:4-6 the Bible sets the example of a small rudder that turns the course of a big ship and explains that our tongue, a small organ of the body, can turn the course of our life.

What you say affects, positively or negatively, you, people around you and your relationship with God and the world.

Jesus has set before us an excellent example of overcoming evil power by using the right words. Jesus just before He started His ministry, He fasted for 40 days and at the end of it was physically weak, tired, hungry and thirsty. Satan thought that it was an opportune moment to browbeat and defeat Jesus at the very beginning of His ministry. Satan knew that Jesus was going to liberate billions and billions of people from the clutches of satan’s hegemony. Satan

knew that Jesus would transform the lives of people who are hell bound and make them go heavenward. Satan knew that the beginning of his end had started.

Satan knew many such things. But he did not know that although Jesus was weak, He was spiritually strong. Although Jesus was hungry, He had loads and loads of God's manna – the word of God. Although Jesus was thirsty, He was filled with Holy Spirit. Therefore, when satan tried to tempt Jesus, He hit back satan with words from the Scripture. Jesus said the right words. He was right. Satan was wrong. Satan was defeated. Jesus triumphed.

My beloved, Jesus likes you to triumph over satan and in life. Let your mouth say what the Bible wants you to say. Say that to you and the people around you and to the satan. Say to the Lord, expressing your faith in God. Let your mouth say the privileges God has given you. Let your mouth say the promises God has given us. Like the Psalmist who is shouting in joy: "He is my refuge and my fortress; my God, in Him I trust".

When circumstances crush us, when our emotions are squeezed beyond our limits, negative words might come to our mouth. Our Lord has given His words to be spoken in such situations. Let us use His words. A few illustrations are here:

### I am afraid

- The righteous are bold as lion  
*Proverbs 28:1*
- The Lord has not given us a spirit of fear  
*II Timothy 1:7*
- And Moses said unto the people, Fear not, standstill, and see the salvation of the Lord, which He will show to you today; for the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall see them again no more forever. *Exodus 14:13*

### I am sick

- By His stripes we are healed *Isaiah 53:5*
- .....I will put none of the diseases upon you, which I have brought upon Egyptians; for I am the Lord who heals you  
*Exodus 15:26*
- When Jesus heard that, He said, this sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby.  
*John 11:4*

### I am weak

- The joy of the Lord is your strength  
*Nehemiah 8:10*
- Let the weak say, I am strong  
*Joel 3:10*
- My grace is sufficient for you, for My (God's) strength is made perfect in (human) weakness.  
*2 Corinthians 12:9*

### I lack ability

- I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me  
*Philippians 4:13*
- Only be strong and very courageous, that you may observe to do according to all the law, which Moses My servant commanded you; turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper in wherever you go  
*Joshua 1:7*
- The Lord will command the blessings on you in your storehouses and in all to which you set your hand.  
*Deuteronomy 28:8*

### I lack wisdom

- If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all men liberally, and without reproach, and it shall be given to him.

*James 1:5*

- In whom (God) are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge

*Colossians 2:3*

- For the Lord gives wisdom; from His mouth comes knowledge and understanding.

*Proverb 2:6*

### Evil power torments me

- Surely, there is no spell against Jacob, nor any fortune telling against Israel *Numbers 23:23*

- For He has delivered us from the power of darkness and has translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son

*Colossians 1:13*

### I feel lonely

- I will never leave you, nor forsake you *Joshua 1:5*

- For which great nation is there that has God so near to it, as the Lord our God is to us.

*Deuteronomy 4:7*

- I am with you always, even to the end of the age [world]. *Matthew 28:20*



### I am a slave to bad habits

- Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.  
*2 Corinthians 3:17*
- By now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit of holiness, and the end, everlasting life.  
*Romans 6:22*
- If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.  
*2 Corinthians 5:17*

### I lack money

- God shall supply all your needs  
*Philippians 4:19*
- Though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich. *II Corinthians 8:9*
- You shall lend to many nations, but you shall not borrow. *Deuteronomy 28:12*

### I am going to die

- Surely, goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life and I will

dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

*Psalm 23:6*

- My times are in your hand.

*Psalm*

*31:15*

- I will fulfill the number of your days.

*Exodus*

*23:26*

### People always make me unhappy

- Your joy no man will take from you.

*John 16:22*

- If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you.

*John 15:18*

### I do not know what to do

- Call unto me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know

*Jeremiah 33:3*

- I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go. I will guide you with My eye.

*Psalm 32:8*

Similarly, a good word that comes out of your mouth is like a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and

health to the body. (Proverbs 16:24) Say a word of encouragement to your children, your children will blossom. Say a word of appreciation to your spouse, your home will become festive. Say a word of gratitude to your parents, your parents' heart will smile. Say a word of cheer to your friend, he will cherish your relationship. Say a word of comfort to someone who has lost a dear one, you will illuminate his life. Say a word of apology to someone you have hurt even unintentionally, you will win back the love and affection. Say a word of greetings to somebody in your neighborhood who looks sad, you will be making a new friend. A good word in due season, a right word at the right moment, will brighten the other person's life and lighten your heart. Try it today.

*A moment, please!*

Can we spend a moment to answer these three questions?

1. What should you say as the first thing when you get up from your bed in the morning?
2. Which is the best thing that you can say during the day?
3. What should you say as the last thing when you go to bed in the night?

I am sure you would come out with wonderful answers. Practice saying these words everyday when you wake up and when you go to sleep. After a week check up how much this exercise has brightened your life.

### Psalm 91:3

*"Surely He shall deliver you from the snare of the fowler and from the perilous pestilence."*

#### **Say Two Hoots To The Snare**

Shall we take a look at the nuts and bolts of the trapping business? The trapper of a bird first entices the bird. He usually keeps a nut or worm which is a delicacy to the particular variety of bird he wants to trap. He keeps the nut or worm in such a way in such a place where the bird can easily see it. He usually sets his snare at a spot the bird normally goes to. When the bird comes to the spot in its routine mission to gather food, it spots the worm. It feels excited to have so easily spotted such a nice worm.

Immediately its mind sets a train of thoughts, starting from pecking this worm, to eating this delicacy and the resultant satisfaction. In the mind the whole process is complete in rapid succession. The bird will realise now that the act is yet to be executed. It will come down to the spot, move quickly than usual; giving a go by to the normal precautions it used to take before approaching its prey. However, coming close to the prey, it will hesitate a bit – probably it will reconsider that it has

not taken the usual precautionary drill. But the trapper has made sure that everything looks normal. Now, the bird plunges to peck the worm but, alas, the bird gets ensnared.

The bird gets shocked that it got caught. All the lifelong knowledge of the terrain, past experience in gathering food, training given by its mother bird and its own natural instincts have come to a naught. In a flash, the bird realises what has happened and how it is going to end in gory. The realisation is only too late.

Human beings are not much different from the bird we were reading about. The person setting up a snare for the bird, is doing it for his livelihood. But, the trapper of mankind, satan, is ensnaring people because he hates mankind. Satan's mission is to take people away from the love of God, stop the goodness and grace reaching mankind.

Satan has an enticing menu to trap people. Instead of nuts and worms used to snare birds, satan uses various variants of three things: 1. Pleasure. 2. Profit. 3. Power. Is satan interested in enticing you to make you commit a crime and ultimately land you in jail? Not at all. Satan's plan is to entice you to do something that will distance you from God. Satan's snare is to stop you going nearer to God. He does

not want you to fly higher and reach your destination, God's bosom.

How wise is it to know the trapping mechanism. What appears to be an occasional and innocuous act, could be a snare. What appears to be legally correct and morally ambivalent could be a snare. An act fully justified by its lofty goals, but the unfair means could be a snare. Little deeds could be a snare. Big thought could be a snare.

Computer users are familiar with the havoc caused by dreadful viruses. The rogue viruses are implanted in a 'normal looking' e-mail or a programme. The moment we download or use them, they cause havoc to the computer. This is the modern day snare. But the mechanism of trapping is almost the same. To avoid the virus problem, we have to install an antivirus package and be constantly alert before we download or use any programme.

Say Hallelujah! There is an antivirus package to prevent snares in our lives. Let our acts and thoughts pass through these questions:

- Will it make Jesus happy?
- Is it in line with whatever I know of the Bible?

- Is my conscience clear on this?
- Will I do this even if everybody knows about it?

Does the anti-snare package sound impractical in this busy modern world? Listen to what the experts say about wearing helmet while driving two wheelers: “If you want to protect your head and save your life, wear helmets constantly while driving without saying it is inconvenient to wear helmet”. The same is true in scanning our thoughts and acts. Let us spend time in examining our acts. It is worth the time spent. We have to expect the unexpected. That is called alertness.

The Bible is a guide for better living. It cautions us of many types of snares in life. They are down to earth. They hold their relevance over generations. An illustrative list of common snares is reproduced below:

- Judges 2:3 “.....their gods (idols) shall be a snare to you.” Our God is a Zealous God (Exodus 34:14). We should worship Our God only. When we give greater importance to anybody else or anything else in our life, it is our idol. This is a snare.



For some people money or fame or career could be the most important thing in life and such things become their idol. The more they pursue this 'idol', it becomes their idol worship.

- Proverbs 6:2 “You are snared by the words of your own mouth.” It could be a false promise made, a pure lie, a negative confession, a self defeating prophecy, a murmur.... the list is endless.
- Psalm 9:16 “...The wicked is snared in the work of his own hands.” Wicked deeds bounce back. They boomerang.
- Proverbs 29:25 “The fear of man brings a snare.” When we try to please a man out of fear or worldly pressure, it is a sure snare.

The more we read Bible, the wonderful book of wisdom, we can locate more potential snares and avoid them in our life.

### **Deadly Pestilence**

**S**atan sets up a secret way of damaging us by a trap. There can be an open source of damage. Usually a snare targets an individual. A pestilence generally affects large sections of society. But the

thing common to both the trap and the pestilence are the suddenness and unexpectedness with which they come. Pestilence may be caused by moral degradation of the society or by indifference to God's love and protection by individuals also. Both the snare and the pestilence are opportunities for us to make introspection.

### **Surely**

**A**h! Let us thank God that the verse very emphatically says that God will SURELY deliver us from the snare and the deadly pestilence. It is pure God's grace. The assurance of deliverance is a certainty to all those who cling on to His love and seek His mercy only.

### **Deliverer**

**J**esus, the very name of our blessed Lord, refers to His deliverance ministry. Matthew 1:21 says, "And she shall bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He shall save (deliver) His people from their sins...". When we realise this, we will also say along with the Psalmist that God will surely deliver us from the snare and the pestilence.

## Psalm 91:4

*"He shall cover you with His feathers, and under  
His wings you shall take refuge;  
His truth shall be your shield and buckler."*

### Discover the cover

Praise be to God the Almighty, the creator of the heaven and the earth, who delights in being compared to a bird to express the utmost protection He gives to those who trust in Him. Most often we use the word 'cover' when we talk of insurance cover which compensates us monetarily, at a price, for a loss that occurs. Here the Psalmist talks of a 'cover' that is divine. It just does not compensate us after the loss or damage has occurred but protects us from loss or damage with tender care like that of a bird that protects its siblings under the wings. A pleasant surprise! The divine cover is free to all those who trust in the Lord for His protection.

The Psalmist uses the example of a bird to make us understand the nature of protection we get from the Lord. Firstly, a hen has an uncommon love for her chicks. The moment the hen perceives danger for its chicks from the very sight of an eagle, it beckons its chicks in a unique way, takes all its chicks under its

wings and zealously guards the chicks from the dangers. It is said of a hen like this: A fire broke out in a farm and after the fire was over, the farmer was removing the debris. While he was doing that he gently rolled over a charred hen and to his surprise, he saw live chickens coming out of the dead mother hen's wings. What a sacrificial love is portrayed!

Secondly, the hen not only gives protection under its wings, it also gives warmth to its chicks when they are under its wings. Yes, God guides us and fills us with His wisdom while we are sheltering in his protective arms. The chicks are not only safe. They also feel safe. They not only feel safe but are made comfortable and warm. Oh! What a picture of safety and security!

### **Under His Wings or Under the Sun**

**T**he opening verses of Ecclesiastes would puzzle many of us. Solomon, who is attributed to have had great wisdom, says all efforts taken by man under the sun are only of vanity. The results are empty. In short, life is meaningless and fruitless.

Ecclesiastes 1:2,3: "Vanity of vanities, said the Preacher, vanity of vanities, all in vanity. What profit hath a man of all his labour which he taketh under the sun?" Notice the word 'all' in the above

verse. In effect, he says the whole life is in vain. Solomon sounds so dismal because he is looking at ‘under the sun’ i.e. in a human perspective or a life without God in it.

But the Psalmist in Psalm 91:4 is so ecstatic when he talks of life under His wings. In other words, a life that rests on God is a safe paradise. When we look at life from a worldly perspective (under the sun) life is gloomy, meaningless, not enjoyable, full of danger and empty. When we look at life from a perspective of a child of God (under His wings) life is a bright, fruitful, enjoyable and fully secured. Do not look under the sun. Look above the sun. Look at the creator of the sun. Look at the sovereign God who controls all the events under the sun. This verse can change your perception of life. There can be an inward revolution. Pessimism will give way to optimism, gloom will become joy, anxiety would change to hope; frustration would turn out to be satisfaction. You would look forward with eagerness to each new day as a gracious gift from God.

### **His Truth**

‘His Truth’ simply refers to the Word of God (John 17:17). Many scholars come with varying number of promises in the Bible. According to one such count, there are about 3000 promises in the Bible. But

when we read the Bible sincerely looking for a promise and guidance to get over a situation, we can come across innumerable promising verses which are not generally counted as a 'promise verse'. When we cling on to the promises of God, they are protective armour – shield and buckler. When we understand this, we will realise that we are a walking armoured vehicle. The enemy cannot touch us.

Man does not live by bread alone – this is a well known truth. Man cannot live by explanations. Man should live by faith in the promises of God – His truth - if he is to enjoy life. God is faithful. His promises are fulfilled. There is a promise for you. Have you discovered it?

### **The Promise I Received**

**W**ithin a few months of my going through the born again experience, about two decades ago, I received a 'Promise Verse' in the 1991 New Year service in our church.

The Promise: Genesis 28:15 ' I will not leave you until I have done what I have spoken to you.'

I could not really understand the promise. I had just come into the Lord. I fully trusted that the Lord would uphold me. But this verse spoke of 'not

leaving me' and I could also not remember of God having spoken anything in particular to me. Yet, with all faith, I personalised this promise.

The very next week I was down with a rare and a deadly disease. Blood was oozing out of me all over. There was bleeding in my tongue and mouth. Blood was oozing out from the flesh just beneath the skin and these spots were visible on the skin all over my body. My urine was full of blood. Just a day earlier I was hale and healthy, but these things happened before we could know what it was. The doctors diagnosed it as ITP (Idiopathic Thrombocytopenic Purpura).

Besides R.B.C. (Red Blood Cells), W.B.C (White Blood Cells) there are cells called 'Platelet cells' in the blood stream. For a normal human being the platelet level ranges from 1,00,000 to 3,00,000 counts. The function of platelet is to help in the clotting mechanism of the blood. When the platelet level drops suddenly, as it happened in my case, blood starts oozing through the capillary vessels all over the body. The cause of the disease is still a mystery to the medical world. That is why the name of the disease starts with the word 'Idiopathic'.

At the start of the disease, my platelet count dropped to 40,000. At one point, blood started oozing from

my eyes also. There was no known source of cure for the disease. I was just put on steroids.

At this low point in my life, when everybody around me was distressed, it struck me that God knew what was going to happen to me and had already given me a Promise through the Promise Verse in the New Year service. My spirit soared. My wife and I rejoiced that the Promise verse said that God would not forsake us. We clung to this verse. It was the hope in the midst of very adverse medical opinions. While I was on the sick bed, a missionary couple prophesied that God is calling me to do His service. Now, when the other part of the promise 'what I have spoken to you' also became clear to us, our mind also became clear.

I was taken to CMC Hospital, Vellore, one of the best hospitals in the country. They confirmed the diagnosis and confirmed the medication. But my disease was getting very worse. My Platelet level dropped to 10,000. At this stage, they decided to surgically remove my spleen for it could have got wrong signals from the brain to remove live platelet cells instead of removing dead cells. But all these bad news did not affect me and my wife. We believed in the Promise Verse. We knew God would deliver us. We did not know when and how but we



knew that I would be cured. I was into the fourth week of the disease.

One very early morning, at about 4 a.m., when I used to get up for prayer, I was just lying on the cot, with my eyes open in my private hospital ward. At that moment, I saw a missionary enter my room and he asked me “Suresh, what do you want?” I said “I want anointing of the Holy Spirit”. Immediately a bright light passed through my body from head to toe. The whole body illuminated like a burning coal. It lasted for a few seconds and the light passed away. My whole body was vibrating. It was a very happy experience. After a few minutes, I woke up my wife and shared with her my experience. She told me:”You have been praying for two things while at this hospital – one, for anointing of the Holy Spirit and two, for healing from the dreadful disease. God has answered both your prayers. He has passed through your body. You have been anointed by light when He passed through your body; your body is also healed.” We believed. We prayed and thanked God.

At about 8 a.m. that morning, my wife went out for buying some food. The lab technicians came and were drawing the final blood sample before the operation fixed for the next day. At this point, my wife entered the room. She said “This blood sample

would prove to us that God has healed you.” The early morning experience (4 a.m.) and the subsequent (8 a.m.) episode were occupying our minds throughout the day. That late evening, the Junior doctor came and announced: “Suresh, for the first time, your platelet count has increased suddenly. The Chief doctor has postponed the scheduled operation.” I have no words to express the intensity of joy we experienced on hearing these words. It was one thing that I was healed but the greatest thing was that God had performed a miracle in my life.

The next morning the Chief doctor expressed his great surprise at the sudden improvement in my platelet level. After a week, I got discharged from the hospital without any operation. After 3 months, the doctor told that I am absolutely alright and I do not require any subsequent check up.

My wife wrote a book describing the whole episode and the miraculous healing in detail. The book named ‘Healed by His Stripes’ is published repeatedly in English and Tamil. We are going around the world testifying the miracle God has done for us. Every word of the Promise I received in 1991 is being fulfilled wholly.

## Rhema

Whenever we read the Bible with prayer seeking God's guidance, certain verses single out themselves and speak to us. We get a sure feeling that they are written just for us. The Holy Spirit prompts us that we should claim these verses. In Greek, such a word is called 'RHEMA'. God gives a verse for a specific person in a specific circumstance. His word works and manifests according to these verses. His words are unfailing.

Isaiah 55:10,11 "For as the rain comes down, and the snow from heaven, and do not return there, but water the earth and make it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; it shall not return to Me void, but it shall accomplish what I please and it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it".

All the words of God that are written in the Bible are called 'Logos' in Greek language. There are many promises in them. When our heart is filled with Logos, and we wait upon the Lord for a specific situation, God gives us a specific verse which is called RHEMA.

*Have you got your RHEMA!*

## Psalm 91:5

*"You shall not be afraid of the terror by night,  
nor of the arrow that flies by day."*

### Conquer Your Fears

The Bible says that the righteous are bold as a lion (Proverbs. 28:1). If you are washed by the blood of Jesus, fear fears you. Your source of protection is the Almighty God. The divine protection you get is 24 X 7 X 365, round the clock and all the time. Many of us know that fear is the opposite of faith. There is one more terse way of looking at fear. Fear is not simply lack of faith in God but belief in the power of satan. When the meaning of this last sentence dawns on you, certainly you will hate fear.

Fear is a curse. It is the opposite of a blessing given by God. The word 'afraid' is mentioned in the Bible for the first time in Genesis 3:10. "And he (Adam) said, I heard Thy (God's) voice in the garden and I was afraid because I was naked and I hid myself."

This is the first instance of man being afraid. Now Adam was afraid of God with whom he had a very regular and loving relationship until he committed a sin. That is why fear is the first curse man faces when he commits sin and is removed from the

relationship with God. Being afraid has since then become a part of human nature. God is aware of this. Even great men of God were and are taken over by fear. All of us in our natural state fear fear.

There are innumerable sources and types of fear. But God is the only one source who will make us conquer fear. God operates through the following:

**Presence of God:** Isaiah 43:1,2 “But now, thus says the Lord, who created you, O Jacob, And He who formed you, O Israel: Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by your name; you are mine.

When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; And through the rivers, they shall not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned, nor shall the flame scorch you.”

God created us. Our Lord redeemed us. He is the one who called us. Jesus owns us as his own. It is this God who promises us His presence that will enable us to overcome all sorts of obstacles in our walk through life. ‘Fear not’ is a promise. Seek His presence to enjoy the promise.

**Holy Spirit:** II Timothy 1:7: “For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.”

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of courage. Where the Holy Spirit is, there is no fear. We are not left to defend ourselves against the sources of fear with our own capabilities and resources. God has given us the Holy Spirit who would drive away fear. The Bible says that the Holy Spirit raises the banner of victory against the inimical forces that come fiercely and forcefully against us. (Isaiah 59:19)

**Word of God:** Our wonderful God has given us the Holy Bible where God and God's messengers have repeatedly said "Fear not." Go through these verses, find out under what circumstance God has said and how people like us overcame fear. Remember, that every word of God is a living force. It will enable you to conquer fear. Some of the verses are here:

Luke 8:50 "Do not be afraid, only believe..."

Isaiah 35:4 "...Be strong, do not fear!"

Isaiah 54:14 "In righteousness you shall be established; you shall be far from oppression, for you shall not fear; And from terror, for it shall not come near you."

Hebrews 13:6. "The Lord is my helper, I will not fear, what can man do to me?"

Psalm 112:7. “He will not fear evil tidings. His heart is steadfast, trusting in the Lord.”

Psalm 46:1, 2. “...God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of sea.”

Genesis 15:1. “....Fear not, Abram: I am your shield, your exceedingly great reward.”

Psalm 27:1-3. “The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is my strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?”

Shun fear. Fear over the past events in life is like living in your own tomb. Fear of the future is a waste of the present. Fearing the present is leading a dead life. Death is inevitable but leading a dead life is certainly avoidable. Cling on to the truths of the Cross. “He died for me that I may live”. “He defeated satan on the cross that I shall be victorious” and “He rose from the dead that I live my life fully” -- keep on meditating these truths. Focus on Jesus. Fear will die.

### **Say Goodnight to Terror by Night**

**D**ou shall not be afraid of the terror by night. For many of us darkness brings a sense of fear;

sometimes for imaginary reasons, sometimes for real reasons and sometimes for a blend of imaginary and real reasons. If you feel that what is said here is true in your case, relax, for, you are in good company. In John 6:15-21 there is a very interesting episode where fear engulfs the disciples.

Just before this episode the disciples were with Jesus when He fed more than 5000 people out of a basket with 5 loaves of bread and 2 small fish. By the wonderful sign, the disciples were overwhelmed by the sufficiency of Jesus under any circumstance. People were convinced that He was the long awaited Saviour, the prophet to redeem the people from the hassles of life.

Soon after this, the disciples got into a boat and were travelling towards Capernaum. The Bible pictures the situation as: ‘And it was already dark, and Jesus had not come to them. Then the sea arose because a great wind was blowing’. Fear overtook the disciples. They were terrorised by the darkness and the windy sea. They knew the sea like the palm of their hand as they have frequently travelled in it. They also knew that such a disturbed sea was quite common there. They had a taste of the sufficiency of Jesus a little while before starting the journey. Yet the darkness of the night and the choppy sea terrorised the disciples.



Their fear was so intense that they could not even recognise their most familiar Jesus who was walking on the sea and approaching them. Realising their panic, Jesus calmed them saying – ‘It is Me’. Then the disciples willingly received Jesus into the boat and everything became alright and they reached their destination.

At high noon, or even when you are surrounded by light from fluorescent lamps in night, a darkness may engulf you mentally, making your moments nightmarish. You may develop a fear of the unknown. You feel that something untoward is going to happen. You feel very insecure and vulnerable. You feel that your loved ones are going to drift away. You perceive that an unknown force is creating disharmony among your family members. You fear the impending damage to your wealth and possessions. You feel insecure about your job. You lose hope about your health. Relationships become a suspect. Like the disciples in a state of terror, you may not grab even the familiar sources of strength, protection, love, comfort and care that come in your way at a moment of despair in your life. You are too afraid and traumatised to make use of the help.

Jesus knows your helplessness. Twenty centuries earlier he hailed the fear stricken disciples and said “It is Me”. In the darkness, the disciples could not

see Jesus. But Jesus could see them. God's omnipotence is not hindered by darkness. Today, the same Jesus, who can sympathise with your fears and tensions, extends his loving arm and says 'It is Me'. He is offering help. Where He is, there is no darkness and fear. Willingly accept His offer to come into your life, as the disciples willingly received Him into the boat. When Jesus got into the boat, immediately everything became alright and they reached their destination. Praise the Lord. Yes, His presence in your life will drive away the darkness that engulfs you. You are rid of fears, real as well as imaginary. Attaining the goals and reaching the destination in your life will be smooth and pleasurable.

A reading of the relevant Bible passage would talk to our heart. John 6:16-21:

“And when evening came, His disciples went down to the sea, got into the boat, and went over the sea toward Capernaum. And it was now dark, and Jesus had not come to them. Then the sea arose because a great wind was blowing. So when they had rowed about three or four miles, they saw Jesus walking on the sea and drawing near the boat; and they were afraid. But He said to them, “It is I: do not be afraid.” Then they willingly received Him into the

boat, and immediately the boat was at the land where they were going.”

Say a prayer to Jesus: “Jesus, I am afraid of so many things in life. I feel very insecure. Every nerve in me gets tensed up. Fear has drained away my energy and robbed me of reason and thinking. I have lost hope. I feel very helpless. But as I read the above passage from the Bible, I can feel a surge of hope in me. In my hour of darkness and hopelessness, your stretched forth hand is most assuring. Your voice is a clarion call of divine help. I willingly accept you to come into my life. The Bible says that you are the light of the world and where you are there is no darkness. Come into my life and cast away the darkness in me and around me. I would like you to sail along with me in my life journey.”

This sincere prayer will deliver you from the power of darkness and the terror by night. Jesus will liberate you from the source of your fear. As you pray, you can feel the darkness, chillness, heaviness and gloom being lifted up.

Pray. Continue to pray until your spirit starts soaring up and up. You are a child of light. In the first chapter of Genesis we read that in the beginning there was darkness and chaos. As the Spirit of God was hovering, God said “Let there be light and there

was light.” Genesis 1:3. The same God is commanding light to set in your life. Believe and rejoice.

### **Remember, You are Arrow Proof – 24 x 7**

**D**ou shall not be afraid of the arrow that flies by day.

Remember these verses that proclaim that you are protected round the clock – 24 hours a day, 365 days a year and forever. The following verses will inspire you:

Psalms 121:6 “The sun shall not strike you by day, nor the moon by night.”

Exodus 13:21 “And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, so as to go by day and night.”

Goliath had physical stature. To add to this, Goliath clad himself with a helmet of brass on his head, a coat of *mail* which was made of brass plates laid over one another on his body, brass boots to cover his legs and other brass embellishments to protect his neck and shoulders. He had a massive spear and a solid shield. He had everything except God on his side. Our lad, David, stood before Goliath as the

personification of simple, pure and wholesome faith and had God on his side. Ultimately, what mattered was God being on the side of David. Even before Goliath could realise what was happening, the stone that David slung hit Goliath on his forehead and he dropped dead, in the twinkling of an eye. The brass helmet and all the other weapons of Goliath were of no avail.

Psalm 127:1 says that unless the Lord guards the city, the watchman stays awake in vain. How true! Unless God is on our side, nothing can really protect us. On the other hand, if God is on your side, no harm can touch you. Isaiah 54:17 says “No weapon formed against you shall prosper.” Underline the words ‘no weapon’ – whatsoever. Open your Bible to Isaiah 54:17, keep your right hand on it, read it aloud, realise the significance of the verse, rebuke every source of your fear, one by one, on the strength of this verse and you would see the overbearing fear fall before you dead, like Goliath, in the twinkling of an eye. The arrow that flies by the day cannot prosper against you, because God is on your side.

## Psalm 91:6

*“Nor of the pestilence that walks in darkness,  
Nor of the destruction that lays waste at noonday.”*

### **A Revealing Light on the Pestilence in Darkness.**

What a comfort to know that Bible says in Psalms 121:4 “Behold, He who keeps Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.” At night, sleep peacefully knowing full well that your God is awake to protect you. God keeps away the forces of death, destruction and damage even when you are unaware of the designs of their devastating forces. Even when you do not suspect any evil design in the other person with whom you are dealing with very innocently and genuinely, the omniscient God protects you.

Jesus was slain for us on the cross and his blood has enabled us to escape the wrath of our sinful nature deserves. The blood of Jesus protects us against devil. Every night when you go to sleep remember Psalm 91:6. You would feel assured to read: Psalm 4:8. “I will both lie down in peace, and sleep; For you alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety.”

Proverbs 3:24 “When you lie down, you shall not be afraid; yes, you shall lie down and your sleep shall be sweet.”

Psalm 139:11 “...Even the night shall be light about me.”

It is like being in an area where there is an electric power failure in the night. The entire neighbourhood gets dark. In other words, darkness is all around you. But when you have power generator in your home, there is light around you all over. Yes, the presence of God in the midst of problems and dangers is like making even our nights fully illuminated.

The child of God lies down in peace and sleeps quickly for he trusts that his body, soul and spirit are in the hands of God. Bad dreams will not torment you in the night. Fear psychosis will not take over you in the day time. No threat whether seen or unseen, whether anticipated or unanticipated can catch God unawares. God is able.

### **Danger in Day Light**

**T**he Psalmist shares with us that there is danger in broad day light also. When all our senses are wide open and we are in command of all our resources, the enemy tries to attack us. The sources of such

dangers could be many but the solution for all of them is one - God.

There may be many instances where we have to use God given wisdom as the tool to destroy these day light dangers. For example, satan may use criticism as a weapon to beat you. Do not get perturbed. Seek God to make Him use this as a tool to build you. Look beyond the critic. Look at Christ. Remember, judgment belongs to God only.

Satan can use gossip to rob you of your peace. It is said that ‘Great minds talk about ideas, mediocre minds talk about things, and small minds talk about others.’ The fact is you cannot stop others from gossiping. The more potent fact is that God would bring everything to light at the right time. Shut your ears to gossip. Focus on God and not on gossip. Remember what the Bible says: He who sows will reap what he sows.

Psalm 64:3, 4 says: “who sharpen their tongue like a sword, and bend their bows to shoot their arrows – bitter words, that they may shoot in secret at the blameless; suddenly they shoot at him and do not fear.” The same Psalm continues to say what happens at the end in Psalm 64:7, 8 as : “But God shall shoot at them with an arrow; suddenly they shall be wounded. So He will make them stumble



over their own tongue.” Do not fret and fume. Pour your heart to the Lord. His counsel will prevail. Be still and know that He is God.

## Psalm 91:7

*"A thousand may fall at your side,  
and ten thousand at your right hand;  
But it shall not come near you."*

### God is above the Number Game

Numbers evoke a sense of strength, fear, confidence, nervousness on the human mind. When we are about to sit for an examination, we may feel nervous when we read that only 20% of the candidates have passed in a particular examination during the last 3 years. You feel shattered when the doctor says that there is only 50% chance of survival for your dear one.

Psalm 91:7 says: "but it will not come near you." The last part of the verse is so emphatic and assuring. The problem won't even come near you. Because you are exempted from numerical logic. Because you are unique. Because you are not ordinary. Because you are covered by the blood of Jesus. General Statistics do not mean anything to God. Medical science, economic cycle, principles of insurance, astrology and every source of worldly knowledge and resource do not mean anything to God. He is omnipotent. He controls and transcends

natural laws, human minds, political forces, political systems, world governments and the judiciary, et al.

Jesus gave a splendid illustration to drive home this point. He said it in a way everyone understands it. Jesus pointed out to those small insignificant sparrows that were flying around and said: “Are not two sparrows sold for a copper coin? Not one of them will fall on the ground without your Father’s will.” (Matthew 10:29) Sparrows were sold as a very cheap commodity. Two sparrows just cost one coin. In the Gospel according to Luke, we read that if one bought four sparrows at this rate, probably one sparrow was given as free. It is just like our present day discount sales of ‘buy 4 and take 5.’ While those sparrows were so cheap and insignificant, none of them will fall down unless it is with the knowledge of God. If the well being of the sparrows were in the hands of God, how certain every child of God can be regarding his life. Nothing will happen in your life without God’s will. God is not interested in the size of the problem or the level of the danger you are into. He is not interested in statistics. He is not interested in the number of people who are affected or fall down on your left side, or right side or front side or back side. He is interested in you only. You are special to Him. A sparrow has neither a soul nor a promise of salvation, yet its life is governed by

God. Therefore rejoice that your soul is precious to God and everything in your life will happen as He alone lets it happen.

The next verse is much more inspiring. Jesus said “But even the hairs of your head are all numbered.” (Matthew 10:30). Shout a Hallelujah! Jesus emphatically says that not only your overall welfare is taken care of by God, but every minute detail of you and your life is controlled by God. You are not controlled by statistics. Your life is not ruled by chance. How many of us know or cared to know the number of hair on our head? But, Jesus told clearly that every hair on your head is numbered. In simple words, we think that when we comb our head some hairs fall and no one has control over it. No, the number of hairs that fall when you comb are numbered in heaven. If such a seemingly insignificant occurrence in your life is controlled by heaven, how minutely every event in our life is measured, monitored, protected and taken care of by our heavenly Father. The moment this truth seeps into us, all anxieties about life will seep out of us.

When I was down with the bleeding disease, the doctors told me that it is a rare disease and its occurrence is one in a million. As my disease was getting worse, the doctors said I should undergo a surgery for removal of my spleen and that the

percentage of success was 50% only. (What does the other 50% mean?—death). But God healed me miraculously without any need for any operation. Even after I received a miraculous healing, while being discharged from the hospital, the doctor said that in 40% of the cases there will be relapse of the problem. These words did not sink into us because I was not healed by the hospital but by God Himself. The divine cure is permanent. We said – The Egyptians (disease) whom you see today, you shall see no more forever. (Exodus 14:13)

Numbers, statistics, medical figures etc do not affect us. We change world records. The strength of the enemy and the numbers in your medical charts do not mean anything to God when He moves to save us.

Focus on giants (or numbers), you stumble. Focus on God, your giant (or numbers) stumble. Jesus asked a question to his disciples. “Do you not yet understand, or remember the five loaves of the five thousand and how many baskets you took up? Nor the seven loaves of the four thousand and how many large baskets you took up?” (Matthew 16:9, 10). God is asking the same question to us today to make us realise that numbers mean nothing to Him when He wants to do what He decides to do. The size or number that stand against you mean nothing to God.

Let not your ambition, plan and life be restricted by your past or what you now have in hand or your age.

God sent several plagues on Egypt to make Pharaoh let go the people of Israel to their promised land. Let us look at a part of the Bible verse relating to one of the plagues.

Exodus 9:24-26 “So there was hail, and fire mingled with the hail, so very heavy that there was none like it in all the land of Egypt since it became a nation. And the HAIL STRUCK THROUGHOUT THE WHOLE LAND OF EGYPT, all that was in the field, both man and beast; and the hail struck every plant of the field and broke every tree of the field. Only IN THE LAND OF GOSHEN, WHERE THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL WERE, THERE WAS NO HAIL.”

Praise the Lord! There was destruction all over Egypt. But the destruction did not even come near Goshen (a part of Egypt) where the children of Israel were staying. Psalm 91:7 shall come true in your life.

## Psalm 91:8

*“Only with your eyes shall you look and see the reward of the wicked.”*

### **Reward for the Wicked?**

The very mention of a reward for the wicked may irritate us. Many a times in our day to day life, we come across wicked people seemingly prosper. Some of us might wonder where God’s wisdom is. Some of us may feel agitated by such sights. Here, the Psalmist simply echoes the truth in the Bible: “Judgment belongs to God.” (Deuteronomy 32:35). God has His own way and time for handling wicked people. Let us remember that He is a sovereign God. As much as He has His way of blessing people, His punishments are also unique. Let us not waste our precious life wishing, praying and watching punishments befall who do wicked things. Let us look at our Lord who protects us from those wicked ones and the way God blesses us. Just keep counting your blessings.

Psalm 37:34 exhorts us: “Wait on the Lord and keep His way. And He will exalt you to inherit the land. When the wicked are cut off, you will see it.”

Let us keep His ways. Let us continue to enjoy our life journey. Let us not halt and wait to see the wicked suffer. It is not worth wasting our time. God’s judgment never fails. Psalm 68:2, 3 say “...as wax melteth before fire the wicked people perish at the presence of God. The righteous rejoice before God - exceedingly rejoice.”

When God liberated Israelites from the slavery in Egypt and led them through the wilderness, the Israelites could see either a pillar of cloud in the daytime or a pillar of light in the night time. But when the Egyptians started chasing the Israelites, they could see light on the Israelites side to lead them as well as cloud on the side of the chasing Egyptians to retard their chase. Up to this point of time, the cloud was to comfort and protect the Israelites from the fury of the sun but today they see the cloud to confound and destroy the Egyptians.

When the Egyptian army pursued the Israelites, it appeared that the children of God had no way to go. But God miraculously parted the Red sea to enable the Israelites pass through the sea. At this point Moses comforted the Israelites with God’s words and said: “Do not be afraid. Stand still and see the



salvation of the Lord, which He will accomplish for you today. For the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall see again no more forever. The Lord will fight for you, and you shall hold your peace” (Exodus 14:13, 14). Moses and the children of God accepted the promise of God and went forward and did not look backward. At the end of the day, the Egyptian army was routed and vanquished. In this case, the sovereign Lord wanted Israelites to see the dead Egyptians. The Bible records: “So the Lord saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore”(Exodus 14:30). To make you see or not see your routed enemy and the timing of it are the sovereign decisions of the Lord. But your eyes of faith can always see your enemy routed.

You may not know when God will let you see the wicked ones get their due share for the wicked acts. It could be on earth or in heaven, but you will see it. Because Psalm 91:8 says so: ‘The wicked will certainly reap what they have sown’ (Colossians 3:25).

Paul says in Romans 12:17 “Repay no one evil for evil.” Let us not waste our time or energy to ever think of retorting bad people with bad things. Every nanosecond we spend on this is a sheer waste of heavenly bliss we enjoy every nanosecond.

## Psalm 91:9

*"Because you have made the Lord,  
who is my refuge, even the Most High,  
your habitation (home)."*

### At Home in God

God has a reason to protect you because you have come to Him. You are at home with God. When you enjoy God as your home, your life is comfortable, secure, safe, quiet, pleasant and wonderful. Then why should we ever think of any other home? Traditionally people speak of going 'home' (to God) when we die. Bible says very clearly that our God is the God of the living. When we live, we live with God as our home, a fortified home.

How are we at home? We are ourselves. In the outside world, people live a life and think what others have to say about that. But when we live in God, we think only about what God thinks about our actions and thoughts. This is communion with God.

Even the king of a mighty nation is a 'father' at home to his children. The king is not restrained by the worldly formalities of kingship when at home. Yes, the King of kings, can be adored by we children without formalities. We can freely praise and

worship Him. We can freely converse with God. It is a heart to heart talk. It is quality time with God, all the time to those who are at home with God.

When we live in Christ, our life is transformed. In the exemplary episode recorded in the 19<sup>th</sup> chapter of Luke, when Zacchaeus accepted Jesus, he did not become a mere Christian but a totally transformed Christian. The first profound change in him is that he was not haunted by his dreadful past. The moment he accepted Christ in his life and repented for his past by his words and deeds, he received a guilt-free heart. Instead of being bogged down by a heavy heart and pulled back by his past sins, he looked forward to a new life in Christ. When the people around him were pointing out the sinner in him, oblivious of what they say, he was mending his life to be acceptable in the eyes of Jesus. He was going the extra mile to make sure that there is an about- turn in his life. In the recording in the Book of Luke there is no mention where his wife was at that point of time. But we can be sure when Mrs. Zacchaeus came home, she would have met a totally different person at home. Jesus was visibly moved by the quick transformation in Zacchaeus that He announced “Today salvation has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham” (Luke 19:9). Yes, when we live in Christ, the commune we enjoy,

would be reflected in our face, heart, thoughts, words and deeds. We become a brand new entity. Apostle Paul confirms this in II Corinthians 5:17; “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation...”

Make the Most High your home. Everyday pray for the personal salvation of every member of your home. Throughout his life time, Zacchaeus would have said “Jesus came to Jericho and made me a new person. My life is a heaven on earth and I am heaven bound”, whereas everybody else in the town of Jericho would have just said “Jesus passed through Jericho just before He died on the Cross.” The crowd remained untouched. The difference is vital and eternal. It would be a great feeling to be assured that every member of your family has accepted Christ as the personal saviour.

## Psalm 91:10

*"No evil shall befall you,  
nor shall any plague come near your dwelling."*

### **No Evil shall Befall You**

What a simple statement. Oh! What a potent statement. It is totally assertive and comprehensive. Lord, let my heart whole heartedly personalise this promise.

There is evil in the world. Everybody accepts this. Every believer also accepts this. But a worldly man becomes a fatalist and leads a scared life. But a child of God trusts the Lord to deliver him from the evil and make a good thing come out of the evil thing. The only way for this transformation of the evil thing to a good thing is TRUST in God.

Satan might want to tear you down. But God uses the weapon or incident to build you. The life of Joseph is a great example. Joseph's own brothers did evil things to him. Likewise, strangers wronged him although Joseph never hurt anyone. Joseph had every reason to be frustrated in life. Hatred could have ruled his heart. He could have surrendered to the evil incidents that came one after the other. Yet,

Joseph stood firm in the Lord. He trusted God. At the end of all trials, Joseph very sincerely tells his brothers: “You meant it for evil, but God meant it for good.” Genesis 50:20.

Joseph’s brothers schemed against him and their evil deeds made Joseph to be brought to Egypt. But when all things fell in proper place according to our God’s plan, Joseph tells his brothers: “And God sent me before you to preserve for you a posterity in earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance. And now you did not send me here, but God. And He has made me a father to Pharaoh, and a lord of all his house, and a ruler over all the land of Egypt.” (Genesis 45:7,8). Nobody can hijack God’s purposes. God will make all things work for the good to those who love Him and are called according to His purpose. We need that mindset when we come across trials. What happens to us through evil things is one thing. But how we respond to these things make our life. Joseph responded positively because he believed that God is greater than the evil. The Bible says that Joseph was successful. His right mindset was the secret of his success. God was at the centre of Joseph’s mindset.

It appeared that Joseph’s life was built brick by brick by adverse events one after the other. But when the whole edifice came up, it was a wonderful

monument for history to adore it as a great role model.

### **Never Knocked Out**

**Y**ou may encounter problems, barriers, diseases and such things but NONE of them will overcome you because 91:10 says:”No evil shall befall you.” I was knocked down by a deadly rare blood disease that appeared to have no medical cure. While I was on the sick bed I used to talk to the disease and say “You have knocked me down with a blood disease that occurs one in a million (people) but with God on my side, I will bounce back to robust health and will go and tell 1 crore (10 million) people that my God is big enough to cure me. Even one drop of the blood of Jesus will cure me of the rarest among diseases.” I used to quote this verse to back up my statement: Micah 7:8 “Do not rejoice over me, my enemy; when I fall, I will arise.” I was knocked down but not knocked out. I have bounced back as a living testimonial, like the Lazarus of this era, to convincingly tell those who are knocked down to arise for His mercies are great.

Please read the following verse that gave me a great source of encouragement in my sick bed. I Corinthians 10:13 “No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is

faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.”

Apostle Paul shares the same experience in II Corinthians 4:8, 9: “We are hard pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed.”

At the end of the problem, you are the one who would rejoice. Proverbs 24:16 says: “For a righteous man may fall seven times and rise again.” Cheer up!

### **Your Home, a Paradise on Earth**

The second part of psalm 91:10 says “...nor shall any plague come near your dwelling.” The plague here in a sense is understood as a divine displeasure or God’s punishment. As a child of God, God’s wrath never even comes near your home. The Bible says that in the home of the righteous, the triumphant sound of salvation will be heard. (Psalm 118:15)

### **Sickness, away from our home**

**T**he centre of the Bible is Jesus Christ and the centre of the life of Jesus Christ on this earth is the



Cross. On the Cross, He defeated sin and satan and won us salvation. Jesus bore our sickness on the cross so that one shall be healed. Sickness is one of the important tools used by satan to discourage us and distract us from getting closer to God. Let us know that Jesus has already won the battle. Good health is our right. Sickness does not belong to us. When we know and realise this truth, satan will withdraw his tool of sickness away from us. Let us have a look at the TRUTH.

**Matthew 8:17** “That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah, saying; He Himself took our infirmities and bore our sickness.”

**I Peter 2:24** “who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness – by whose stripes you were healed.”

**Exodus 15:26** “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 23:25** “.... He will bless your bread and water. And I will take sickness away from your midst.”

**Psalms 103:2, 3** “Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits; who forgives all your iniquities, who heals all your diseases.”

**Deuteronomy 7:15** “And the Lord will take away from you all sickness.”

**Malachi 4:2** “But to you who fear My name the Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in His wings.”

**Isaiah 53:5** “By His stripes we are healed.”

**John 11:4** “This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it.”

**Psalms 41:3** “The Lord will strengthen him in his bed of illness; You will sustain him on his sick bed.”

God’s words are living words. They accomplish what God says. Believe and receive healing. Drive sickness out of your home.

## **Psalm 91:11, 12**

**"***For He shall give His angels charge over you,  
to keep you in all your ways.  
They shall bear you up in their hands,  
lest you dash your foot against a stone."*

### **Life, a Guided Tour**

**O**ur life is a journey. We are pilgrims travelling to the promised destination. God's presence is the guide map and His promises are the landmarks. The secret of a happy life is not only to reach the destination but to enjoy the journey. All along the way we must walk the walk God likes. We must walk the path God shows. This verse is a promise in this direction. When we go about doing things or living the way that is within God's plan, we are fully guided, served and protected. Life becomes as pleasant as a guided tour fully planned, protected and provided for. Many seem to live for the tomorrow when they reach the destination. Kindly remember that God promises you an enjoyable and a safe journey. Live your today also. See the beautiful things God has created on your way. God wants you to enjoy them. You will admire and adore God for all His works on His ways.

You have a wonderful destination to reach. You are absolutely sure that it is a God appointed destination. But you are aware that there are barriers on the way. Right now you are not equipped to overcome these barriers. You become very introspective as you are planning your journey. This is the state of the mind of Joshua in the first chapter of the Book of Joshua.

God has chosen Joshua to lead Israelites into the Promised land. Joshua was laden with a very heavy luggage -- a very difficult people to be led. Along the way, there were many battles to be fought. God reads Joshua's anxious mind and assures Joshua that He would be with Joshua as He was with Moses when he led the people of Israel out of slavery. God encourages Joshua thrice to be bold and courageous. God reveals to Joshua the key to success all along the way to the Promised Land in the following verses:

Joshua 1:7, 8: "Only be strong and very courageous so that you may be careful to do according to all the law which My servant Moses commanded you. Do not turn from it to the right or to the left, so that you may act wisely wherever you go. This book of law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it by day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it. For

then you shall make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.”

Let us look at the ingredients that make our way prosperous. Do not turn to the left or right. Just follow God. Do not make your own interpretations of God’s words and directions. Do not try to find short cuts to reach the God appointed destination. When Jesus was about to start His earthly ministry and had just ended His 40 day prayer and fasting in the wilderness, satan appeared to Jesus and tempted Him to turn to the left and right from God’s chosen path. The conversation between Jesus and the Satan is a great learning point for us.

Luke 4:9-12. “And he (satan) brought Him to Jerusalem and set Him on the pinnacle of the temple and said to Him, ‘If you are the Son of God, cast yourself down from here. For it is written, “He shall give His angels charge over you, to keep you; and in their hands they shall bear you up, lest at any time you dash your foot against a stone.”’

The famous Psalm 91:11 verse meant to guide every child of God, was infamously used by satan to make Jesus turn to the left and right of God’s chosen path. But in Luke 4:12, we read that: ‘And Jesus answering said to him (satan), it has been said, “you shall not tempt the Lord your God.”’ The reply of

Jesus tells us clearly that we are not to misinterpret God's words and instruction to suit and justify our self will and convenience.

Between the two wrappers of the Bible, we have everything we need to walk the journey of life. It is a guide to God given way of life. God's thoughts and wisdom are in it. The principles of life that are written there are world proof, culture proof, time proof and need proof. So, God tells Joshua to

- fill his mouth with God's word - keep saying the promises of God.
- fill his mind with God's word - keep meditating God's words.
- fill his day and night with it –at all time.
- fill his deeds with it – his actions are to be based on His words.

When Joshua was to obey this command, he would be prosperous in his way. God did not instruct Joshua how to handle the SWORD but how to use His WORD. Yes, Joshua followed these instructions and his life journey is one of the most illustrious in the Bible. Shall we follow this step by step instruction to a prosperous way. Life is a celebration. Let us celebrate in His way.

God has a wonderful destiny for every child of God. Say, Amen. As we walk along the way, God shows us great opportunities to be a valuable vessel for God. He would show you the way and clearly speak to you to go that way. It may be a call for His ministry. It can be to accept a higher responsibility in your secular job. It may be to move you from one city to another. It may be to build more churches. It may be to take up a new profession. It may have something to do with your family members, church members and so on. Sometimes we may hesitate or decline to go the way God calls us to. We may be afraid of stepping out of our comfort zone or the familiar way of life. The promise in this verse Psalm 91:11 would encourage us to take the way God shows for God gives command to His angels to protect us in our way. God's angels are commanded to protect us. In other words, God's resources are there to take care of our journey.

Boldly step out. Peter boldly stepped out of the boat to walk on water, when Jesus asked him to do so. Once he stepped out, the mighty hand of Jesus was there to protect Peter on his watery way. You are destined to play a bigger role. Let us not restrict the growth in our life. Let us not fear the unknown. When we do not accept God's invitation, we miss opportunities.

Conquer for Christ. The promises God gave to the children of Israel to take over the Promised Land are promises for you today. Let us look at them:

- “Behold, I send an Angel before you to keep you in the way and to bring you into the place which I have prepared.” (Exodus 23:20)
- “I will send My fear before you. I will cause confusion among all the people to whom you come, and will make all your enemies turn their backs to you.” (Exodus 23:27)
- “I will send hornets before you, which shall drive out the Hivite, the Canannite, and the Hittite before you.” (Exodus 23:28)

Do we need a better example than the way walked by Abraham? The Bible says in Genesis 12:1-3: “And the Lord said to Abram: get out of your country, and from your kindred and from your father’s home into a land that I will show you. And I will make you a great nation. And I will bless you and make your name great. And you shall be a blessing. And I will bless those that bless you and curse the one who curses you. And in you all the families of the earth be blessed.”

Oh! What a call from God! Oh! What an obedience on the part of Abram to accept the call! Abram let go



of the known land and people and got hold of the known God, the God who called him. In all the ways of Abraham, God and His resources protected Abraham from all dangers. All stumbling blocks on the way were overcome by the power of God. Abraham's life was a blessing. He was made the channel of blessings to every child of God.

Fear of the unknown danger on the way is a serious problem. It causes stagnation in our life. God wants you to increase and expand. Let us get hold of the promises of God and get out of the danger of leading a small life. Go forward. That is the way forward. The promise in Isaiah 43:18, 19 encourages every child of God as follows: "Do not remember the former things, nor consider the things of old. Behold, I will do a new thing, now it shall spring forth; Shall you not know it? I will even make a road in the wilderness and rivers in the desert." Before you became a child of God, you were tied down by the fear of an uncertain future. But now you have God's resources at your command. God will make a way where there is no way. To meet your needs on your (new) way, God will create rivers of (new) resources to meet all your needs.

## **Psalm 91:13**

*“You shall tread on the lion and the cobra;  
the young lion and the serpent  
you shall trample under your foot.”*

### **Born to Rule**

You are a world changer. The world is afraid of the lion and the snake. The lion is reputed for its ferocity and its overt power. The snake is notorious for its cunningness and hidden venom. But as a child of God you have the reputation as a treader of lion and snake. Your power to overcome them is notorious for the underworld forces.

There is an interesting story about a lion and a fox. A lion, the king of the jungle, was lying in front of its den and a fox went past the lion without paying the lion due respects. The lion roared and said “You fox, don’t you know that I am the king of the jungle? All the creatures in the jungle are afraid of me. I am powerful. Pay me obeisance.” The fox coolly replied, “Who said you are the king of the jungle? I am the king. Let us go around the jungle and I will show you that every living thing is afraid of me

only.” To save its honour, the lion took up this easy challenge. The fox led the lion through the jungle. A group of Sambar deer ran helter and skelter as those two walked by. The fox proudly pointed this out to the lion and said how the deer were afraid of him. As they walked further, a big herd of bison took to their heels and vanished from the scene. The fox told the lion: “Now, are you clear that I am the king of the jungle and the whole jungle is afraid of me only”. The lion was confused and probably convinced with what the fox said and sat down in despair. A monkey was watching the whole drama and giggled loudly. The lion already in a bad temper shouted at the monkey to be quiet. But the monkey giggled louder and said “you lion, you are powerful but you are a fool. The herd of deer and bison ran away because they saw you and were afraid of you. They are least bothered about that fox.” The lion got the point and with one foot trampled the fox to the ground. The lion regained clarity in its mind that it is the most powerful creature in the jungle.

The moral of the story is that we are the lion in this story and the fox is the satan. We are the ones ordained to rule. The lion and the snake are to be trampled under our feet. The satan knows this truth but pretends not to know the truth. When you know (realise) this truth, your mind is liberated. You assert

your rights and use your power. Your life is power filled.

We are born to reign. We are not slaves. We are not afraid of the lion and the snake. The underworld powers of darkness are afraid of us. Not vice versa.

When soldiers came to arrest Jesus on the fateful night at Gethsemane, Jesus looked at the soldiers and said: "Here, I am." The Bible records that when Jesus said these words, the soldiers fell backwards. The person to be arrested was so powerful, confident and composed. These who came to arrest Jesus, felt powerless, and fell down. Later, when Pilate was seated on the throne and Jesus was standing before him as a prisoner, Pilate was interrogating Jesus. When we carefully read the dialogue between Jesus and Pilate, we can see that it was Pilate who was on trial. Christian life is a different order. We are powered by the Almighty. Let us put the lions and snakes to notice. Define your identity as a treader of lion and snake.

When God created man, He designed man and instructed him to rule and govern. But because of the sin committed by man, he lost his right to rule. In simple words, Adam lost it on the Eden Garden. But Jesus, the second Adam, regained it for us on the cross. Jesus gives back the power to rule. In Luke

10:19 Jesus says “Behold, I give you power to tread on serpents and scorpions and over all the power of the enemy; and nothing by any means hurt you.” Oh! What a wonderful way to get back the power to rule. It is a God given power to tread the enemy. The moment you accept Jesus as the ruler of your heart, you are entitled to exercise this power.

## Psalm 91:14

*"Because he has set his love upon Me, therefore will I deliver him; I will set him on high because he knows My name."*

### The Answer to Trust

There are two potent words in this verse - 'Because' and 'Therefore'. What sets us apart from the world? Because we love the living God, we desire Him. We love Him the most. He is the priority one of our life. He is the most loved and desired person of the heart. The verse says, therefore we inherit all the protective blessings from Him. The Almighty Himself delivers you because you love Him. The verse says 'he has set his love upon Me'. It is not a passing or a momentary or a fickle love. It is a steadfast love. It is a focused love. All the thoughts and deeds of the person who has focused his love on God, is focused towards this love. In simple words, whatever we do, it is to enrich our love for God.

The Bible tells us that it is God who loved us first. (I John 4:19) God loved us when we were unworthy of His love. Out of His love for us, He sent His only begotten son Jesus Christ to us. Because of His love

for us, Jesus Christ died for us on the cross. A most adorable verse in Bible: God is love (I John 4:8). It is an unchanging love despite the ups and downs we create by our thoughts, deeds and words. The moment we accept this wonderful love, His love protects us.

### **Steadfast Love**

**L**et us look at Paul's declaration in Romans 8:38, 39. "For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Paul beautifully expresses his conviction that no power can separate him from the love of Christ. Jesus Christ is the expression of God's love. When we love Jesus Christ, we love God. Paul says that even the extremes will not separate him from the love of Jesus Christ. Paul's declaration is that his love for Jesus Christ is steadfast, come what may.

### **Cat's Catch and Monkey's Catch**

**T**he cat and the monkey handle their very young ones differently – until they are able to move on

their own. A cat carries its young kittens from one place to another by holding the scruff of the kitten's neck in its mouth. The kitten just dangles at the mouth of the mother cat. This is called "cat's catch", whereas, an infant monkey dangles on the mother monkey's belly by holding on to the belly with all its strength when the mother monkey walks, runs and leaps. This is called "monkey's catch". There are times when God holds us like a mother cat. There are times when we hold on to God like an infant monkey. Normally, soon after our born again experience, God holds us like the mother cat. But when we mature in Christ and become strong believers, we hold on to God like infant monkeys. Either way, cat's catch or monkey's catch, the bondage between the mother and the infant are intact. They cannot be separated.

### **I will Deliver Him**

**A** very comforting promise that God Himself would deliver us when we cling on to Him in love.

At the beginning of His ministry, Jesus went to a synagogue on a Sabbath day. He was handed over the book of the prophet Isaiah and Jesus read the following prophecy relating to His ministry on earth as mentioned by Isaiah: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the



gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives..." (Luke 4:18). Thus deliverance ministry is a vital component of His ministry. We need to be delivered from sin, satan, world, sickness and poverty.

Apostle John very emphatically conveys that Jesus is the only person who can give us true and full deliverance. John 8:36 reads: "...if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed." Out of many experiences, King Solomon has also gained this wisdom and says: "The horse is prepared for the day of battle, but deliverance is of the Lord" (Proverbs 21:31). If God decides to deliver you, nothing can stop Him. If God does not deliver you, nothing can deliver you. God alone is able. Deliverance belongs to Him.

King Nebuchadnezzar was furious that Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-Nego, the friends of Daniel, did not worship the golden image the king had created. The king in a fit of rage told them that if they did not worship the image, they would be thrown into the burning fiery furnace. Look at the assured and cool response of them: "...God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the fiery furnace, and He will deliver us from your hands, O king."(Daniel 3:17). Rest is history. God delivered Daniel's friends from the

fiery furnace. The deliverance was so apparent that the king himself said: "...there is no other God who can deliver like this" (Daniel 3:29).

When God decided to deliver Israelites from the slavery in Egypt, nothing could stop God. 400 years of bondage was broken like a match stick. The Pharaoh, the most powerful king of his times, could not stop the deliverance. When God moves, the universe moves. Chains are broken. Fetters are unshackled. Is there anything too hard for the Lord? Now, seek your deliverance from bad habits, bad relationships, bad practices, bad emotions like anger and jealousy. Seek deliverance from sickness that has chained you for decades. Get freed from the bondage of debts. In Isaiah the Lord makes a powerful question to prompt us to accept His deliverance. "Is My hand shortened at all that it cannot redeem? Or have I no power to deliver?" Accept the power of God to deliver you and enjoy freedom.

### **Set Him on High**

**T**he promise says that God would keep us on a high refuge beyond the reach of our enemies. Please look at it intently, you will see many highs:

One of the ‘highs’ of God is to bless you so abundantly and miraculously that all your enemies realise that you are a child of God upheld by the power of God. They would start fearing you. Their enmity against you will vanish. They may try to make peace with you. There is a very inspiring account in the life of Isaac as mentioned in Chapter 26 of Genesis. Isaac settles down in Gerar, a place in the Philistines’ area, as directed by God. Philistines do not have good relationship with Israelites. At that point of time, there is famine also. Genesis 26:12 records: “Then Isaac sowed in that land, and reaped in the same year a hundred fold; and the Lord blessed him.” Isaac is in a hostile country. There is drought. But Isaac’s efforts are blessed abundantly and unbelievably. Genesis 26:13, 14 continue to record: “The man began to prosper, and continued prospering until he became very prosperous. For he had possessions of flocks, and possessions of herds and great store of servants and the Philistines envied him.”

The Philistines tried to block the blessings Isaac was receiving. In a time when a man’s prosperity consisted of his crops and cattle, if the water resources are stopped, prosperity would vanish. So the Philistines filled up the wells of Isaac with earth. Isaac was also asked to vacate Gerar. The Bible says

that Isaac left Gerar and camped at the valley of Gerar. Here again, when Isaac dug the wells that were earlier used in his father's time, Isaac was blessed with 'springing water'. The Philistines quarreled with Isaac over the well. Once again, Isaac dug another well of his father's time and found rich water source. The Philistines again and again fought over these wells. Ultimately, they stopped quarreling with Isaac. The king of Philistines went over to Isaac and made peace with him. Isaac's enemies could clearly see the hand of God in the blessings of Isaac. They considered it futile to quarrel with Isaac and ceased to be Isaac's enemy. God blessed Isaac so much that even his enemies wanted to be on the right side of friendship with Isaac. Yes, keep your right hand over Genesis chapter 26 and ask God to bless you abundantly and keep you on a high pedestal so that people can see the finger of God in your life and seek your friendship instead of quarrelling with you. Proverbs 16:7 says: "When a man's ways please the Lord, He makes even his enemies to be at peace with him." It is a good deal. Instead of just seeking God to protect you, it is a better way of protecting you through abundant and miraculous blessings in your life.

### **High Thoughts**

As we cling on to God. He makes our thoughts noble and wise. Wisdom would sparkle in our thought process. Wisdom is looking at life the way God wants us to look. Isaiah 55:9 says “For as heavens are higher than the earth, so are My (God’s) ways higher than your ways and My (God’s) thoughts higher than your thoughts.” God’s thoughts are infinitely better than human thoughts. When we look to God for direction and counsel in each aspect of our life, we inherit God’s thoughts. Our thoughts are set on a higher pedestal. All negative emotions disappear in our life. Anger, jealousy, hatred, prejudice, venom, negative thinking, anxiety, scheming, joy in other’s fall, lies and all that stuff disappear. Instead we are filled with love, joy, happiness in others’ smile, genuine concern for others – neighbours and strangers, affection, helping tendency, forgiving spirit, positive outlook on life and all those kind of goodies. When our mind follows God’s thought process, enmity will dry up.

There is a very revealing practical advice in Romans 12:20,21. When we comprehend the message of these two verses, our whole approach to handling those who have enmity with us will change.

Romans 12:20,21: “Therefore if your enemy hungers, feed him; if he thirsts, give him a drink; for

in so doing you shall heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.” To do evil for evil is human nature. To do good for evil is godly advise to every child of God. Apply this in your life. Think what kind of good deeds you can do to people who hate you, people who are awaiting an opportune moment to injure and damage you. Christian life is extraordinary. God’s wisdom triumphs. It transcends human rationality.

‘Heaping coals of fire’ here refers to the reaction of your good deeds on your enemy’s mind. He will have mental pain when he thinks of harming you. His enmity melts. ‘To overcome evil with good’ is a divine advise. Your thoughts are on a high pedestal. You outwit your enemy by your God inspired noble thoughts and deeds.

### **He Knows My Name**

God is known by many names. Every name portrays a part of God’s character. For instance, El Shaddai means Almighty God. It portrays God’s omnipotence. To know God’s name means to know God’s various characters. There are different stages in knowing God’s name. It is not simply knowing God’s names but to comprehend and understand them. Next stage. It is not simply understanding God’s characters but accepting them with faith. Next stage. It is not simply accepting God’s characters

with faith but experiencing God's characters in our life. The deeper we 'know His name', the higher we are set in life.

### **Psalm 91:15**

*“He shall call upon me, and I will answer him;  
I will be with him in trouble;  
I will deliver him and honour him.”*

### **He Shall Call**

**Our** God is omniscient. He knows our needs. He can meet all our needs without our asking. Sometimes He does so. But when you get closer to God and know his heart, desires and nature, you will realise a big truth; Ask. ASK GOD.

Some of the Bible verses that enable us to fully comprehend this truth are reproduced here; Jeremiah 33:3 “Call upon me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know.’ When we read the first two preceding verses of this chapter, we can know that the prophet Jeremiah is confined in a prison. But God speaks to him for the second time on the same subject and prompts the prophet to tell people to pray to Him. What does God want the people to pray for? In the preceding chapter, Jeremiah 32, God has showered

promise upon promise on the children of Israel that He would redeem, establish and bless them. God wants people to pray for the fulfillment of these promises. Promises are not substitute for prayer. Promises strengthen and prompt us to pray earnestly. Never lose hope. Pray. God will provide solutions which were never in your reckoning. You never thought God had glorious ways of meeting your needs, surpassing your expectations. Great and mighty things will happen in your life!

Matthew 7:7 “Ask, and it shall be given to you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.” Ask, seek and knock, the three words, just emphasise the need to pray. We should pray. We must pray often. We should pray sincerely. We must pray continually. Seeking and knocking are more than asking. Knocking is more than asking and seeking. Pray, pursue, plead and persevere until you get your worldly and spiritual needs.

Jesus again says in Matthew 21:22 ‘And all things, whatsoever you shall ask in prayer, believing, you shall receive.’ The stress is asking in prayer, believing. Again in John 16:24 Jesus tells His disciples “Hitherto you have asked nothing in My name; ask and you shall receive, that your joy may be full.” The message is: Ask and receive; Ask not and receive not. God wants all our worldly and



spiritual needs to be fully received by us through prayer. It is not mere survival with a frugal living. But in our life 'joy must be full'. Prayer is the channel for the abundant life God has promised us. Prayer fills up your life to be full of joy.

Ask God without inhibitions. We are after all His children. Ask God without hesitation. He has promised to answer our calls. 'I will answer him' is a promise! Don't prune your askings by self righteousness. God Himself says that your joy must be full. Do not postpone your asking. Our god is anytime God. There is nothing like a perfect setting to ask. Remember, Jonah prayed from the belly of a fish! Do not avoid asking small things. Nothing is too hard and nothing is too small for the Lord! Do not feel shy of asking. Our attitude to prayer will undergo a massive transformation when we understand that prayer is just conversing with a loving God. We do not converse with our loving parents, spouse and children after weighing each and every word. When we pray, let the words flow from our heart.

A FAQ: How long should I pray? Answer: As long as you want! There are very long prayers and very short prayers in the Bible. God has answered both.

Another Frequently Asked Question: When I pray, should I speak or should I listen? Answer: Prayer is a conversation between God and you. Therefore, you speak as well as listen. There are occasions when we speak more as well as we speak less. It is a conversation between loved ones. There is no protocol.

Praise God! Whenever we speak to God, we don't get a recorded message that "All lines in this route are busy" or "the person whom you called is out of coverage area" which we hear many a times when we use the cell phone. Our God is the most accessible person.

### **Be with Him in Trouble**

**I**t is God's promise that He will be with us in our trouble. What a great comfort! What a great relief! Where He is, or better say, wherever He is, life is a paradise. It is our human nature that we sense His presence much more in times of trouble than on routine moments. His presence in trouble is a promise. We can be assured of His presence in our moment of crisis. We shall find Him when we need Him the most. His assuring presence is a promise.

### **Delivers and Honours**

**T**he promise is not simple delivery. But honour at the end of deliverance. If you are walking through troubled moments, get hold of this promise and seek God to not only deliver you over this troublesome patch but to edify you and bring grace upon you.

Let us look at the classic incident in the life of Daniel's friends. They were with God at all times. Now, the king had thrown them in a fiery furnace and God was with them in the fiery furnace. God's presence in the fiery furnace was visible. When God was with Daniel's friends, the fire had no power over them. The king, governors, captains, counselors and et al were stunned by the visible presence of God and the divine protection God's presence brought. The king immediately brought them out of the fiery furnace and proclaimed that there is no other God that can deliver like this. Daniel 3:30 records that the king honoured them by elevating and promoting them in the administration of the kingdom of Babylon.

Rejoice, for when trouble comes, God's presence and deliverance come and honour follows them.

## Psalm 91:16

*“With long life will I satisfy him,  
and show him My salvation.”*

### **Looonng Life**

One of the great blessings of life is to live a long and a full life. On birthdays, we wish the person celebrating birthday a happy and a long life. Many of us look forward to the same in our lives. But a person, when he advances in life, starts feeling uneasy of living long. He wonders whether he will continue to have the same good health, who will take care of him if he becomes sick? - He ponders, will he have sufficient income to meet his needs? Will he command the same respect he is used to getting, he begins to doubt. So on and so forth. Instead of enjoying the long life, the anxiety list becomes longer and longer. Remember, our Lord is a God of wisdom. Whenever He promises, He delivers in full measure, thoroughly and continually. There is nothing like the proverbial ‘fine print’ in God’s promises.

Proverbs 3:13-16 “Happy is the man who finds wisdom and the man who gains understanding....

Length of days is in her (wisdom) right hand; and in her (wisdom) left hand riches and honour.”

The word ‘wisdom’ here means a man understanding life the way God has designed it. Such a person is blessed with both long life as well as riches and honour. They are concurrent. God knows that both should coexist to enjoy life. God’s blessings are comprehensive.

Deuteronomy 34:7 says: “And Moses was a hundred and twenty years old when he died: his eyes were not dim, nor his natural vigour abated.”

Deuteronomy 33:25 says: “....As your days, so shall your strength be.”

Moses lived for 120 years, in spite of the harshness of the wilderness where he spent 40 years and the very demanding 40 years when he led the people of Israel. At the age of 120, Moses was of good health. Even his eye sight was sharp. His intellect and judgment were good. Probably, wrinkles were not on his body and mind. Can we paraphrase and say Moses was hale and healthy when he died at the age of 120. Yes, God gave him long life and a rich health. Health is a God given wealth. God’s blessings are continuous and evergreen (Isaiah 58:11)

In one of the most illustrious dialogues between man and God, King Solomon asks God to bless him with wisdom and knowledge. But our great God, blessed Solomon not only with wisdom and knowledge but also with wealth, riches and honour. God knows that a very wise king should also be a very wealthy king. God's blessings are wholesome.

So, a long life is accompanied by matching resources to lead a good, joyful and abundant life till the very end. Isaiah 46:3,4 says "...who have been upheld by Me from birth, who have been carried from the womb: Even to your old age, I am He, And even to your grey hairs I will carry you." Your age is just a number. It is a label to help you keep track of your personal time on this earth. When we realise this we can be useful to God, family, church, society and self until we depart from this earth.

Let us ponder over a conditional commandment and blessing given by God. Exodus 20:12 says "Honour your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God is giving you." The commandment says that to enjoy the milk and honey that would be flowing in your life, you must honour your parents. Let us obey the voice of God and enjoy a long life.

## **I will Satisfy Him**

One of the rarest blessings of life is to have a satisfying life. This wonderful blessing has been stored for the very last verse of the Psalm.

Satisfaction does not come in the abundance of things we possess. Ecclesiastes.5:10 says “Whoever loves money will never be satisfied with money. Whoever loves wealth will never be satisfied with more income. Even this is pointless.” We come across in our day to day life, people who have a lot of wealth but who never enjoy it. They keep complaining of not having enough. We also come across people who are happy with all they have and enjoy using them. Where is the difference? What is the critical thing to enjoy a satisfying life? This may be a million dollar question to a person who has no Bible in his hands. The answer is revealed very crisply in Ecclesiastes 5:19 which says, “It is a gift from God when God gives some people wealth and possessions, the power to enjoy them, the ability to accept their lot in life and the ability to rejoice in their own hard work.” (God’s Word Translation) Oh! What a wonderful revelation. The key to ‘satisfaction’ in life or the ‘power to enjoy’ life is a gift (blessing) from God.

The following words of wisdom would vitalize our power to enjoy:

- Psalm 65:4 “Blessed is the man whom You (God) choose, and cause to approach You, that he may dwell in your courts. We shall be satisfied with the goodness of Your home, of Your holy temple.”
- Psalm 107:9 “...For He satisfies the longing soul, and fills the hungry soul with goodness.”
- Proverbs 13:7 says “There is one who makes himself rich, yet has nothing; And one who makes himself poor, yet has great riches.”
- Psalm 4:7 says “You (God) have put gladness in my heart, more than in the season that their grain and wine increased.”

Riches or no riches, the power to shout Hallelujah is from the God.

### **Long Life and Satisfying Life**

**I**n the year 1991, when I was afflicted with a rare bleeding disease, I was initially put in a small hospital at Madurai. There was a very critical episode here. I reproduce the whole episode in the words of my wife, as follows:



“Tuesday, 8.1.91 dawned. There was no improvement in my husband’s condition. Bleeding in the mouth subsided. But bleeding in the urine went unabated. There were bleeding spots in his eyes also. He became exceedingly tired due to loss of blood. His eye lids started drooping even while he was talking.

The doctors told me, “Please search for blood donors immediately. We have to take out the entire blood from your husband’s body and infuse fresh blood. Your husband’s blood group is also rare – A1B (positive). Therefore, search for the donors quickly and earnestly.”

That’s all. I felt the earth slipping under my feet. I knew that for blood cancer patients only such replacement of blood is administered. But here was the doctor, telling me that such a treatment was to be given to my husband. I was confused. Was he suffering from blood cancer? I asked myself. I felt as though I was losing my sanity. I started crying to Lord Jesus, our eternal blood donor, who shed his blood for us.

“Lord Jesus, 2000 years ago you came into this world and shed your precious blood for us. You are living even today. You are a risen Lord. You should give my husband your blood, not only spiritually but

physically also. You are our eternal blood donor. Let your blood flow through my husband's body. One drop of your precious blood is sufficient to keep my husband alive. I am depending on you only for the blood. Hence, I will not seek any other blood donor."

I cried, I wept and I wailed as I came into our room. I felt darkness surround me. I was struggling in darkness. Evil forces were dancing all around me. I heard someone speaking to me – "What if your husband dies? He is saved. He is a child of God. If he dies, he will go straight to Heaven. What you earn is sufficient for you and your children."

I was all the more confused. I asked, "Lord what is this? Is it you who is speaking like this?" Immediately the Lord replied, "*With Long life I will satisfy him. And show him My salvation.*"(Psalm 91:16). Then I realised that the person who spoke first was none other than satan himself.

At that time, my husband's aunt Mrs. Johnson visited us. She was the Branch Leader of CSI Chain of Prayer – Madurai Ramnad Dist. Her Ministry was very powerful in Thirumangalam, near Madurai.

She started to pray. She rebuked the power of the devil in her prayer. She prayed casting out the devil

in the wonderful name of Jesus. With authority, she commanded satan to leave us, in the mighty name of Jesus. I also joined her in prayer.

At that moment, the darkness that tormented me lifted. I felt light shining all over me, around me and within me. My faith in the Lord was strengthened immensely.” This critical episode is expressed by my wife in her own words.

I praise God that after two decades I find the best way to portray Psalm 91:16 is to recollect how faithful this promise verse has been in my life. Yes, God has given me a long and a satisfying life.

John 10:10 says: “The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.” In the episode narrated by my wife, you will observe that Satan tried to confuse my wife. Satan wanted to deceive my wife by bringing false logic of “gracefully” accepting me succumbing to the disease. But prayer brought discernment to my wife. She could understand that it was satan who was speaking. With prayer, she could hear God’s voice saying that with long life He would satisfy me. Yes, it is God’s will that every child of God would have a long and a satisfying life.

Ecclesiastes 5:20 “For he shall not much remember the days of his life; because God answereth him in the joy of his heart.”

In our childhood, once our school holidays started we never counted them. We used to be busy enjoying each and every day and we lose count of the days. The school vacation used to be such fun that we would forget the date on which the school was to reopen and our parents would be forced to remind us of the reopening of the school at least a few days before the reopening.

Yes, our life is to be enjoyed as much as we enjoyed our summer vacation in our childhood. We should enjoy life so cheerfully that the days pass on delightfully. The key is in the joy God puts in our heart. The power to enjoy life means the power to smile, the power to sing, the power to be merry (in a Godly way), the power to share your blessings with others, the power to trust that God would take care of your tomorrow, the power to believe that every blessing or promise in the Bible would come to pass if you believe in it, the power to stop worrying, the power to chase away fear, the power to genuinely love dear ones, the power to have sincere concern for your friends and colleagues, the power to laugh at your own folly, the power to be delighted by reading the Bible, the power to indulge in a creative

hobby, the power to be excited by a scoop of ice-cream, the power to be involved in sports and games, the power to enjoy good food, the power to love dressing well, the power to admit the thrill of a roller coaster, the power to enjoy saying yes to a good thing, the power to derive happiness in doing good to others, the power to think positively, the power to use sweet and encouraging words, the power to forgive, the power to be not critical of others, the power to believe that happiness is a birth right of every born again Christian, the power to have a burning thirst to pray for others in their dire needs and earnestly look forward to the answer from God every day, and so on.

Now we know what it means to enjoy life. We also know its source. It is God's gift to have the power to enjoy life – a long satisfying life. Psalm 23:6 says: "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; And I will dwell in the house of the Lord. FOREVER."

This enjoyment in a long satisfying life does not stop with our earthly life. When we are saved by the blood of Jesus, the salvation brings to us a happy, joyful merry life in heaven too. That is God's way of showing salvation – Eternal Joy.

## Epilogue

Psalm 91 is a revelation of what God has done for us. It is a prayer without petition. It is a praise without motive. It is a holy shout. It is a bold confession of faith. It is said that Psalm 91 was read during installation of kings in the Old Testament days. The priest and the king assuming the throne recited this Psalm responsively. For us, it is clear, as we go through this Psalm verse by verse that the Psalmist begins making revealing statements of who God is to him. He praises God for the blessings and protection in Him. The Psalmist makes inspirational confessions and claims his privileges in God. But in the last three verses (verses 14,15 and 16) God Himself responds to the prayers, praises and confessions and speaks in the first person and says - I will deliver him, I will set him on high, I will answer him, I will be with him in trouble, I will deliver him and honour him and I will satisfy him. Oh! What a glorious conclusion.

Let our prayers, praises and confessions make our Most High God speak to us in the first person and make our life great and glorious.

In the last three verses God reveals yet another secret. Why does God pour out so many blessings?

The Psalm says ‘Because he has set his love upon Me.’ Out of the love for the Lord, we know more of His names i.e. His characters and nature and we call upon Him. Thus, our love of God is the key to divine blessings and protection.

In the beginning of the Psalm we observed that the secret place of protection and blessing is God’s own heart and at the end of this Psalm we find that the secret of enjoying God’s protection and blessings is in loving God. God has revealed to us secret treasures of a great life.

***Hallelujah!***