

A Psalm of Promise: Safe in the Secret Place of the Most High

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 02 June 2013

Preacher: William Philip

[0 : 00] We're going to turn now to our Bibles, you'll find it in the Old Testament, in the book of Psalms, in Psalm number 91. If you have one of our church visitors' Bibles, that's page 497.

And we're going to read this wonderful psalm together. A psalm, as you'll see, full of great promise, many, many promises from God.

I'm not sure who wrote this psalm, but I rather think that it comes, at least originally, from Moses. You'll see Psalm 90, the one immediately before it is a prayer of Moses, the man of God.

We don't have another title or author until you come to Psalm 101. And it may well be this continues on, the prayer of Moses. Psalm 91.

He who dwells in the shelter, or I prefer the old version, which is more literal, in the secret place of the Most High, will abide in the shadow of the Almighty.

[1 : 11] I will say to the Lord, my refuge and my fortress, my God in whom I trust. For he will deliver you from the snare of the fowler and from the deadly pestilence or the deadly word.

He will cover you with his pinions, and under his wings you will find refuge. His faithfulness is a shield and buckler. You will not fear the terror of the night, nor the arrow that flies by day, nor the pestilence that stalks in darkness, nor the destruction that wastes at noonday.

A thousand may fall at your side, ten thousand at your right hand. But to you, it will not come near. You will only look with your eyes and see the recompense of the wicked.

Because you have made the Lord your dwelling place, the Most High, who is my refuge, no evil shall be allowed to befall you.

No plague shall come near your tent. For he will command his angels concerning you to guard, to keep you in all your ways.

[2 : 29] On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone. You will tread on the lion and the adder, the young lion and the serpent you will trample underfoot.

Now we have the voice of the Lord himself. Because he holds fast to me in love, I will deliver him. I will protect him because he knows my name.

When he calls to me, I will answer him. I will be with him in trouble. I will rescue him and honor him. With long life, with length of days, I will satisfy him and show him my salvation.

Amen. May God bless to us this, his word. Turn with me, if you would, to Psalm 91.

As I've said, a psalm of promise. And it's all about being safe in the secret place of the Most High. This is unmistakably a psalm of promise.

[3 : 47] From beginning to end, as you've seen, it's packed full of promises about what God does and what God will do for his people. Promises proclaimed by the psalmist, backed up by his own personal testimony.

Verse 2 and again in verse 9. This is my God I'm speaking about, he says. And promises that you'll see at the end are affirmed by God himself. Verses 14 to 16.

The Lord himself speaks. I will, I will, I will, I will, I will, I will, I will. Six times he affirms great, extraordinary promises to his believing child.

And there's perhaps a problem as we approach a psalm like this. Does it, does it seem that the psalm is promising too much?

Doesn't it seem to be proclaiming a life that is utterly charmed? Free from all illness, from all misfortune. No sickness, no injury, no poverty.

[4 : 51] Only health and prosperity and wealth and a guaranteed long future retirement, it seems to say. Well, certainly there are those who would say, yes, that is exactly what is promised.

And if that is not your personal experience, then the problem is yours. You just don't have enough faith. And probably that's manifest in the fact that you haven't given enough money to the church to prove your faith.

And so what you really need to do is open your wallet. And surely this prosperity described in this psalm will begin to flow in direct proportion to your giving.

Needless to say, pastors of churches that proclaim that message do tend to be rather prosperous, even if the congregation aren't. But that so-called prosperity gospel is rife.

It's rife in the world today, especially in Africa. It's rife in African churches in this country. But it's also very common in the West too. Sometimes it's crass.

[6 : 00] And sometimes it's more sophisticated. But indeed it is very common. Less common, but nevertheless present also in some places are bizarre groups of people, as we would see it anyway, who take a verse like verse 13, do you see?

And other verses similarly in other parts of the Bible. And this drives them to snake handling as an integral part of their worship.

They stand quite literally in pits full of rattlesnakes. And they handle them and they claim divine protection. Some of them even would demand snake handling as evidence of salvation.

Many, of course, are bitten. And many of them die. But it doesn't seem to deter them. We may be astonished. But what are we to say to a psalm that seems to give support to that view?

Presumption of safety from snakes. And expectation, it seems, of a prosperity in all spheres of life. Indeed, a psalm that seems to promise these very things.

[7 : 11] Well, what we can say, quite categorically, is that that view of a psalm like this, that view of its teaching, isn't merely mistaken.

It is, in fact, positively demonic. That's not my opinion, by the way. That's the clear verdict of Scripture itself. We know that because the devil himself uses this psalm in exactly that way when he quotes it to Jesus during his temptation in the wilderness.

In Matthew chapter 4, verse 6. The devil tempts Jesus to presume upon God's promises of protection, to jump off the pinnacle of the temple, for it is written, says the devil.

And he quotes from verses 11 and 12 in our psalm here, implying that no physical harm can come to Jesus if he jumps off the roof. But Jesus rebukes the devil sharply.

And he says, again it is written, you shall not put the Lord your God to the test. A quote from Deuteronomy chapter 6, referring to Israel's presumptuous testing of the Lord in the wilderness when they demanded water and said, is the Lord really among us?

[8 : 29] Let him show himself. But the promises, says Jesus, are not to lead us to unbelieving testing, but rather to faithful trusting in God's unseen powerful goodness and care, even in the very wilderness of testing, where Jesus himself was not spared physical hardship.

Now angels did, in fact, come and minister to Jesus, Matthew tells us, but not to remove the hardship, but rather to strengthen him in the midst, in his obedient and trusting faith.

And so he did tread the tempter down. He did trample the serpent, the devil, who left him. And it's no accident that Luke tells us later on in Luke chapter 22, that it was in Gethsemane, but there again when Jesus was in agony, when he was contemplating the cross ahead of him, when he was praying, not my will, but thine, if this cross, if this cup cannot be taken from me, where he persevered under great trial of grief and agony, that it was there again that angels came and strengthened him.

The absolute antithesis of presumptuous demands for peace and prosperity. And again, he trod the tempter down.

It's interesting that the devil didn't quote verse 12 of the psalm to Jesus, or rather he did. He stopped at verse 12 and didn't quote verse 13, because no doubt that would have been very much too close to the bone to ever cross the lips of that ancient serpent who is called the devil or Satan, the deceiver of the whole world, as Revelation chapter 12 calls him.

[10 : 27] And how he loves to deceive by misusing and by misconstruing God's own words of promise. He truly has been a liar from the very beginning, as John says.

Just read Genesis chapter 3. But we must not fall into the devil's deception in a psalm like this. If we do, we are liable to lose faith in God, because we will presume from God all kinds of things that he has never, in fact, promised to us.

When that happens and we don't receive it, well, naturally, we begin to give up on God. We think he has no power. That is, sadly, the story of so many who have been lured by the so-called prosperity gospel, which has ruined so, so many lives.

But then, if that is not the kind of prosperity that this psalm is speaking about, what is it speaking about? Does it actually promise anything at all?

Or is it, as one evangelical commentator says, is it that the psalmist's faith has, quote, grown a bit exuberant in this psalm? That these extraordinary statements simply mean that God can deliver people from dire straits, that sometimes he does, but that often he doesn't.

[11 : 52] Verses like verse 7, he says, states, not what must necessarily happen, but what God can bring to pass.

In other words, when it says, but it will not come near you, it really means, except on the occasions when it does come near you. Well, that's hardly very comforting, is it?

It's not very comforting to me. Are we really to think that God's promises, then, are no more reliable than a politician's like Nick Clegg? Is he going to have to make videos saying, I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I misled you?

There is a real problem that the scholar there is trying to address, because verse 10 seems utterly definite. And no evil shall be allowed to befall you.

And yet, if we're honest, as Christians, we look around and we see troubles everywhere, often very close to our own tents, to our own lives. So what can this mean?

[12 : 59] If it does mean something real, if it is a solid promise from God that we can rely on, something we can rely on always, not just in a sort of, generally most of the time, this happens sort of way.

Well, the key is, I think, we have to take a careful look at the language of the psalm and the imagery of the psalm, and also the true focus of this psalm, which is very clearly on the matters of great ultimate importance in life.

matters of ultimate destruction and ultimate deliverance. Matters of the recompense of the wicked and of the rescue of the godly.

That's what the psalmist is really concerned with here. And it's a psalm that does promise, surely and certainly, to the believer that they will not ultimately be overcome by evil.

But instead, they will be overcomers. They will be those who know, now and forever, true life. The life that is knowing God.

[14 : 13] The life that is seeing his salvation. salvation. We could read the last verse this way. With true life or with abundant life, I will satisfy him and show him my salvation.

This is a psalm of promise. It promises that there is for all those who dwell in the secret place of the Most High, for all those who dwell under the shadow of the Almighty, there is absolute safety, ultimately and forever.

We have a promise from God's own mouth of a real and permanent salvation in verses 14 to 16. And therefore, the psalmist, as a believer, can confidently promise to others what he knows to be true for himself.

That to make this God your dwelling place is to know a personal shelter in the face of all punishment for wickedness. and a present strengthening in the face of all the powers of evil in life.

So let's look carefully then at what this psalm is really teaching about. About the life of salvation. A life lived safely in the secret place of the Most High.

[15 : 31] Let's begin at the end at verses 14 to 16 because there we have God's own voice. And indeed, verse 16 is a key verse. And I think if we can understand that properly, I think it will open up the whole psalm to us.

These verses give us God's own promise that he who abides with him will know a real and permanent salvation. His promise is for a permanent life.

It's a life that will be ultimately permanent with God. Permanently secure under his preservation. Verse 14, I will deliver him, I will protect him.

Verse 15, I'll be with him, I will rescue him and honor him. And a life that is permanently satisfied in God's presence. Verse 16, literally, with length of days, I will satisfy him and show him my salvation.

It's a promise of God's permanent preserving presence. that was God's promise to Abraham. Do you remember way back at the very beginning that he would be present to bless him, blessing those who blessed him and cursing those who cursed him.

[16 : 48] And here, it's all summed up in verse 16 as the life of satisfaction and of salvation. Verse 16 is key. We really do need to understand it.

Is it just long life that's being promised here, as our translation suggests? Well, if so, do all the godly always live a long earthly life?

Well, clearly, that's not so, is it? Many saints have died very young. So, is it just a generalization? If you live a godly, circumspect life, then you will tend to live longer than the dissolute.

Well, no doubt there is some truth in that as well, but it's hardly a way around this very definite promise, is it? Literally, the phrase says, with length of days will I satisfy him.

And, in some places, that can reasonably be translated as long life, but very often, and especially in the Psalms and in other poetry, it clearly means something very different from that.

[17 : 59] Just turn over one page to Psalm 93 in verse 5, you'll see a very handy example. The very last line of the Psalm says, Holiness befits your house, O Lord, forevermore.

Literally, for length of days. Same as our Psalm. For endless days is how the NIV translates it there. Another place that we'll be very familiar to is the last verse of Psalm 23.

As you know, the Psalm hence, I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever. Look at the footnote and it'll tell you literally it's translated for length of days.

Same as our Psalm. Another place where we find that phrase where it can't possibly mean long earthly life is in Isaiah chapter 53 in the famous servant song.

Don't look it up, but we're told there in verse 10 that after the servant of the Lord dies, after he gives his life as a ransom, as a sin offering, he shall see his offspring, he shall prolong his days, he shall have length of days.

[19 : 05] The Messiah will have life, he'll have endless days beyond his physical death. Something that's very prominent in the wisdom books like Proverbs and Ecclesiastes where life never just means clinical physical life, it means much more than that, it means the abundance of life, it means life in fellowship with the Lord.

Life means a living relationship that will not end with clinical death. It's a life that is in stark contrast in Proverbs to the cutting off of the wicked in eternal death.

It will not be well with the wicked, neither will he prolong his days, have length of days, because he does not fear God, says Ecclesiastes 8 verse 13.

But by contrast, Proverbs 12 28 says this, in the path of the righteous is life, and in that pathway there is no death. Same in Proverbs 24 verse 14, it says, the wise who know the Lord will have a future.

Their hope will not be cut off, while the evil man has no future. the lamp of the wicked will be put out. So you see, what God is promising here in verse 16 is a real and permanent salvation, which is real and permanent life in fellowship with this God, the God who gives permanent security and permanent and ultimate satisfaction.

[20 : 44] One last reference, we'll make it clearest of all, Psalm 21, verse 4, where David is rejoicing in the salvation that God has given to him in his own experience. He says of himself, he asked, life of you, you gave it to him, length of days forever and ever.

His glory is great through your salvation. Life, length of days, salvation. I will show him my salvation, says verse 16, 16, which is true life, which is abundant life, which is life in all its fullness, life forever and ever and ever in the presence of God.

God. It's an absolute promise of a permanent salvation, permanent life that will never be snuffed out by mere physical death.

Those who continue in the fear of the Lord, as Proverbs 23, verse 17 says, or in the language of our own psalm, who make the Lord their dwelling place, they have a sure promise.

Surely there is a future and your hope will not be cut off. That's what this psalm is promising. That, of course, is what the whole world is seeking and has been seeking since the beginning of time, abundant life, life that's more than just mundane and miserable, life that has meaning, life that has hope, and above all, life that is not robbed by the great thief of death.

[22 : 23] Woody Allen who famously said, I don't want to achieve immortality through my work, I want to achieve it by not dying. Well, here is a promise of exactly that to all who will listen and heed it.

It's found in a secret place, the secret place of the Most High, that's how the authorised version translates it very literalistically, a secret place, but it is a secret place, a refuge that has been proclaimed aloud publicly by the Lord himself and by the psalmist as an invitation.

If you will make my God your God, he says, this can be yours. That's the message of the whole psalm. And that's so clear also in verses 1 to 8, where the psalmist bears his own personal testimony and adds it to God's promise.

God's promise, he says, is to be a real personal shelter. It's a promise for a protected life. It's a promise that the life will be ultimately protected by God himself.

My God, says the psalmist, is my refuge and my fortress, verse 2. He is that because of the kind of God he is. Do you see all these great names of God in the first two verses?

[23 : 53] The names that describe his nature. He's the most high God, Elyon, towering above all others and cutting every threat right down to size. He's God almighty, El Shaddai, the all sufficient God who kept Jacob, do you remember, through all his wanderings.

He's the Lord, the covenant God, the great I am, who will be what he will be for his people and who will be everything that his people always need him to be.

Ever true to every promise he gives. And he is my God, says the psalmist, a personal God. He intimately knows him as his very own.

It's being in his shelter, it's being in his hidden care and under his shadow that you will find permanent protection from all harm. Verse 4 is a wonderful verse.

It speaks both of a beautiful tenderness and a battle-ready toughness of God's protection. I don't know about you, I've been in many castles, old and new, many fortresses, and they're very strong and very safe, but they're often pretty rough and pretty harsh and pretty uncomfortable places.

[25 : 13] Well, God's shelter is no less tough. His faithfulness is a shield and buckler, it's tough outward body armor.

But inside, do you see, it's as soft and comfortable as an eider-down. The Lord's pictured here as a mother bird tenderly protecting her chicks from every possible harm, near to her body, in the warmth and comfort of her own heart.

There's nothing hard and rough about God's protection of his people. It's a loving, tender care under the wings of the eagle.

That's the imagery that Moses uses in his great song in Deuteronomy 32. Powerful and strong against all foes like the eagle, but tenderly bearing its young on its own feathers, its own pinions.

But protection from what? Well, verse 3 speaks of God's rescue from the plots of the wicked. That's the imagery here which is very common in the Psalms.

[26 : 20] We find very similar language in Psalm 124, Psalm 140. The snare, the trap of the fowler, the deadly pestilence. Probably, I think, the Greek Old Testament translates that better, the deadly word.

The traps, the words of temptation, the powerful lures that, as Derek Kidner says, threaten to entangle our affairs or compromise our loyalty to God.

The whole Bible warns, doesn't it, of many snares and traps that can lead us to ruin. Moses warned constantly of the snares of pagan religion that would lead his people away to destruction.

The Proverbs are always warning of snares, the snare of the adulteress, the snare of the fool's lips, the snare of the pull of wealth. Apostle Paul similarly speaks of snares, snares of riches, the many snares and traps of the devils that can lead to ruin.

And the message is only the Lord's shelter can protect from such snares, from such plots of the wicked. But the main emphasis in these verses lies in verses 5 to 8.

[27 : 36] Do you see? The psalmist promises something very, very important indeed. A refuge from the punishment of the wicked. You will not fear the terror of the night, nor the arrow, the pestilence, the destruction.

Thousands will fall all around, but, verse 7, to you, it's emphatic, to you it will not come near. What's all this that he's talking about?

Well, verse 8, you see, sums it up. It's the recompense. It's the just punishment of the wicked he's talking about.

You'll see it, but you will never suffer it. If God is your personal shelter, you will not fear that punishment of the wicked.

the language of these verses is very evocative of the plagues that God sent upon Egypt in the book of Exodus. Also evokes some of the judgments that God sent on his own unbelieving people in the desert for their own sin and their rebellion.

[28 : 44] Think of the plague of the fiery serpents in Numbers 21, or the great destruction in Numbers 25, when thousands were judged for their idolatry to the Baals of Peor.

And as I said, it may very well be Moses who is the author of this psalm. There's no other author mentioned until 101 and the Jewish Talmud says that Psalms 90 to 91 are all from Moses.

Certainly a lot of the language echoes the language of Deuteronomy. Verse 10 you'll see he speaks about tents. There is a sense in the pictures here of a people on pilgrimage, on a journey, facing many disasters, many foes.

We can't be sure, but verses 5 to 8 do view certainly a supernatural plague of destruction which is totally under God's control and which brings a just judgment, recompense, judgment on the wicked, but keeps his own trusting people in total safety.

It's like the Passover, do you remember? when every single home in the whole land of Egypt suffered the avenging angel of God except those that were sheltered under the blood daubed on the lintels and the doorposts, the blood of the Passover lamb.

[30 : 11] And in just this way it will be when God judges the whole world utterly and forever. Those who dwell under the shelter of my God, says the psalmist, shall not fear that day.

And again, there's a common theme so often in the psalms, a potent source of comfort for God's people indeed, that God will judge the wicked ultimately, even when it seems he's not judging them now.

We saw that a week or two ago in psalm number 10. Or listen to psalm 37, turn away from evil and do good, so shall you dwell forever, for the Lord loves justice, he will not forsake his saints, they are preserved forever, but the wicked shall be cut off.

Wait for the Lord, keep his way, and he will exalt you to inherit the land. You will look on when the wicked are cut off. The coming of God's judgment is a great comfort to the oppressed when they see the wicked triumphing now.

He will bring recompense to the wicked. God's fear. But it can also be a great sense of fear, can't it? Fear even for believers because we know our own guilt, we know our own sin, we know our own hearts.

[31 : 30] In fact, maybe it's only because we know God's truth that we do fear. The world arrogantly ignores God, the world says, oh, there will be no judgment, we don't fear, but we do fear because we see our own guilt and we feel it.

Don't you sometimes fear the punishment of God? Maybe in the darkness of night with its terrors, or maybe in the weakness of illness or an old age, or maybe most of all in the aftermath of some lapse into sin, and you wonder, can God turn aside his judgment this one more time?

Or it may be that you've never given such things a thought. You've never given the Christian faith a thought. Perhaps you've just come into church this very morning because you've been diagnosed with some illness or something's happened in your life, and you've started to fear death and what might come afterwards.

Like Hamlet, the dread of something after death, the undiscovered, country from whose born no traveler returns. As Shakespeare says, his conscience makes cowards of us all.

Well, here is a promise, says the psalmist. If you trust in my God whom I trust, he will be your personal shelter. He will be your shelter from all the just punishment of wickedness and sin.

[33 : 06] You will not fear the plague of his wrath. To you it will not come near. Fear not. It's the great trumpet call of the Bible, isn't it?

In so many places that God loves to sign to people whose faith is faltering. Fear not. Fear not. I have redeemed you. I have called you by name. You are mine, says the Lord.

The flame shall not consume you. fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom, says the Lord Jesus Christ.

You will not fear. You will only look with your eyes and see the recompense of the wicked. Not because of your superior righteousness, but because you have a refuge, a real personal shelter that is the assurance of a real and permanent salvation.

And therefore, you see, verse 9, because you have made my refuge, the Lord, your dwelling place, your shelter, you can also rejoice in the promise of a real present strengthening.

[34 : 23] God's promise, you see, is for a prevailing life. That's what verses 10 to 13 tell us. A life that will prevail ultimately with God. Through his powerful providence, the psalmist is saying, you'll be kept through all the perils of life, through all the perils of evil in a fallen world, the stones on your way, and you will be conquerors, he says, over all the powers of evil, even the serpent that strikes at your heel.

Again, verse 10 is absolute. Look at it. No evil shall be allowed to befall you. Notice, he doesn't say no affliction, no hardship, no struggle, but no evil.

He's not saying that your life will be charmed and exempt from all perils. In fact, he's plain that there will be stones along the path, that there will be serpents on the path.

death. But what he is saying is that no such perils or powers will be allowed to floor those who have this God as their refuge.

Because he is a God who uses even the worst powers of evil, the worst evil of men and of devils, and turns it to the good of those who are called according to his purpose.

[35 : 52] Remember Joseph? What you meant for evil, God meant for good, for a great salvation. And the whole host of heaven's angels are at work, says the psalmist, making sure this is so.

Look at verse 11. They're there to keep you, to guard you in all your ways. Moses knew plenty about angels. God gave them a promise in all his very words in Exodus chapter 23 that there would be an angel going ahead to keep them, to guard them all the way to the promised land.

But that's not fanciful. Hebrews chapter 1 tells us that God's angels are ministering spirits sent by God to help those that he is saving.

To bear them up, says verse 11, precisely because there will be many stones, many rocks in the path, many perils of evil to encounter in a fallen world. that is the reality of the life of faith, is it not?

It's a hard struggle. There's plenty of things constantly that could floor us. But no, we shall not stumble so as to fall completely.

[37 : 10] That's the constant teaching of the Bible. When a man is the Lord's, though he fall, he shall not be cast headlong, says Psalm 37, verse 24.

The righteous fall seven times and rises again, but the wicked stumble in their hour of calamity, Proverbs 24, verse 16.

But what does Paul say to the Corinthians? We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed, perplexed, but not driven to despair, persecuted, yes, but not forsaken, struck down, yes, but not destroyed.

Why? Because no evil shall be allowed to befall you. Because all things work together for good to those who love God, who are kept by his sovereign power.

And that good, Paul tells us in Romans chapter 8 is our conforming into the image of the Lord Jesus Christ.

[38 : 23] That we may prevail as he prevailed over every peril of evil, and that through him we also might conquer every power of evil, treading down the lion and the serpent, trampling them under foot.

You only have to read lines like this and read other psalms, like Psalm 58 and many other scriptures to be absolutely plain about what's meant here in these verses. It's nothing to do with snake handling, but it's everything to do with serpent crushing, the devil, the roaring lion seeking to devour, the cunning serpent seeking to deceive.

But you will not just survive them, says the psalmist, you will conquer them. And all the powers of evil you shall trample underfoot. the psalmist and the prophets, they longed for the day when at last, as God promised, the serpent would be destroyed forever.

In that day, says Isaiah, the Lord will punish Leviathan, the twisting serpent, and he will slay the dragon that is in the sea. And at last, says John the apostle, the son of God appeared to destroy the works of the devil.

And so says Paul in Romans chapter 16, the God of peace shall soon crush Satan under your feet. His promise is for a life that shall prevail over all evil.

[39 : 56] And we can be assured, my brothers and sisters, of a present strengthening. No evil shall be allowed to befall you.

nothing in the path of your life will ever make you stumble so as to fall if you abide under his shadow. Though your life be full of stones and rocks in this fallen world, that is God's promise.

And no evil power, not even the devil himself, shall overcome you. sinning. So don't despair. Even if it seems like you are surrounded by roaring lions and fiery serpents right now in your Christian life, it doesn't mean that God has abandoned you.

It doesn't mean that you're coming under his judgment at last. How could it? When Jesus himself was faced with all of these things and much, much more.

no, in all these very things, in every affliction in which he will not allow evil to befall us, but will turn everything to his ultimate glory in Christ, in all these things, you are conquerors, and more than conquerors, says Paul, through him who loved us.

[41 : 19] You can trust this God, my God, and you can be assured of his present strengthening in your life today, to keep you in all your ways in this evil world, and to make you conquer every evil power that is against your soul, the lion and the serpent you will trample underfoot.

It is a psalm of promise, a certain promise of a life that is protected from all punishment against sin, of a life that prevails over every evil and every power, and a life that is permanent in the presence of God himself.

Aren't you glad that you have this God as your shelter, as your hiding place, as your dwelling place? Maybe you're not sure that you have.

How do you find that refuge? How do you find that shelter, that strengthening, that salvation? Well, look, look at verse 14. It's not complicated, not at all. It's for all who hold fast, who cleave to him in love, says the Lord.

It's for all who know his name. It's for all who will call upon him, because these he will always answer with life everlasting, with his great salvation.

[42 : 50] friends, the Lord Jesus Christ came to make known his name, and to continue making it known, and to bring us his life, life in all its fullness, life which is to know the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

And he says that the Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him will have eternal life.

I will raise him up at the last day, says the Lord Jesus. With length of days, with endless days, I will satisfy him and show him my salvation.

A promise from the lips of the Most High God. Let's pray. Heavenly Father, how we thank you that through Jesus Christ, your Son, we know your glorious name, we hear your voice, and we can come to you.

So, Lord, shelter us, everyone, we pray, strengthen us, and give us joy in your great salvation. For we ask it in Jesus' name.

[44 : 16] amen. Amen. Amen.