

**May 25**

**Scriptures:** Read Psalms 90 & 91

**Key Verse:** “Because he has set his love upon Me, therefore I will deliver him; I will set him on high, because he has known My name.” (Psalm 91:14)

## **Overview**

Psalm 90 is unique because it is the only one in the psalter ascribed to Moses, and although it is a personal meditation, he speaks on behalf of the whole nation. Moses probably wrote this during their wilderness wanderings, when they had no place to call their home and were very susceptible to enemy attacks. Moses learned, however, that their safe dwelling place was in God.

When Israel sinned in not trusting God to enter Canaan, after reaching the border, God’s wrath was upon that whole generation (with the exception of Joshua and Caleb), and they were excluded from entering the Promised Land (Num. 14:19-35). During those forty years of wilderness wandering, they saw many, many people die, which constantly reminded them of their sin and of man’s frail, transitory nature; man is here one day and gone the next, but God is from everlasting to everlasting. God has neither a beginning nor an end, for He is our eternal God who is above time (2 Peter 3:8). Man, however, is bound by time and his lifespan is very short and fleeting, even when one lives beyond his seventy years and reaches eighty (90:10).

Considering the shortness of our days, Moses concludes that each day is precious and should be spent gaining wisdom in our hearts. The biblical definition of wisdom is to fear God, that is, to revere, respect, and obey Him with a sincere heart (Prov. 9:10). If we labour daily to know God, love Him more, and abide in Him, then our days will not be futile; they will find satisfaction in God’s mercy and be filled with rejoicing (90:14).

Moses concludes by asking that God would bless them by letting His work, glory, and beauty be upon them and their children. He also asks that God would establish all the work of their hands — something especially important for their children who would inherit the Promised Land. Moses knew that without the Lord going before them into the Land, they could never succeed (90:16-17; cf. Deuteronomy 2:7; 14:29; 16:15; 24:19).

Since Psalm 91 is untitled, it is traditionally believed to be composed by the author of the preceding psalm; therefore, this may well be another psalm by Moses. It expands upon the thought of Psalm 90:1, which expresses that the Lord Himself is “our dwelling place”. In Psalm 91, we learn of the blessings received by those who abide in Him. There is a difference between one who dwells and one who abides in the Lord. To dwell means to remain for a time, but abide means to continually remain or stay. Not all believers abide in constant closeness and fellowship with the Lord, but this is what He desires of His people. This difference in the closeness to God could account for the drastic change in tone from Psalm 90, which is somber, to that of Psalm 91 which is joyful and comforting (compare 90:10 and 91:16).

The blessing in this psalm is the security of the one who trusts fully in the Lord. He is providentially protected from “the snare of the fowler” (one who traps birds), which means that the believer who abides in the secret place of the Lord will never be caught in a trap by the great

liar and deceiver, Satan. Under the wings of God, the trusting believer finds a place of refuge like a well protected chick (91:3-4a).

Another means of protection is in knowing the truth of God (His Holy Word), which acts as our armour, that we might be victorious over evil and never have fear (91:4b-6). Yet another means of protection for the one who abides in the Lord is that God's angels will keep watch over him, lest he stumble (91:11-12). Satan quoted this verse of scripture in tempting Jesus, but since Jesus knew the truth of the Word of God, He knew that Satan twisted its meaning. When Jesus rebutted by quoting the truth of Scripture, it was like a weapon, whereby Jesus was victorious (cf. Heb. 4:12; Eph. 6:17). The devil left and the angels came and ministered to Jesus (Matthew 4:5-11). Those who abide in the Lord and know His truth, can likewise be victorious over the devil and his demons, and the angels are close by to come to our aid. Whether it be a lion (an open and direct attack by Satan), or a serpent (an indirect, deceptive, or subtle attack by Satan) the abiding believer will trample over it victoriously (91:13)!

God Himself gives the reason for all these blessings: "Because he has set his love on Me.. .[and] because he has known My name" (91:14). The fuller revelation of God in the New Testament has revealed that name to be "Jesus". Therefore, to know God's name is to know and love Jesus personally and abide in Him (Acts 4:12; John 15:4-9). Our Lord Jesus is that refuge — "the secret place of the Most High" (91:1; Heb. 6:18-20).

## **Prayer**

We love You today, oh God, because You have first loved us and have proven Your love in so many wonderful ways. Teach us the secret of abiding in You, giving us a place of peaceful rest and security.