

My Refuge And My Shield – Psalm 119.113-120

During World War II, following word that an only son had been killed in action, a priest was called to the home of grief-stricken parents. The father, pacing the floor, weeping, in anger demanded, “Where was God when my son was being killed?” Silence prevailed. Then the ministering priest replied, “I guess where He was when His Son was being killed.” The calm, profound answer impacted the father, for it brought God out of remoteness into the circle of real life.¹ Sometimes in life we can feel like God has left us to ourselves, to figure out life on our own, to make our own decisions, to find our own path. However, this could not be further from the truth. For God would never leave us nor forsake us (Deuteronomy 31.8| Hebrews 13.5), but there are times when it seems like God is not with us, like we are on our own. In this Psalm, the Psalmist is reminding himself about Who God is and His faithfulness.

First, he reminds us how we must watch-out for those who say one thing and do another. The Bible calls those people ‘double-minded.’ The Apostle James writes, “But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind. For that person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways” (James 1.6-8, ESV).² A double-minded man, one who is hesitant, indecisive, uncertain, or wavering in the things of God is unstable in all his ways. The Psalmist says, “I love Your Law” (vs.113), I want to follow the Words of the Lord God Almighty. Why because He is our Refuge and Shield, He is our only Hope in this world. We must put our trust in God in all He says He will do.

Second, how do we go about doing this? By staying away from those who would draw us away from God, from His Word, and from a relationship with Him. The Psalmist is a little more blunt about it; he says, “Away from me, you evildoers...” (vs.115). Why does he say this? So, he can be focused on God’s Word. We too, must keep the right people around us so, we can be focused on the right things in life, especially God’s Word.

Third, we need to recognize it is only God Who can sustain us, uphold us, and give us the direction in our life. God will never break His promises or dash our hopes, He will fulfill all He has said He would do. We must be faithful in following Him, in remaining in His Word, and fellowshiping with the One True God, our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ the King of kings and Lord of lords.

Fourth, God is a Loving and Compassionate God, but He is also a Just God, One Who will judge the whole earth. We need to be on the right side of God’s judgement. Understand this, God judgments in our life today are here to help us follow Him, to bring us into a closer relationship with Him. This is what a Father does to the children He loves. If we were not His children then He would not punish us the way He does. This does not mean the unjust go unpunished while alive on earth, but God’s main concern is how His children are living and what they are doing for Him (Hebrews 12.3-17).

Finally, as we remember God is our Refuge and Shield, we must also have great fear for who God is. Now when we say, “fear,” we mean “awe, reverence, honor as unto the King of kings and Lord of lords.” Not “fear” as “I am afraid of a snake.” God deserves our awe and wonder for

¹ Jones, G. C. (1986). *1000 illustrations for preaching and teaching* (p. 147). Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers.

² *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*. (2016). (Jas 1:6–8). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

all He has done and will do in our lives. Remember, He sent His only Son to die on the cross in our place so we could be sent free from our bondage of sin and death (Romans 5.8, 6.18-23, 8.1-9; 2 Corinthians 5.21). Remembering this will help us stand in awe of God, His Son, and His Word, and should help us want to be in His Word more and more each and every day. Just like a new video game we cannot put down because of how great it is. All the actions, the graphics, sound, and whatever else has gotten our attention. The Word of God must draw us with the same AWE and MORE because It's Words are life for our very soul.

Application

1. Have you ever felt like God has left you to yourself? How did you feel in that moment? What did you do to remove this feeling? Where do you believe God had gone? Remember this God will never leave you nor forsake you, when these feelings come along it is our flesh pushing God aside. Stop in that moment, and spend time in His Word, bring Him back into the picture and this feeling will subside.
2. Take 10 minutes today and reflect on a time in your life when God was your Refuge and Shield. How did it make you feel to know God was protecting you in that moment? Have you allowed God to continue to be your Refuge and Shield since? If not, Why?
3. Take time to read Romans 5.8, 6.18-23, 8.1-9 and 2 Corinthians 5.21. What do these verses say about who you used to be and who you are now? How has your relationship with God changed because of Christ in relation to these verses?

Prayer

Dear Heavenly Father, I want to thank You for Your Son, Who died so long ago for my sins. If it was not for His unselfish sacrifice on the cross, I would not have the opportunity to spend time in Your presence. Thank You for Your loving kindness and mercy and grace that set me free. Lord, help me to be of one mind, focused on You and Your Word, knowing You are always right there beside me helping me every day. Help me stay focused on the important things and keep me away from those who would distract me from You. In Jesus Christ Name, Amen.