

It is another Monday morning, and time to look into the Word of God, spend time with Him in prayer, and head out into the week. God bless you as you walk in the sheltering love of Jesus.

SHELTERED IN THE ARMS OF GOD

or

THE HOLY PERIMETER

A Devotional prepared by Dr. Robert L Morris

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“Those who trust in the LORD are like Mount Zion, which cannot be moved, but abides forever. As the mountains surround Jerusalem, so the LORD surrounds His people from this time forth and forever.” (Psalm 125:1-2; NKJV)

There is something reassuring about the knowledge that the mountains that “surround” Jerusalem are immovable. It is even more reassuring to know that in like manner, the Lord “surrounds” His people, and that without ceasing. Ah! Yes! This is being Sheltered in The Arms of God! This is The Holy Perimeter. The following Scripture verses are only a few examples of the use of forms of the root word: סָבַב – “săbâb.” (Note: the first “a” in “săbâb” is pronounced like the “a” in “ah,” and the second “a” is pronounced like the “a” in “cat.”) Notice in each of the English verses below the words “around,” “surrounds” or “round about.”

“The angel of the LORD encamps all around those who fear Him, and delivers them.” (Psalm 34:7; NKJV)

“A fire goes before Him, and burns up His enemies round about.” (Psalm 97:3; NKJV)

“And you shall overlay it with pure gold, inside and out you shall overlay it, and shall make on it a molding of gold all around.” (Exodus 25:11; NKJV)

“LORD God of Hosts, who is strong like You, LORD? Your faithfulness surrounds You.” (Psalm 89:8; HCSB) Here I am quoting from 2 Kings: “And Elisha prayed, and said, ‘LORD, I pray, open his eyes that he may see.’ 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.” (2 Kings 6:17; NKJV)

The Hebrew word in each of these Scriptures is translated by the English word “surround” or “around” or “round about,” each being a form of the root word: סָבַב – “săbâb.”

Now, let’s get into the Scriptures quoted above, each containing a form of the basic verb סָבַב – “săbâb.” When looking into the contexts of the Scriptures noted in this study, we learn that this Hebrew word indicates some wonderful concepts that are supported throughout the Word of God. Come with me as we enter the portals of the eternal written Word of God. We will dare to walk courageously, and with determination, anticipation, and contemplation, eager to learn truth about what it means to be enfolded in or surrounded by and sheltered in the strong arms of the Eternal God. Who is this “God” we read about in the Bible, and to whom we ascribe worship? He is the God who, in His infinite power and glory spoke the word and the entire universe flashed into existence, being formed out of absolutely nothing that previously existed. Instantly, every distant star and planet found its lodging place in the vast limitless space of the universe. Every molecule and atom, every chemical element, every color and hue now known to humankind, burst into reality and took their places in the unlimited space we call the universe. He spoke and this tiny ball we call “the earth,” composed of substance or matter, elements, and gasses was put into its place in the darkness of the universe. He issued the command that the “darkness” yield to something known as “light.” He the light from the darkness, and identified them as day and night. He made the sun to provide for and govern the light of the day. He fashioned the silent orb we know as the moon, and made it to reflect the sun’s light during the night on this revolving planet as it whirls through space. He scooped out the basin of the seven seas and piled up the great granite of the mountains until they pierced the uncharted, clear blue skies. He spoke to this orb we know as the earth, and rivers and streams, oceans and lakes, plants and flowers, and the creatures of the sea and the animals of

the land were suddenly alive and well, swimming in the waters and roaming the verdant hills and valleys of this planet!

To occupy this beautiful environment, God picked up some of the earth and fashioned a creature in His own image, known as "man". He breathed into the man the breath of life, and the man became a living soul. God caused a deep sleep to fall on the man, and from him extracted a piece of bone and from it made a companion for the man. He called her "woman." From that time forward, that one man and one woman, brought together in what the Scriptures designates as marriage, occupied the beautiful garden God made for them. We know them as "Adam and Eve." They were created to create! God said to them: "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth ..." (Genesis 1:28) Tragedy broke when Adam and Eve disobeyed God. Their destiny and the destiny of every naturally engendered member of the human race emerging by and from them was sealed - a place separated far from God, and known as "hell." A price for disobedience had to be paid. But how? The heart of God is best defined by the word LOVE. Out of His infinite love for them and for us God provided what is known as "redemption." The Old Testament means of trusting God lay in the blood sacrifice of a suitable animal as determined by God Himself. The sacrificial blood of the animals could not atone for the sins of human beings. It was a temporary solution. This provision was in place until God Who became man came to pay the debt He did now owe. He is Jesus the Christ, the Second Person in the Trinity! Then came that day ... the most blessed day in earth history. A shout was heard throughout heaven and earth: "IT IS FINISHED!" The redeeming power of God defies the imagination of the greatest minds on earth. God's eternal, co-equal, co-existent Son, Jesus Christ uttered that shout. God had made the ONLY satisfactory atoning sacrifice that could be made. Redemption's plan was now complete and available for all who come to Him in faith, confessing their sins, believing and trusting His atoning sacrifice. That is what it means to be born again, and become a member of the family of God. And that is the heart of the unique story in the Book we love and refer to as The Bible. Now, join me as we look into this marvelous Book, the author of which is God Himself, and inscribed by some of His obedient servants to whom He gave that assignment. What does it mean to be Sheltered in The Arms of God? It means at least the following.

1. The Protection of God. From Psalm 34:7 we gain the truth of God's protection or care for His own. "The angel of the LORD encamps all around those who fear Him, and delivers them." (Psalm 34:7; NKJV) The word "around" is the translation a form of the Hebrew word סָבַב – "sābāb." How often in life one can find a little child, feeling frightened over something. The protecting arms of a loving Mother or Father calms the troubled, frightened heart of that child. How beautiful is that comforting 1958 song Mosie Lister brought to us, in both the lyrics and musical score. It is deeply loved.

'TIL THE STORM PASSES BY

"In the dark of the midnight have I oft hid my face,
While the storm howls above me and there's no hiding place.
'Mid the crash of the thunder, Precious Lord, hear my cry,
'Keep me safe 'til the storm passes by.'
'Til the storm passes over, 'Til the thunder sounds no more,
'Til the clouds roll forever from the sky,
Hold me fast, let me stand in the hollow of Thy hand;
Keep me safe 'til the storm passes by."
Protection! What a comfort!

2. The Peace of God. God's comforting and protecting care produces the kind of peace and tranquility that characterized the realm of King Jehoshaphat after the nation's enemies had been overcome. "Then the realm of Jehoshaphat was quiet, for his God gave him rest all around." (2 Chronicles 20:30; NKJV) Another illustration of God's peace is found when recounting the life and reign of King David. In the record found in 2 Samuel, we note: "Now it came to pass when the king was dwelling in his house, and the LORD had given him rest from all his enemies all around, that the king said to Nathan the Prophet, 'See now, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of God dwells inside tent curtains.'" (2 Samuel 7:1; NKJV) Here is the reassuring key: "Rest from all his enemies all around!" When one is redemptively related to Jesus through His shed blood on the

cross, the great hymn of the Church, Hidden Peace, written in 1899 by John S. Brown, and usually sung to the musical score created by L.O. Brown in the same year, has comforting power for every circumstance in life. The Chorus of that song is powerfully comforting:

“There’s a deep, settled peace in my soul.
There’s a deep, settled peace in my soul.
Though the billows of sin near me roll,
He abides; Christ abides.”

The tragedies, the temptations, the trials, the turmoil ... all very real as we walk through this journey called “life.” But for the Christian, the lyrics of a verse and chorus of the great hymn penned by W. D. Cornell, with music by W.G. Cooper, both in the 19th century, are reassuring and comforting.

WONDERFUL PEACE

“Far away in the depths of my spirit tonight, rolls a melody sweeter than psalm;
In celestial-like strains it unceasingly falls o’er my soul like an infinite calm.

CHORUS

Peace! Peace! Wonderful peace, coming down from the Father above!
Sweep over my spirit forever, I pray, in fathomless billows of love.”

3. The Presence of God. It is from 2 Chronicles that we learn about living in God’s magnificent presence. “And all Judah rejoiced at the oath, for they had sworn with all their heart and sought Him with all their soul; and He was found by them, and the LORD gave them rest all around.” (2 Chronicles 15:15; NKJV) We are captivated by the truth that they “sought Him with all their soul; and He was found by them...” In the Psalm of Ethan the Ezrahite, we find his prayer: “LORD God of Hosts, who is strong like You, LORD? Your faithfulness surrounds You.” (Psalm 89:8; HCSB) Living the Christian life means among many other truths, that the person is living in the presence of God. It is the reality of the words penned by C. Austin Miles in 1912: “He walks with me, and He talks with me, and He tells me I am His own; And the joy we share as we tarry there, none other has ever known.”

I close this Devotional with the beautiful song written by Dottie Rambo and Jimmie Davis.

SHELTERED IN THE ARMS OF GOD

Dottie Rambo, Jimmie Davis

1. I feel the touch of hands so kind and tender;
They’re leading me in paths that I must trod.
I have no fear when Jesus walks beside me;
For I’m sheltered in the arms of God.

Chorus (after each verse)

So let the storms rage high, the dark clouds rise;
They won’t worry me, for I’m sheltered safe within the arms of God.
He walks with me, and naught of earth shall harm me,
For I’m sheltered in the arms of God.

2. Soon I shall hear the call from heaven’s portals:

“Come home my child, it’s the last mile you must trod.”
I’ll fall asleep and wake in God’s new heaven;
Sheltered safe within the arms of God.