

## FINDING SECURITY IN A DANGEROUS WORLD

### *Note to the speaker:*

Help audience understand that although we face many dangers today, spiritual calamity is the most serious threat confronting us. Stress the need to rely implicitly on Jehovah for protection. Avoiding satanic snares will help us maintain our spirituality and find refuge in Jehovah

### **BIBLE FORETOLD INCREASING DANGERS FOR TODAY'S CHRISTIANS (3 min.)**

Physical dangers increasing, but all people face these (Mt 24:7, 8)

Christians face greater, subtler danger of spiritual calamity (Heb 10:38, 39)

Spiritual calamity is more serious, as it can lead to eternal destruction (Mt 10:28)

Very real, present danger; some have succumbed (*yb80* 10-11)

Where can we find refuge and protection?

### **PSALM 91 ASSURES US OF SPIRITUAL SECURITY AMID INCREASING DANGERS (7 min.)**

Jehovah warns of danger and provides refuge and protection

Psalms 91 uses symbolic language to describe dangers

[Invite audience to open Bibles to Psalm 91, and note phrases such as “trap of the birdcatcher,” “pestilence causing adversities,” “anything dreadful by night,” “arrow that flies by day” in verses 3, 5, 6, 10, 12, 13]

To avoid these dangers, we must know what they represent

Promised protection assures us that we need not fear [Read Psalm 91:1-3] (*w01* 11/15 15-16)

Satan, the great “birdcatcher,” views us as birds for him to prey upon (Jer 5:26; *it-1* 316)

His traps are usually camouflaged, where least expected

Just as a birdcatcher uses grain to lead a bird into a trap, so Satan appeals to fleshly desires to ensnare humans

Must make Jehovah our refuge, trust in him, take no chances

Like fledgling bird, need to stay under God's wings of protection to escape Satan's lures and maintain our spiritual security [Read verse 4] (*w01* 11/15 17)

By remaining loyal to God and doing his will, we will enjoy his protection (Ps 15:1, 2; 121:5-8; 1Jo 2:15-17)

### **AVOID BEING TRAPPED BY SATAN (30 min.)**

Satan's trap is his visible wicked system of things (1Jo 5:19)

Satan uses “bait” to trap victims—selfish attractions of world, such as wealth, fame, prominence

His system promotes godlessness by wanton excesses and cravings for sensual pleasures, such as by drugs, alcohol, sex

Jehovah helps us not to succumb to Satan's snares (2Co 2:11; Eph 6:11)

One potential threat to spiritual security is “pestilence causing adversities” (Ps 91:3)

Pestilence is deadly disease that spreads quickly

As used here, “pestilence” is symbolic; psalmist links with birdcatcher's trap

Is apparently nationalism, a divisive feature of this world lying in Satan's power (1Jo 5:19)

Arnold Toynbee: “Since the end of World War II nationalism has doubled the number of local sovereign independent states . . . Mankind's present mood is increasingly divisive” (*w01* 11/15 16)

Rulers of mankind have fanned the flames of divisive international strife

“Adversities” in the form of national prejudices, burdensome taxation, and wars have resulted (*w01* 11/15 16; *w79* 11/1 6-7)

How can we be protected from this “pestilence”?

By “dwelling in the secret place of the Most High” (Ps 91:1)

Is “secret place” to world; cannot be seen with the literal eye

Title “Most High” is clue to understanding where it is

“Most High” refers to Jehovah's position as Universal Sovereign

Place of spiritual security is position taken by those on Jehovah's side and thus in “the secret place”

Maintained by strict neutrality (Joh 17:16)

Must be careful not to be drawn into favoring a political side

Comforting to know that Jehovah will take us under his “wings” and protect us (Ru 2:12; Ps 5:11)

By dwelling in God's figurative place of protection, we will not fear any scheme formed against us [Read verses 5, 6]

Evil deeds committed by others will not make us cower in fear (*w01* 11/15 17)

Will not fear “arrow that flies by day,” such as verbal attacks, false accusations, lying propaganda, malicious slander, violent threats, legal actions (*w74* 12/15 754-5)

Jehovah can protect against all such attacks (Isa 54:17)

The figurative “pestilence” produces a spiritually dead state of heart and mind (1Ti 4:1, 2; 6:4, 5)

World of mankind in “gloom” respecting God and his purpose

By remaining in God’s refuge, Christians enjoy spiritual light and do not fear “the gloom”

World thinks it is enjoying the enlightenment and brilliance of its “midday,” its human intellectualism and materialistic views

Such indoctrination destroys spirituality (1Ti 6:20, 21)

‘Under the shadow of the Almighty One,’ and thus shaded from misleading worldly brilliance, those dwelling in security see thousands falling in spiritual death [Read verses 7, 8]

Integrity keepers assured that “it will not come near” them

Protected, we merely see the retribution heaped upon the wicked (Ga 6:7)

Although the world’s security is breaking down, those who make Jehovah their refuge are assured that no calamity will befall them [Read verses 9, 10]

These are the calamities previously described in this psalm

Even “natural” calamities do not destroy our faith and spiritual security (*w01 11/15 19*)

Note that ‘not even a plague will draw near to our tent’

This will be true if we remain no part of the world, including its immorality, materialism, and false religion

A particularly effective snare of Satan is immorality

Demons have been sex-oriented since days of Noah (Ge 6:4)

They delight in promoting immorality through media

The lure of immorality can easily entrap one, as in the case of David (2Sa 11:2-4)

Majority of disfellowshippings due to immorality

We can avoid this snare by safeguarding our spirituality

#### **JEHOVAH, OUR SURE REFUGE AND SALVATION** (5 min.)

Great enemy, Satan, continually tries to stumble God’s servants by wrecking their spirituality

Angels have a command to guard God’s servants [Read verses 11, 12]

Guarded from stumbling spiritually and falling for man-made systems for salvation and from worshiping “the wild beast” and its “image” (Re 13:1-18)

Even ‘stones,’ such as bans against the preaching work, will not stumble us and cause us to fall from divine favor

Like a “young lion,” Satan may make open, frontal attack through powerful worldly agencies or strike from concealment like a hidden “cobra” [Read verse 13]

Need to recognize the source, Satan, and his aim to devour (1Pe 5:8)

If we stay loyal to Jehovah and keep our integrity, he will provide us with escape and a place of refuge [Read verses 14-16]

Calling on the divine name in faith, we will be saved (Ro 10:11-13; *w01 11/15 20*)

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read or commented on)