

## PSALMS 11

{11:1} In the LORD I take refuge. How then can you say to me: "Flee like a bird to your mountain. {2} For look, the wicked bend their bows; they set their arrows against the strings to shoot from the shadows at the upright in heart. {3} When the foundations are being destroyed, what can the righteous do?"

When we think of security, do we think about an insurance policy, a bank account, a strong military, a bomb shelter? A refuge is a place where we can take cover in times of danger. In many buildings, the stairwells or perhaps the basements are designated as "areas of refuge."

What are the things we look for in picking a place of refuge? Of course, the answer depends on the nature of the danger. We might think of one set of values if the danger is a tornado or another set if the danger is economic failure. One common value all the various sets would have would be "strength." Another common value we would look for would be the ability to insulate us from the effects of the danger. For example a metal box might be the ideal thing that provide the strength to protect us from the effects of a tornado or hurricane; however, you would not want to be in that "refuge" in the case of a fire. We may look out into the future and try to predict what dangers might be coming our way and take steps to build a refuge to which we can go in times of danger; however, we cannot know all the possibilities of the dangers that might be there. Something can come along that we never imagined could or would ever happen and we find ourselves at the end of our resources.

David found himself in various sorts of physical danger in his life. At times, his situation seemed hopeless. The king and all the king's men were attempting to do him in. It would seem to the faint-hearted advisors that the only solution was to run away and hide. David knew that our ultimate and only security is in God. All other resources will eventually fail.

{4} The LORD is in his holy temple; the LORD is on his heavenly throne. He observes the sons of men; his eyes examine them. {5} The LORD examines the righteous, but the wicked and those who love violence his soul hates. {6} On the wicked he will rain fiery coals and burning sulfur; a scorching wind will be their lot. {7} For the LORD is righteous, he loves justice; upright men will see his face.

In the second half of this Psalm, David list the reasons he took refuge in God and did not run away and hide.

1. Jehovah has not gone away. He is in His temple. We may not sense His presence, but He is always where He is supposed to be. The fact that the Lord is in His holy temples speaks of the special revered position He has as divine ultimate spiritual Head of all things. David also noted that the Lord is on his throne. The throne represents the truth that God is Supremely Sovereign over all things and reigns over and oversee all things universally.
2. God is never surprised by the plotting and scheming of men since He see everything that happens and knows every thought of every heart. If God is absolutely omniscient and nothing escapes his scrutiny, the He knows the danger that is around us and since He is also omnipotent, then He is infinitely able to protect us from every danger that may come our way.
3. When we do have problems and experience danger, then the righteous can be assured that God has examined them in the very depth of their being and the trials are allowed in their lives for the purpose of refining and purifying them. On the other hand, the Lord examines the wicked and trials are brought to their lives because God is actively opposing them and hindering what they are doing. When we are told that God "hates" the wicked we need to keep in mind that "love and hate" are not so much emotions as they are actions. The opposition that God gives to the wicked is described in terms descriptive of what happened to Sodom and Gomorrah. This description of

fiery coals and burning sulfur is a preview of the ultimate destination of the wicked in hell.

4. We have confidence in the righteousness of God and His ultimate justice that will prevail. Sometimes that justice works out in time, in the history of man; but, it will always work out in eternity when all come before His throne in Heaven.

If God is sovereign and if He is all knowing and all powerful and if he is taking action for our best interest and opposing the wicked, then why would we ever be tempted to run away and hide? As a popular song affirms, "Because He lives, I can face tomorrow, Because He lives, all fear is gone, Because I know He holds the future, Then life is worth the living, Just because He lives.

When trouble comes and all the traditional solutions are no longer working, then we may be tempted to lose heart and become discouraged. We are encouraged and revitalized when we realize that God is still in control. He knows what is happening and He knows who is good and who is evil.

For those who will not respond to God's grace and offer of salvation, judgment will come and right will prevail while evil will fail.