**TIME ALONE WITH GOD**

Ingredients:

* Half an hour, every day.
* Quiet, so you focus on yourself and on God;
* Prayer, worship, thanksgiving, as your response to God
* Word, so you can ponder His truth
* Life, people and events, so you are aware of Him in these situations

Method:

* Time – a fixed time when you are unlikely to be interrupted is best but more important is to actually start having such a time with God.
* Quiet – A simple method is to be quiet until you are aware you are in God’s presence before you start to respond to Him.
* Word – Read and be familiar with what is said. Meditate on the Word: “What does it say?” “What does it mean?” “How should I respond?” You may use the questions to help you or set them aside.
* Life – Use the time to also be aware of the things that are happening, inside you and around you. Bring these before God and speak to Him.

# Monday and Tuesday

[**PSALM 91:1-2**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm%2091&version=NIV)

Remember this is your time alone with God. It is a time to tell God what is on your mind (thinking back over the past day), listen to him speak to you (reading and meditating on a bible passage), and finally, to respond to him (prayer). The questions are there to help you do this. Ignore them if they do not help. If your time is limited, I suggest that you don’t do everything in one go but spread them over the two days.

1. Take time to be quiet so you can focus on your time alone with God. Recall and briefly write down any significant things that happened or occupied you during the past day. Share with God what you thought or felt. Pray also for those he has laid on your heart.
2. Read [PSALM 91:1-2](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm%2091&version=NIV). Write down what you think the passage is about and what it says to you. Feel free to use the questions in “Further Thoughts” to help you think over the text.
3. What is God saying to you? Write down a prayer in response.

**Further Thoughts**

This psalm has no title, and therefore the author remains unknown. Because it shares some of the themes of Psalm 90, some think Moses was the author. Because it shares some of the themes and phrases of Psalm 27 and Psalm 31, some think the author was David. “Some of its language, of strongholds and shields, reminds us of David, to whom the Septuagint ascribes it; other phrases echo the Song of Moses in Deuteronomy 32, as did Psalm 90; but it is in fact anonymous and timeless, perhaps all the more accessible for that.” (Derek Kidner)

In this study I bring up Moses, the writer of Psalm 90, to contrast with the writer of this Psalm, which, for simplicity, I am attributing to David. If you have not, you may want to begin with the meditation on Psalm 90, TAWG-2023-Week-04.

1. *“Whoever dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty.”* For David, God as his dwelling place was very different from the experience described by Moses in Psalm 90. What is it like for David to know God as his dwelling place? Is your own experience closer to David’s or Moses’?
2. *I will say of the Lord, “He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust.”* Can you recall any stories of David that show how God has been his refuge and fortress? Do you have any stories of your own in this respect? If you do, just make quick references to them here. If you don’t, perhaps you might ask, “why not?”
3. *I will say of the Lord, “He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust.”* To testify of God, as David does so here, “He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust” one should have some experiences of God to back it up. But at the same time it is also a matter of faith, of resolve, in times of difficulty. How would you respond to God in whom you dwell?

# Wednesday and Thursday

[**PSALM 91:3-8**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm%2091&version=NIV)

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1. Take time to be quiet so you can focus on your time alone with God. Recall and briefly write down any significant things that happened or occupied you the past day. Share with God what you thought or felt. Pray also for those he has laid on your heart.
2. Read [PSALM 91:3-8](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm%2091&version=NIV). Write down what you think the passage is about and what it says to you. Feel free to use the questions in “Further Thoughts” to help you think over the text.
3. What is God saying to you? Write down a prayer in response.

**Further Thoughts**

1. *“Surely he will save you from the fowler’s snare and from the deadly pestilence. He will cover you with his feathers, and under his wings you will find refuge; his faithfulness will be your shield and rampart. You will not fear the terror of night, nor the arrow that flies by day, nor the pestilence that stalks in the darkness, nor the plague that destroys at midday.”* Flowing from the previous sentiment, ‘I will say of the Lord, “He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust.”’, David describes what it means for him to trust God as his refuge and fortress. Could you take what he said and put it in your own words: what does it mean to trust God as your refuge and fortress?
2. *“A thousand may fall at your side, ten thousand at your right hand, but it will not come near you. You will only observe with your eyes and see the punishment of the wicked.”* Logically it would be unwise to take this whole section (vv3-8) literally, but more as a poetic expression of what it means to have God as your refuge and fortress. Could you put in your own words what you think it means to have God as your refuge and fortress?
3. Why do you think David seemed to have a much better experience of God than Moses? Does it mean that God loved David more than Moses? Why do you think some Christians seem to have an easier experience of the Christian life than others?

# Friday and Saturday

[**PSALM 91:9-16**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm%2091&version=NIV)

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1. Take time to be quiet so you can focus on your time alone with God. Recall and briefly write down any significant things that happened or occupied you the past day. Share with God what you thought or felt. Pray also for those he has laid on your heart.
2. Read [PSALM 91:9-16](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm%2091&version=NIV). Write down what you think the passage is about and what it says to you. Feel free to use the questions in “Further Thoughts” to help you think over the text.
3. What is God saying to you? Write down a prayer in response.

**Further Thoughts**

1. *“For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways; they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.”* These verses were quoted by Satan in the temptation of Jesus (see Luke 4:9-12). What do you think Jesus meant with his answer? Would this guide us in the way we should apply these promises in our Christian life?
2. *“If you say, “The Lord is my refuge,” and you make the Most High your dwelling, no harm will overtake you, no disaster will come near your tent. … You will tread on the lion and the cobra; you will trample the great lion and the serpent.”* If that is the case (question 1) how can we express “He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust” in our Christian walk without presumptuously putting God to the test, or should we just take them as nice words to express our faith in God but in reality we should do everything we can to look after ourselves?
3. *“Because he loves me,” says the Lord, “I will rescue him; I will protect him, for he acknowledges my name. He will call on me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble, I will deliver him and honor him. With long life I will satisfy him and show him my salvation.”* When we believe this we will always call on him, knowing that he will answer. As has been said many times, because it is true, the point is not that things will then turn out the way we expect, but that in doing so we place ourselves under the shadow of the Almighty, and there we find rest. Spend some time in prayer as you respond to what God says to you.

# Sunday

**MY GOD IN WHOM I TRUST**

*I will say of the Lord, “He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust.”*

In 1 Samuel 13, David was described as “a man after my own heart” by God. In Exodus 33 we are told that “The Lord would speak to Moses face to face, as one speaks to a friend.” Both of them enjoyed a close fellowship with God but their life experiences were very different.

All Moses wanted (in a manner of speaking) was to wake up each morning with a deep sense of the unfailing love of God, to sing for joy and to be glad all his days. David stood on the unfailing love of God and trusted him to always come through for him.

Both of them had a deep relationship with God but both their experiences were very different. Both of them drew close to God but their circumstances were very different.

It would be wrong to read Psalm 91 and expect the same outcome as David experienced when he called on God. Moses had a much tougher time. And our Lord ended up on the cross. Yet we would not say that God was not true to any of them.

What we should take from this Psalm is that we should draw close to God and trust him and know that God will not betray that trust. He is our refuge and our fortress. When we do so we will then rest in the shadow of the Almighty. God hears our call and God will respond to our call. God will bless our efforts. God will protect us. God will honour us. God will satisfy us. And at the end of the day we will stand before him.

However, how our life experience will take shape will depend on our circumstances, the task that God has placed on us, and the work he wants to do in us. God does not have a “one size fit all” response to us. But all who draw near to God will rest in the shadow of the Almighty.

*“Because he loves me,” says the Lord, “I will rescue him; I will protect him, for he acknowledges my name. He will call on me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble, I will deliver him and honor him. With long life I will satisfy him and show him my salvation.”*

1. Review the answers/thoughts you wrote down in the past week. Read the short sharing above. Does it add anything to your own thoughts?
2. What is God saying to you? Write down a prayer in response.