

THE WINGS OF GOD

“He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High shall abide (remain stable and fixed) under the shadow of the Almighty - Whose power no foe can withstand” (Psalm 91:1).

Have you ever thought about the wings of God? When I think of wings, I sometimes think of birds, or a mother pigeon taking care of her little ones. When I was young I used to keep pigeons and I remember the mother bird laying her eggs and guarding those eggs by sitting on them and watching over them. When those eggs hatched these tiny, helpless little birds appeared. They had no feathers and their eyes were shut, and they looked very vulnerable. But the mother was there, and with her instinct to provide protection and care, she kept her young chicks under her wings and provided a place of protection and security. Those wings were a shelter and a refuge for her offspring.

I heard a story once about a hen that apparently perished in a barnyard fire; but after the rubble was cleared out they found, under that hen, the baby chicks, alive. The mother's wings had protected those little ones; she had laid down her own life, and those little chicks were safe and were preserved under her. Likewise, as we look into the psalms, there are a number of verses that talk about how the “wings of God” provide a place of safety, security and refuge for us. The first thing we will notice in these verses is that the “wings of God” are for you and for me a place of satisfaction, and a place of refreshment. Psalm 63 is a psalm that was written by David when he was out in the wilderness of Judah. The early verses of that psalm tell us that he was in a dry and thirsty land where there was no water. He was in a dry, parched place. Yet, in the midst of that dry place, he found the “wings of God” - a place of satisfaction and a place of refreshing.

Let's read Psalm 63:3 together. David says to God, **"Because Your lovingkindness is better than life, my lips shall praise You."** Now remember where David is. He's in the wilderness, in a dry place where there is no water. But instead of focusing on the dryness and what he doesn't have, he looks heavenward, and he finds something that he does have - the lovingkindness of God. He says, *"Your lovingkindness, O Lord, is better than life."* In other words, if I perish out here in this wilderness, I have something that is more enduring than life itself. So, he says, by faith I'm going to praise You.

Verse 5, **"My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and abundance."** Now he's not in a place of abundance; he's in a place of need and desperation, but he says, *"In Your presence and in Your love, I will be satisfied as if I had plenty and more than enough. And my mouth shall praise You with joyful lips."*

Then verse 7, **"Because You have been my help, therefore in the shadow of Your wings I will rejoice."** He finds under the wings of God a place of satisfaction, a place of refreshment, even though it's a dry land. He goes on in verse 8 to say, **"My soul follows close behind You; Your right hand upholds me."** We see the same thought in Psalm 36. In verses 5 and 6 of that passage, David talks about the mercy of God, the faithfulness of God, the righteousness of God, and the judgments of God. And then he says in verse 7, **"How precious is your lovingkindness, O God! Therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of Your wings."** Because of God's lovingkindness and care, we find our place of satisfaction and refreshment under the shadow of His wings. He goes on in verse 8, **"They are abundantly satisfied with the fullness of Your house, and You give them drink from the river of Your delights."**

In a dry and thirsty land, the presence and the wings of God provide for us a place of satisfaction, a place of abundance and refreshment and joy. As I read these passages I realise that we will never find true, lasting, deep satisfaction in anything or anyone other than God. And I think that's one of the reasons why God sometimes moves us into wilderness places - to realise that we need Him, and that in Him we have everything that we need.

The other thing these psalms reveal is that you and I can have joy and fullness, and we can have abundance, even in the midst of the desert. Even in a dry and thirsty land. It may be the desert of endless demands on your life and the physical exhaustion and weariness that comes along with that. But in the midst of those deserts, as we put our trust under the "wings of God", we find satisfaction, refreshment, abundance, and joy.

We also find in the psalms that the wings of God are a place of shelter from storms. Psalm 57 paints for us a picture of the "wings of God" providing such refuge. The setting of this psalm is, again, David speaking when he was fleeing from King Saul, who was a violent and insanely jealous king. So he cries out to the Lord, (verse 1), and he says, ***"Be merciful to me, O God, be merciful to me! For my soul trusts in You; and in the shadow of Your wings I will make my refuge, until these calamities have passed by."*** David is saying, Lord, there's a storm passing by; there are calamities that are pouring in on my life. But I have a shelter, and that shelter is the "wings of God;" that's my refuge and my shelter, and I'm going to stay there until these calamities have passed by. We see the same thought in Psalm 61:1-2, where David says, ***"Hear my cry, O God; attend to my prayer. From the ends of the earth I will cry to You, when my heart is overwhelmed."*** We don't like to be in places where our hearts are overwhelmed.

But more often than not that's what it takes in our lives to get us to the place where we cry out to the Lord. When there are no storms, we just go through life without ever thinking about God! But when the storms come, that's when we think, I need a refuge! I need a way to get out of this storm; I need some protection, a shelter in the midst of this storm! So David says, *"In the midst of this storm I will cry out to You; when my heart is overwhelmed; lead me to the rock that is higher than I. For You have been a shelter for me, a strong tower from the enemy. I will abide in Your tabernacle forever; I will trust in the **shelter of Your wings**"* (verses 2-4).

You see what David keeps coming back to? *"Lord, You have provided a shelter, a refuge for me. So what do I have to do? I have to run to that place, and then I have to trust You. As those little birds, those little chicks come under the wings of the mother, and trust, so I will wait for You to meet all my needs."* I'm certain that there are some of you who are going through storms. There are a number who may have physical challenges and health issues. And then some of you are facing challenges and storms bigger than what you've ever experienced before. I want to remind you tonight; you have a safe place, a refuge, a shelter in the midst of any hardship you may be experiencing. So come to the Lord and say, *"Lord, I come to find refuge under Your wings. You are more than enough; You are sufficient; You are my hiding place; and in You I am completely safe."*

"Lord, keep me as the apple of Your eye; Hide me under the shadow of Your wings" (Psalm 17:8).