



Life Guide

applying God's Word to life

He Commands His Angels Concerning You September 28-30, 2019

Psalm 91

- ¹ He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High
will rest in the shadow of the Almighty.
- ² I will say of the Lord, "He is my refuge and my fortress,
my God, in whom I trust."
- ³ Surely he will save you from the fowler's snare
and from the deadly pestilence.
- ⁴ He will cover you with his feathers,
and under his wings you will find refuge; his faithfulness will be
your shield and rampart.
- ⁵ You will not fear the terror of night,
nor the arrow that flies by day,
⁶ nor the pestilence that stalks in the darkness,
nor the plague that destroys at midday.
- ⁷ A thousand may fall at your side, ten thousand at your right hand,
but it will not come near you.
- ⁸ You will only observe with your eyes
and see the punishment of the wicked.
- ⁹ If you make the Most High your dwelling—
even the Lord, who is my refuge—
¹⁰ then no harm will befall you,
no disaster will come near your tent.
- ¹¹ For he will command his angels concerning you
to guard you in all your ways;
- ¹² they will lift you up in their hands,
so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.
- ¹³ You will tread upon the lion and the cobra;
you will trample the great lion and the serpent.
- ¹⁴ "Because he loves me," says the Lord, "I will rescue him;
I will protect him, for he acknowledges my name.
- ¹⁵ He will call upon me, and I will answer him;
I will be with him in trouble, I will deliver him and honor him.
- ¹⁶ With long life will I satisfy him
and show him my salvation.

1. What's your favorite Bible story with an angel in it? What do you like about it? There are many great answers. In church we read Daniel 10 and 12 (*At that time Michael, the great prince who protects your people, will arise. There will be a time of distress such as has not happened from the beginning of nations until then. But at that time your people—everyone whose name is found written in the book—will be delivered.*) and, Revelation 5:11-12 (*Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels, numbering thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand. They encircled the throne and the living creatures and the elders. ¹² In a loud voice they were saying: "Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!"*). Don't forget about 2 Chronicles 32:21 (*And the Lord sent an angel, who annihilated all the fighting men and the commanders and officers in the camp of the Assyrian king. So he withdrew to his own land in disgrace. And when he went into the temple of his god, some of his sons, his own flesh and blood, cut him down with the sword.*). Angels save Daniel from lions (Daniel 6:22 *My God sent his angel, and he shut the mouths of the lions. They have not hurt me, because I was found innocent in his sight. Nor have I ever done any wrong before you, Your Majesty.*). An angel announced the births of John (Luke 1:11-19 ¹¹ *Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing at the right side of the altar of incense. ¹² When Zechariah saw him, he was startled and was gripped with fear. ¹³ But the angel said to him: "Do not be afraid, Zechariah; your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you are to call him John. ¹⁴ He will be a joy and delight to you, and many will rejoice because of his birth, ¹⁵ for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He is never to take wine or other fermented drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit even before he is born. ¹⁶ He will bring back many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God. ¹⁷ And he will go on before the Lord, in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the parents to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous—to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."*¹⁸ Zechariah asked the angel, "How can I be sure of this? I am an old man and my wife is well along in years."¹⁹ The angel said to him, "I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to you and to tell you this good news.) and Jesus (Luke 1:20-21 ²⁰ *And now you will be silent and not able to speak until the day this happens, because you did not believe my words, which will come true at their appointed time.*"²¹ Meanwhile,

the people were waiting for Zechariah and wondering why he stayed so long in the temple.; Luke 1:26-38 ²⁶ In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, ²⁷ to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸ The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you."

²⁹ Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. ³⁰ But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. ³¹ You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. ³² He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, ³³ and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end." ³⁴ "How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?" ³⁵ The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. ³⁶ Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be unable to conceive is in her sixth month. ³⁷ For no word from God will ever fail." ³⁸ "I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May your word to me be fulfilled." Then the angel left her). Angels appeared on Christmas night (Luke 2:8-14 ⁸And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. ⁹An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. ¹¹Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹²This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." ¹³ Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, ¹⁴ "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests."). Angels attended Jesus after the devil tempted him (Matthew 4:11 *Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him*). Angels appeared at Jesus resurrection (Matthew 28:2-7 ² There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it. ³ His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. ⁴ The guards were so afraid of him that they

shook and became like dead men. ⁵ The angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. ⁶ He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. ⁷ Then go quickly and tell his disciples: 'He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him.' Now I have told you."), and ascension (Acts 1:10-11 ¹⁰ They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. ¹¹ "Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven."). Angels will accompany Jesus on the last day (Matthew 25:31 *"When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his glorious throne."*)

2. Agree or disagree: The world is scarier when you are a child than when you are an adult. Agree: 1) Uncertainty is scary, and children are uncertain about everything, including 2) darkness 3) closets 3) what's under the bed. 4) Children, more than adults, have good reason to fear strangers. Children depend on others for their daily needs, while most adults can figure out survival more or less independently. Disagree: Problems which adults deal with are considerably more significant than children's problems. Adults are aware of their failings, the pressures of family and social life, the threat of local violence, international conflict. To put it shortly, adults can watch the frightful nightly news, and children generally don't. Resolution: While adults have more ability to deal with fearful situations, they also encounter more frightening things. Who's more afraid, the adults in your house or the children in your house? In other words, who can better appreciate the ministry of angels?

3. Read through Psalm 91 and underline every word or phrase that describes something scary. Then add two scary things from your own life. Give everyone 2 minutes to read silently and underline words, or, read it aloud s l o w l y and have them underline as they listen. I've underlined words on this sheet. You might add 21st-century equivalents of these ancient dangers. "arrows that fly by day" are replaced by school shooters. "pestilence" is replaced with cancer. "A thousand may fall" becomes the list of funerals you've attended. You

could also add new ideas like family strife, terrorism, the decay of our society, or mental illness.

4. Read through Psalm 91 one more time and circle every word or phrase that describes God delivering you. Then add two real life ways God examples of how God can deliver you from danger. Repeat the process used in number 3. I've circled some words on this sheet. This is a great time to invite people to share stories of how they've seen God's hand in their life. Infantrymen tell of missiles veering away from their jeep at the last second. Survivors describe a miraculous recovery after their doctor said there was nothing more to do. But don't forget the less miraculous, more natural ways God helps us. Did anyone here die from polio? That is certainly a testament to modern medicine, but God gave man his mind! Medicine is God's way of taking away the "fear of the pestilence that stalks in the darkness." The same can be said for armored trucks, and mental health counselors, and many more natural ways God blesses us.

5. Verses 14 and 15 makes it clear that people who trust in God will still go through trouble. How would you comfort someone who's living a "Ps. 91:15 year" instead of a "Ps. 91:8 year"? Just because God promises to deliver us from evil, doesn't mean nothing bad ever happens to Christians. When we find ourselves in trouble, it is good to remember that God is still in control of it. A wise man once said, "It's easier to handle trouble from a loving God than from a world that hates me." God is with you in the middle of trouble, and his ultimate promise is to deliver you in his time. Keep in mind, Psalm 91 doesn't say you'll never be in the battle, only that you will not perish in the battle. It doesn't say you won't be in the plague, only that you need not fear the plague. It doesn't say that you won't encounter lions and snakes, only that Jesus has crushed the head of the snake, and he is with you every time you meet an enemy.

6. Angels are invisible spirits (Heb. 1:14). Angels sometimes appear as winged creatures (Isaiah 6:2). Angels sometimes look like humans (Heb. 13:2). They're super-human (2 Ch. 32:21). There are millions of them. (Rev. 5:11). Psalm 91:11 says they are on your side! How might we be negatively affected if we deny or forget about the existence of angels? Secondly, what might we get wrong if we overemphasize the importance of angels?

Hebrews 1:14 – *Are not all angels ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation?*

Isaiah 6:2—*Above him were seraphim, each with six wings: With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying.*

Hebrews 13:2—*Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it.*

2 Chronicles 32:21—*And the Lord sent an angel, who annihilated all the fighting men and the commanders and officers in the camp of the Assyrian king. So he withdrew to his own land in disgrace. And when he went into the temple of his god, some of his sons, his own flesh and blood, cut him down with the sword.*

Revelation 5:11—*Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels, numbering thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand. They encircled the throne and the living creatures and the elders.*

Many people deny all miracles and the existence of angels. They miss out on the comfort of having God's super-soldiers watching over them. They have only cheap comfort to offer children who are frightened in the dark, mothers who are frightened before surgery, and grandparents who worry about their grandbabies.

Other people make far too much of angels by worshiping them, praying to them, and trusting them more than they trust Jesus. Don't forget what the 1st Commandment means! *We should fear, love, and trust in God above all things.* As wonderful as angels are, they only do the will of God. It is God who protects us even when he uses medicine to do it, and it is God who protects us when he uses angels to do it. Trust in God, worship God, because it is God who saves us!

7. What references to the devil do you see in Psalm 91? Discuss why each word picture is a good representative of the devil.

The fowler's snare (v. 3)- Satan loves to set a trap for us, just like a bird-catcher (fowler) sets a net. He baits his trap with lies, and when we believe them we've fallen for his scheme (2 Cor. 2:10-11 *Anyone you forgive, I also forgive. And what I have forgiven—if there was anything to forgive—I have forgiven in the sight of Christ for your sake,* ¹¹ *in order that Satan might not outwit us. For we are not unaware of his schemes;* Eph. 6:11-12 ¹¹ *Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes.* ¹²

For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.)

The deadly pestilence (v. 3)- could refer to the deadly poison of sin that Satan spreads (Isaiah 1:4-5 ⁴ *Woe to the sinful nation, a people whose guilt is great, a brood of evildoers, children given to corruption! They have forsaken the Lord; they have spurned the Holy One of Israel and turned their backs on him.* ⁵ *Why should you be beaten anymore? Why do you persist in rebellion?*

Your whole head is injured, your whole heart afflicted.; Mark 2:16-17 ¹⁶ *When the teachers of the law who were Pharisees saw him eating with the sinners and tax collectors, they asked his disciples: “Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners?”* ¹⁷ *On hearing this, Jesus said to them, “It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.”*)

The (great) lion (v. 13)- Satan wants to destroy us (1 Peter 5:8 *Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.*). If you have a sturdy stomach and you want to get a sense of this word picture, google “lion kill” and watch a video result. This is not The Lion King!

The serpent (or cobra) (v. 13)- Satan appeared as a snake (Gen. 3:1-6 *Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God really say, ‘You must not eat from any tree in the garden?’”* ² *The woman said to the serpent, “We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden,* ³ *but God did say, ‘You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.’”* ⁴ *“You will not certainly die,” the serpent said to the woman.* ⁵ *“For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”* ⁶ *When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.) and is called a great dragon (Rev. 12:9 *The great dragon was hurled down—that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him.*) Snakes are creepy, like the devil, poisonous and deadly.*

8. The devil tried to use Psalm 91:11 to train-wreck our salvation. (Matthew 4:5-7). Jesus trampled him, just like Psalm 91 foretold.

How is Psalm 91:13 different when you read it with Jesus in mind? (Matthew 4:5-7 ⁵ *Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple.* ⁶ *“If you are the Son of God,” he said, “throw yourself down. For it is written: “‘He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.’”* ⁷ *Jesus answered him, “It is also written: ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’* [Deuteronomy 6:16]”) We can trample Satan because Jesus did. His victory is our victory. Jesus finally destroyed Satan when he crushed him on the cross. This is what was predicted in Genesis 3:15. (*I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.*)

9. Here’s a closing prayer for your study. Before praying it together, take an opportunity to say which line means a lot to you today. **I thank you my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ your dear Son, that you have graciously kept me this day, forgive me all my sins and graciously keep me this night. Into your hands I commend my body and soul and all things. Let your holy angel be with me that the wicked foe may have no power over me Amen.**