

Sermon Title: **"EL SHADDAI: LIVING WITH CONFIDENCE IN THE PANDEMIC!"**

Sermon Text: **Psalm 91**

*Introduction:*

**GOOD MORNING TO ALL!** WE PRAISE THE LORD FOR ANOTHER BEAUTIFUL SUNDAY MORNING THAT HE HAS GIVEN US. FOR THOSE JOINING US FOR THE FIRST TIME IN PERSON OR ONLINE, WE WELCOME YOU TO OUR SUNDAY CELEBRATION SERVICE! FOR YOUR INFO, WE ARE STUDYING THE BOOK OF PSALMS UNDER THE THEME **"PONDERINGS ON THE PSALMS: FINDING MEANING & PURPOSE IN THE PANDEMIC!"** FOR THIS MORNING, WE ARE GOING TO STUDY A VERY FAMILIAR PSALM WHICH I THINK HAS BECOME ONE OF THE MOST QUOTED PSALM OR SCRIPTURES DURING THIS PANDEMIC - **PSALM 91!**

**FOR A CHANGE, LET US ALL READ PSALM 91! READ!!!**

WE CAN SAY THAT THIS YEAR 2020 HAS BEEN A VERY DIFFICULT YEAR ESP. FOR MANY ALASKANS. THIS YEAR OUR NATION HAS BEEN BESIEGED BY ONE CALAMITY AFTER ANOTHER. **IN MARCH, WE WERE CAUGHT OFF GUARD BY THE COVID 19 VIRUS FOR EVER CHANGING OUR POLITICAL & ECONOMIC LANDSCAPE AS A NATION.** I THINK THAT THIS VIRUS IS THE MOST POLITICIZED VIRUS EVER IN THE HISTORY OF THIS NATION IN WHICH WE HAVE SEEN A DEEPER POLARIZATION OF OUR PEOPLE. AND THE END TO THIS COVID CRISIS IS NO WHERE YET IN SIGHT!

**LAST MAY, WE HAVE THE RONNIE FLOYD CASE THAT OPENED UP DEEP SEATED RACIAL DIVIDE IN THIS NATION. AND WHICH IGNITED VIOLENT PROTESTS & RIOTS THAT DISRUPTED & DESTROYED BUSINESSES & ESTABLISHMENTS EVEN UP TO THIS POINT IN TIME.**

**THIS SEPTEMBER, WE ARE NOW BATTLING EXPLOSIVE FIRES THAT ARE RAVAGING OUR FOREST IN THE WEST COAST STATES OF CALIFORNIA & OREGON & HAVE TAKEN LIVES AS WELL AS DOZENS OF PROPERTIES ALREADY & STILL RAGING ON.**

**NOW, WHEN WILL ALL THESE CALAMITIES & TROUBLES STOP? I THINK IN TIMES LIKE THIS, WE NEED A SOLID ANCHOR FOR OUR SOUL. WE NEED A CONFIDENCE THAT IS UNSINKABLE & UNSHAKABLE. AND THIS IS WHAT WE WILL DISCOVER AS WE STUDY PSALM 91!**

**LET US PRAY!**

**A. MOSES CONFESSES THE CONFIDENCE OF HIS LIFE!**

**NOW, AS WE STUDY THIS PSALM, WE CAN EASILY DIVIDE IT INTO TWO SECTIONS – IN VERSES 1-8, WE FIND MOSES CONFESSING THE CONFIDENCE OF HIS HEART/LIFE AND IN VERSES 9-16, WE SEE MOSES CHALLENGING HIS HEARERS/READERS & US TODAY TO ALSO PUT THEIR TRUST & CONFIDENCE IN HIS GOD!**

**SO, LET’S BEGIN OUR STUDY NOW BY LOOKING AT VERSES 1-8 & HERE WE SEE MOSES CONFESSING & EXPRESSING THE CONFIDENCE OF HIS HEART & LIFE! AND IN VERSES 1-2, WE FIND PARTICULARLY, THE BASIS OF MOSES’ CONFIDENCE.**

**1) Moses reveals the BASIS of his confidence!**

***“The one who lives under the protection of the Most High dwells in the shadow of the Almighty. I will say concerning the Lord, who is my refuge and my fortress, my God in whom I trust...” (vv. 1-2)***

**IN VV. 1-2, MOSES REVEALS TO US THE BASIS OF HIS CONFIDENCE AND THIS IS THE LORD HIS GOD! TAKE NOTE THAT IN THESE TWO VERSES, MOSES USES FOUR NAMES OF THE LORD THAT I THINK GIVES US THE REASON OR RATIONALE FOR THE CONFIDENCE OF MOSES.**

- a) “MOST HIGH” (“ELYON”) – THIS REFERS TO THE LORD AS THE SUPREME MONARCH OR RULER. IT SIGNIFIES THE LORD’S MAJESTY, SOVEREIGNTY & PREEMINENCE AS THE SOVEREIGN KING OF HEAVEN & EARTH. (Gen. 14:18)**
- b) “ALMIGHTY” (“SHADDAI”) – AS I’VE ALREADY MENTIONED EARLIER THIS NAME REFER TO THE LORD AS THE “ALL**

POWERFUL” & “ALL SUFFICIENT” GOD OF ABRAHAM & HIS PEOPLE! (GEN. 17: 1-2)

- c) “LORD” (“YAHWEH”/“JEHOVAH”) – THIS REFERS TO THE COVENANT NAME OF GOD THAT HE GAVE TO MOSES WHEN ASKED WHAT IS HIS NAME – “I AM” SPEAKS OF HIS BEING A PERSONAL GOD. HE IS NOT ONLY THE GOD WHO SUSTAINS THE UNIVERSE BUT THE GOD WHO KNOWS THE VERY NUMBER OF OUR HAIRS!
- d) “GOD” (“ELOHIM”) – THIS WAS THE SAME NAME THAT MOSES USED IN GEN. 1 TO INTRODUCED THE CREATOR OF HEAVEN & EARTH! HE IS THE FIRST & THE LAST, THE SUPREME CREATOR & SUSTAINER OF THE UNIVERSE.

CHURCH/FRIENDS, HERE LIES THE CONFIDENCE OF MOSES. HE HAS PLACED HIS TRUST & CONFIDENCE IN THE LORD HIS GOD AS HIS SHELTER, REFUGE & FORTRESS BECAUSE HE KNEW THAT THE LORD IS THE SUPREME & SOVEREIGN CREATOR, RULER, & LORD OF ALL, THE ALL POWERFUL & SOVEREIGN GOD! HE HAS CHOSEN TO SET/FOCUS HIS HEART TO WORSHIP & OBEY HIM. MOSES HAS DECIDED TO PUT HIS TRUST & CONFIDENCE IN THE LORD’S SOVEREIGN POWER TO PROTECT, PROVIDE, & SECURE HIS LIFE!

CHURCH/FRIENDS, IN THIS PANDEMIC, TO WHOM WE PLACE OUR TRUST & CONFIDENCE MATTERS! FOR THIS WILL DETERMINE THE STATE & CONDITION OF OUR HEART! THIS ALSO MEANS THAT WE CAN EITHER CHOOSE TO WORRY ABOUT MANY THINGS OR WORSHIP THE GOD OF MOSES & TRUST HIS SOVEREIGN POWER TO WORK OUT HIS GOOD PLAN FOR OUR LIFE! AND THE CHOICE IS OURS TO MAKE!

2) He relays the BLESSINGS of his confidence!

IN NEXT VERSES (3-8), MOSES RELAYS TO US THE BLESSINGS OF THIS CONFIDENCE.

(a) The first is DIVINE PROTECTION!

*“He himself will **rescue** you from the bird trap, from the destructive plague. He will **cover** you with his feathers; you will take refuge under his wings. His faithfulness will be a protective shield.”*  
(vv. 3-4)

THIS HAS SOMETHING TO DO WITH **OUTSIDE OR EXTERNAL EVILS, DANGERS, AND ENEMIES** THAT THREATENS TO HARM AND DESTROY US. MOSES ASSURES US THAT THE LORD WILL BE OUR PROTECTION & OUR SHIELD FROM THESE ENEMIES!

(b) The second is **DIVINE PEACE!**

*“You will **NOT FEAR** the **terror** of the night, the **arrow** that flies by day, the **plague** that stalks in darkness, or the **pestilence** that ravages at noon. Though a thousand fall at your side and ten thousand at your right hand, the **pestilence** will not reach you. You will only see it with your eyes and witness the punishment of the wicked.”* (vv. 5-8)

TAKE NOTE THAT IF THE FIRST BLESSING HAS SOMETHING TO DO WITH OUR EXTERNAL ENEMIES, THE SECOND BLESSING HAS SOMETHING TO DO WITH OUR **INNER OR INTERNAL ENEMIES** LIKE **FEAR** OR **WORRY** OR **ANXIOUS** OR **NEGATIVE THOUGHTS**. REMEMBER THAT WE HAVE ENEMIES FROM WITHOUT AND FROM WITHIN!

I THINK THAT ONE OF THE GREATEST DAMAGE/DESTRUCTION THAT THIS COVID CRISIS BROUGHT IN THE LIVES OF PEOPLE TODAY WHETHER HERE IN THE US OR OTHER NATIONS IS THIS - **FEAR & ANXIETY!** INDEED, FEAR IS A VERY POWERFUL TOOL OF THE DEVIL TO IMMOBILIZE & DISTRACT PEOPLE INCLUDING BELIEVERS IN LIVING A NORMAL LIFE. THIS FEAR COULD BE **“FEAR OF DEATH”, “FEAR OF LOSING OUR LOVED ONES/JOB/WORK”, “FEAR OF THE UNKNOWN, ETC.”** WE ARE USED TO BE ALWAYS IN CONTROL OF OUR LIFE BUT NOW WE ARE NOT! WE ARE CAUGHT OFF BGUARD BHY THIS PANDEMIC!

I THINK I’VE SHARED THIS ALREADY THAT IN THE INTIAL STAGE OF THE PANDEMIC, WE ARE HAVING SHORTAGE OF TISSUE PARERS, DISINFECTANTS, FOOD, BUT NOW IN MIDDLE & LATER

PART, WE ARE HAVING SHORTAGE OF DEPESSION MEDICINES IN OUR PHARMACIES NOWADAYS.

THEREFORE, THE LORD IS ASSURING US HERE THAT WHEN WE MAKE THE LORD THE CONFIDENCE OF OUR LIFE, OUR SHELTER, OUR REFUGE & FORTRESS, WHEN WE PLACE OUR TRUST IN HIM & SET OUR HEART IN WORSHIPING & OBEYING HIM, HE WILL BE OUR PROTECTION & OUR PEACE! HE WILL SHIELD US FROM ALL DANGERS & ALL OUR ENEMIES FROM WITHOUT AND FROM WITHIN! SO, ASK YOUR SEATMATE, “LABAS AT LOOB NA PROTEKSYON. MERON KA NUN? THE QUESTION IS - “DO YOU HAVE THIS KIND OF PROTECTION?”

B. MOSES **CHALLENGES** US TO MAKE THE LORD THE **BASIS** OF OUR CONFIDENCE TOO!

NOW, NOT ONLY DID MOSES CONFESS HIS CONFIDENCE IN THE LORD HIS GOD, IN THE NEXT SECTION OF THE PSALM, HE IS CHALLENGING THE READERS/HEARERS/US TO HAVE THE SAME CONFIDENCE IN HIS GOD!

1) Moses **persuades** us to have the same **confidence**!

*“**Because you have made the Lord**—my refuge, the Most High—your dwelling place... **Because he has his heart set on me...**”*  
(v. 9, 12, CSB)

***If you say, “The Lord is my refuge,” and you make the Most High your dwelling...**Because he loves me...**”*** (v. 9, 12, NIV)

IN VERSES 9 & 12, WE FIND MOSES **PERSUADING** YOU AND ME TO MAKE THE SAME DECISION AND COMMITMENT THAT HE DID REGARDING THE LORD – **“IF YOU MAKE THE LORD...IF YOU LOVE HIM/SET YOUR HEART ON HIM...”** MOSES, HERE, IS ACTUALLY CHALLENGING US TO PUT OUR TRUST & CONFIDENCE IN HIS GOD - EL SHADDAI!

NOTE THAT MOSES ACTUALLY ADDED A CLARIFICATION AS TO WHAT IT MEANS TO PUT YOUR TRUST IN EL SHADDAI IN VERSE 14 -

**IT IS TO LOVE HIM (v. 14a). TRUSTING GOD IS LOVING GOD & LOVING GOD IS OBEYING HIS COMMANDS! (JOHN 14: 16). IF YOU TRUST THE LORD, YOU WILL STILL LOVE & OBEY HIM EVEN THOUGH YOU FEEL OR SEE THAT HE IS NOT WORKING IN YOUR BEHALF. REMEMBER THE DANIEL AND HIS FRIENDS? (DAN. 3:16-18). THEY COMMITTED THEMSELVES NOT TO BOW TO IMAGE MADE BY KING NEBUCHADDNEZAR. SABI NILA, “KAHIT DI KAMI ILIGTAS NI LORD SUPERNATURALLY, TRUST PA RIN KAMI SA KANYA. LOVES PA RIN NAMIN SIYA!”**

2) Moses **parades MORE BLESSINGS** for his **confidence!**

IN VERSES, 10-16, MOSES GIVES US **ADDITIONAL BLESSINGS** FOR THOSE WHO WILL TRUST “EL SHADDAI” & SET THEIR HEARTS ON HIM.

(a) The first is **DIVINE PROTECTION** through angels!

*“No harm will come to you; no plague will come near your tent. **For he will give his angels orders concerning you, to protect you in all your ways.** They will support you with their hands so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.” (vv. 10-12)*

INTERESTINGLY, THE DEVIL QUOTED THIS VERSE TO TEMP THE LORD JESUS IN MATTHEW 4. REMEMBER ALSO THAT IN THAT STORY OUR LORD JUST HAD COMPLETED HIS 40 DAYS OF PRAYER AND FASTING, AND HERE COMES SATAN TEMPTING HIM. BUT THE LORD OVERCAME SATAN THROUGH THE WORD & THEN WE READ IN THAT HE WAS MINISTERED BY ANGELIC BEINGS! THE WRITER OF HEBREWS TEACHES THAT ANGELS MINISTERS TO THE NEEDS OF GOD’S PEOPLE. THE WRITER OF HEBREWS EVEN EXHORTS US TO ENTERTAIN VISITORS IN OUR HOMES BECAUSE BAKA “ANGELS” ANG MA-SERVE MO! (HEB. 13:1).

*“Now to which of the angels has he ever said: ‘Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool?’ **Are they not all ministering spirits sent out to serve those who are going to inherit salvation?**”* (Heb. 1: 13-14)

(b) The second is **DIVINE POWER** against demons!

***“You will tread on the lion and the cobra; you will trample the young lion and the serpent.” (v. 13)***

***“Be sober-minded, be alert. Your adversary the devil is prowling around like a roaring lion, looking for anyone he can devour. 9 Resist him...” (1 Peter 5: 8, 9)***

**MOSES IS TELLING US THAT WE CAN RENOUNCE & DRIVE OUT THE WORKS OF SATAN IN OUR LIFE AND OTHERS THROUGH THE POWER, DELIVERANCE, AND INNER HEALING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT!**

**(c) The third & last is DIVINE PROMISES from the Lord!**

***Because he has his heart set on me, I will deliver him; I will protect him because he knows my name. When he calls out to me, I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble. I will rescue him and give him honor. I will satisfy him with a long life and show him my salvation.” (vv. 9-16)***

**I CALL VERSES 14-16, THE LORD’S “PLEDGE OF LOVE”! TAKE NOTE THAT THESE ARE PERSONAL PROMISES OF THE LORD “EL SHADDAI” TO ALL THOSE WHO PUT THEIR TRUST IN HIM & MAKE HIM THEIR CONFIDENCE! IN THESE PROMISES, THE LORD PLEDGES TO BE ALL THAT WE WILL EVER NEED HIM TO BE IN THIS THIS LIFE! THE LORD PROMISES TO BE OUR ALL IN ALL OUR NEEDS!**

### **PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS/APPLICATION QUESTIONS:**

**(1) WHAT IS THE CONFIDENCE OF OUR HEART/LIFE TODAY? IS IT OUR WEALTH/POSSESSIONS/POWER OR OUR HEALTH/STRENGTH/WISDOM/BEAUTY?**

**FOR MOSES, IT IS THE LORD OUR GOD! HE HAS MADE THE LORD GOD ALMIGHTY “EL SHADDAI” HIS SHELTER & REFUGE. AS POINTED OUT BY THE APOSTLE PAUL, “IF GOD IS FOR US, WHO CAN BE AGAINST US?” (ROM. 8:31). THE TRUTH IS, ACCORDING TO PAUL, WE ARE SUPER CONQUERORS THROUGH JESUS CHRIST WHO LOVED US (ROM. 8: 37). PRAISE THE LORD! GOD BLESS!**



- a) **WEALTH/POSSESSIONS/POWER** – THE WORD OF GOD SAYS THEY ARE ONLY WITH US FOR A MOMENT & THEN THEY FLY AWAY! SETTING YOUR HEART ON RICHES IS FUTILITY!

*“Don’t wear yourself out to get rich; because you know better, stop! **As soon as your eyes fly to it, it disappears, for it makes wings for itself and flies like an eagle to the sky.**” (Pro. 23: 4-5)*

- b) **HEALTH/STRENGTH/BEAUTY** – THEY ARE TEMPORARY & FLEETING. THEY SOON WILL PASS AWAY! BUT INNER BEAUTY & STRENGTH IS WHAT WE SHOULD ASPIRED & DIE FOR!

*“**Charm is deceptive and beauty is fleeting,** but a woman who fears the Lord will be praised.” (Pro. 31: 30)*

**WE WERE ALL SHOCKED WHEN WE HEARD THE NEWS THAT /ONE OF THE STAR OF THE BOX OFFICE HIT MOVIE “THE BLACK PANTHER”, CHADWICK BOSEMAN DIES AT AN EARLY AGE OF 43 OF CANCER! DON’T SAY YOU ARE HEALTHY NOW BECAUSE IT COULD BE YOU THE NEXT TIME!**

**(2) WHAT IS THE FOCUS OF OUR HEART/LIFE TODAY? IS TO SEEK EARTHLY PLEASURES & FULFILL OUR FLESHLY DESIRES WITHOUT RESTRAINT OR TO SEEK & DO THE LORD’S WILL & PURPOSE WITHOUT RESERVATION?**

- a) OUR PURSUIT OF **EARTHLY HAPPINESS/PLEASURE** LEADS ONLY TO **EMPTINESS & DISAPPOINTMENTS!**

*I said to myself, **“Go ahead, I will test you with pleasure; enjoy what is good.” But it turned out to be futile. I said about laughter, “It is madness,” and about pleasure, “What does this accomplish?”** (Eccl. 2: 1-2)*

**A LIFE FOCUSED ON SEEKING EARTHLY PLEASURES OR HAPPINESS WILL BE DISAPPOINTED & WILL LEAD ONLY TO EMPTINESS! MAN WAS CREATED TO FIND HIS TRUE HAPPINESS & PLEASURE IN GOD HIS MAKER ALONE! AS SAINT AUGUSTINE HAS PUT IT, “MAN WILL NOT FIND REST UNTIL HE RESTS IN THE LORD!”**



FOR BELIEVERS LIKE US, OUR TRUE HAPPINESS & JOY CAN NOT BE FOUND IN THE THINGS OF THIS WORLD BUT IN DOING THE WILL OF OUR GOD. OUR TRUE JOY & HAPPINESS IS IN THE LORD! IT IS A BY-PRODUCT OF OUR OBEDIENCE TO HIS WORD! THIS IS THE REASON THE LORD COMMANDS US TO SEEK HIM & TO SEEK TO BE HOLY LIKE HIM, FOR THEN & ONLY THEN CAN WE EXPERIENCE TRUE JOY & HAPPINESS! AS GOD'S PEOPLE, WE ARE COMMANDED TO SEEK FOR HAPPINESS BUT FOR HOLINESS!

b) OUR PURSUIT OF **FLESHLY DESIRES** LEADS ONLY TO **MISERY & DESTRUCTION!**

*“Don’t be deceived: God is not mocked. **For whatever a person sows he will also reap, because the one who sows to his flesh will reap destruction from the flesh, but the one who sows to the Spirit will reap eternal life from the Spirit.** Let us not get tired of doing good, for we will reap at the proper time if we don’t give up.” (Gal. 6: 7-9)*

c) BUT OUR PURSUIT OF DOING **GOD’S WILL & HOLINESS** LEADS TO **TRUE JOY & HAPPINESS!**

*“For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, **instructing us to deny godlessness and worldly lusts and to live in a sensible, righteous, and godly way in the present age,** while we wait for the blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ.” (Titus 2: 11-13)*

THEREFORE, REMEMBER THAT **WHERE WE PLACE OUR TRUST & CONFIDENCE**; AND THAT IS, WHERE WE **FOCUS OR SET OUT HEART** IN THIS TIME OF PANDEMIC WILL **DETERMINE THE STATE & CONDITION** OF OUR WHOLE PERSON!

SO **AGAIN, WHO/WHAT IS THE CONFIDENCE OF YOUR HEART/LIFE TODAY?**