

God, Our Great Protector

(Psalm 91)

Introduction

We've been learning about God's attributes. An *attribute* is a character trait or quality about someone.

What are some of things that we've learned about God already?

- God is **great creator** —He created the whole universe! We know that there is a God because we see what He has done. We see the wonderful things which He has created.

The heavens declare the glory of God; And the firmament shows His handiwork. (Psalm 19:1)

- God is **holy**—He is without sin; He is perfect in every way.

Who is like You, O LORD, among the gods? Who is like You, glorious in holiness, Fearful in praises, doing wonders? (Exodus 15:11)

- God is **just**—He always does what is right and fair.

He is the Rock, His work is perfect; For all His ways are justice, A God of truth and without injustice; Righteous and upright is He! (Deuteronomy 32:4)

- God is **merciful**—He extends forgiveness to us even though we don't deserve it.

Through the LORD's mercies we are not consumed, Because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness. (Lamentations 3:22-23)

- God is **love**—He always does what is best for me even when I'm not at my best.

Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. He who does not love does not know God, for God is love. (1 John 4:7-8)

- God is **all-knowing**— God knows everything—past, present, and future. He knows all about you—even what you are thinking. He knows your deepest needs and desires, and He knows how to meet them.

Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out! (Romans 11:33)

- God is **all-powerful**—He is almighty; He has all power in heaven and earth and can do anything. There is no limit to His power.

With God all things are possible. (Matthew 19:26b)

- God is our great **provider**—He is a generous, gracious, abundant provider.

And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:19)

Today we're going to focus our attention on the fact that God is our great **protector**.

Can anyone share about a time that God protected them in a fearful situation? [Teacher, share with the children a personal story in which God protected you in a fearful situation.] God doesn't protect just adults; He protects boy and girls, too.

What are some things kids your age worry about? (Getting a good grade on a math exam. Making the team at soccer tryouts.) What kind of troubles might kids your age face? When might someone need to depend on God's help and protection? (When they are in danger. When they are uncertain about the future. When others might tease them for doing something they believe in.)

God has promised to protect us. This does not mean that you will never get hurt, but it does mean that God is always able to care for you. Sometimes God allows things to happen to us that we think are bad, but God uses them for our good.

Today we will learn about God's wonderful protection.

Opening Prayer

Father, You are our Great Protector. Help us to really know that we don't have to worry or fret about things that happen to us in life. Help us to always remember that You are always there for us, even in most scary times. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Memory Verse

*God is our refuge and strength, A very present help in trouble.
(Psalms 46:1)*

Lesson

Open your Bibles to Psalm 91. We are not exactly sure who wrote this praise song to God. Some think it might have been Moses. Whoever it was, he uses lots of word pictures to help us understand what he's trying to explain.

Psalm 91:1

Those who live in the shelter of the Most High will find rest in the shadow of the Almighty.

Here Moses speaks of people living in the "shadow" of God. The Bible tells us that God is spirit. He obviously does not cast a shadow, like a shade tree. Have you ever had to work out in the blazing hot sun? Isn't it a relief to come into the shade? Here Moses is using a word picture to describe how we can find spiritual rest by being "in Christ."

You are "in Christ" if you believe that Jesus died on the cross and rose from the dead so that your sin can be forgiven. When you do that, God says you are clean and pure in His sight because He sees you as "in Christ."

It's like taking a piece of paper all covered with marks and placing it inside your Bible. Now all you can see is your Bible. You can't see the dirty piece of paper. In the same way, when you accept that Jesus

took your punishment on the cross – when you believe that what Jesus did on the cross satisfied God's need to punish all sin – then God no longer sees you as guilty before Him. He only sees Jesus' righteousness because you are "in Christ" (2 Corinthians 5:17; Hebrews 13:5-6). He is our place of shelter and safety from the wrath of God against sin.

Psalm 91:2

This I declare about the LORD: He alone is my refuge, my place of safety; he is my God, and I trust him.

Do you have a favorite hiding place? In Bible times, people hid from danger in caves. God is our hiding place, our place of shelter. If you are "in Christ" then God will protect you from eternal death.

Being "in Christ" is our place of safety.

Psalm 91:3

For he will rescue you from every trap and protect you from deadly disease.

Moses knew that Satan often tries to destroy God's people. Have you ever caught a mouse in a mouse trap? Satan will try to catch you in his trap, in just the same way. He will set the trap and then put something tempting in it – not a piece of cheese, but a temptation to sin. Maybe he will tempt you to covet something that belongs to someone else, something you've seen other kids have or something you've seen advertised on TV that wouldn't be good for you. God said that you are not to covet. It's one of the Ten Commandments. But Satan wants you to covet things you don't have.

What other kinds of traps does Satan try to catch us in? (Sin of all sorts: lying, slandering, jealousy, coveting, and, disease.)

1 Peter 5:8

Stay alert! Watch out for your great enemy, the devil. He prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour.

Satan is the great destroyer. But God is able to protect you in every situation no matter what Satan may try to do. You may face some scary situation, perhaps when you are home alone or when you have to be some place in the dark. At those times you should remind yourself that God is always able to protect you.

However, when bad things happen, remember that God still has everything under control. Even though we can't always understand why hard times come into our lives, nothing happens to you and me except what God knows is best. Moses had learned this lesson well by seeing what God did to protect the Israelites in Egypt.

David knew this, too.

Psalm 18:2

The LORD is my rock, my fortress, and my savior; my God is my rock, in whom I find protection. He is my shield, the power that saves me, and my place of safety.

Now Moses uses another word picture to explain that God is our great protector.

Psalm 91:4

He will cover you with his feathers. He will shelter you with his wings. His faithful promises are your armor and protection.

Now obviously God does not have feathers! Moses is saying that if you are "in Christ" you are as safe as a little chick that hides under the wings of its mother.

This verse also assures you that you will be just as safe as a soldier wearing armor and standing behind a big strong metal shield because God always keeps His promises.

Psalm 91:5-6

Do not be afraid of the terrors of the night, nor the arrow that flies in the day. (6) Do not dread the disease that stalks in darkness, nor the disaster that strikes at midday.

God is protecting you night and day. Have you ever had "night terrors" or nightmares? You can have peace in these dreadful situations; remember that God is with you and powerful enough to do anything.

Let's skip down to verse 11 and 12 to see how God protects us.

Psalm 91:11-12

For he will order his angels to protect you wherever you go. (12) They will hold you up with their hands so you won't even hurt your foot on a stone.

God sends His angels to protect you wherever you go. Did you know that children have guardian angels?

Matthew 18:10

Beware that you don't look down on any of these little ones. For I tell you that in heaven their angels are always in the presence of my heavenly Father.

God assured the children of Israel that He would protect them as they made their journey to the Promised Land.

Exodus 23:20

"See, I am sending an angel before you to protect you on your journey and lead you safely to the place I have prepared for you.

Angels are servants of God sent to take care of us.

Hebrews 1:14

Angels are only servants—spirits sent to care for people who will inherit salvation.

Daniel experienced that. The king had passed a law that no one was to pray to any god except to him. But, Daniel refused to obey that law. So, the king threw him into a den of lions. And God honored Daniel for his faithfulness to Him. While Daniel was in the den of lions, God sent His angel to shut the lion's mouths so they would not hurt him.

Daniel 6:22

My God sent his angel to shut the lion's mouths so that they would not hurt me, for I have been found innocent in his sight. And I have not wronged you, Your Majesty."

God can keep you safe from dangerous things like mean dogs and spiders and snakes, too.

Psalm 91:13

You will trample upon lions and cobras; you will crush fierce lions and serpents under your feet!

This verse promises that God can protect you from a lion or a snake. These animals are word pictures to help you understand that God will protect you from the strongest, meanest, and most frightening of situations. Of course, you need to be wise and not foolishly put yourself into dangerous situations to see if God will protect you.

God adds His promise that He is able to deliver those who love Him.

Psalm 91:14

The Lord says, "I will rescue those who love me. I will protect those who trust in my name.

God knows that the greatest need we all have is to be saved from the judgment of our sins (Romans 6:23). If you call on God and ask Him to forgive you, He will save you.

Psalm 91:15-16

When they call on me, I will answer; I will be with them in trouble. I will rescue and honor them. (16) I will reward them with a long life and give them my salvation.

God promises to help you when you call on Him in times of trouble.

Sometimes God, in His wisdom, may allow things that seem bad to happen. But He promises to use even these situations for your good (Romans 8:28). Whatever happens, God is able to protect you.

This week when you are afraid, remember that you belong to God and that He is the strongest of all (Romans 8:38-39). No matter what comes into your life, even dangerous or frightening things, you can trust God to do what's best for you.

Closing Prayer

Father, thank You for being our Great Protector! Thank You that You are always watching out for us, even when we are unaware of Your presence. Thank You that we do not need to fear because You are always with us. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Learning Activities

Craft Corner

See coloring pages at end of lesson

Game Center

Use the following review questions in a time of discussion or a game of your choice:

1. When are times kids your age might need to depend on God's help and protection? (When they are in danger. When they are uncertain about the future. When others might tease them for doing something they believe in.)
2. What is a word picture? (A way of describing something in an understandable way.)

3. When Moses says that we can find shelter or rest in the shadow of the Almighty, what is he trying to say? (We can find spiritual rest by being “in Christ.”)
4. What does it mean to be “in Christ”? (When you believe that Jesus died on the cross, God no longer sees us as guilty before Him. He only see Jesus’ righteousness.)
5. What does verse 2 say our hiding place is? Why? (God is our hiding place; He will protect us from eternal death.)
6. What kind of trap does Satan try to catch you in? (Sin of all sorts: lying, slandering, jealousy, coveting, etc.)
7. Why did Moses have peace in the midst of dreadful situations? (He knew that God was with him and powerful enough to do anything.)
8. What did Moses mean when he said that God would cover you with his wings? Is God like a chicken? (God will keep you just as safe as a baby chick is under its mother’s wings.)
9. What did God send to protect Daniel when he was in the den of lions? (An angel.)
10. What are angels? (Servants of God; spirits sent to care for people.)
11. What is your greatest need? (To be saved from the judgment of our sins.)
12. How can you be saved? (Trust in what Jesus did for you on the cross.)
13. Does God always keep you from experiencing bad things? (No, in His wisdom, he may allow things that seem bad to happen. But, He promises to use even these situations for your good.)

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