

Home group / study notes: overcoming fear – Psalm 91

Feel free to use as much or as little as you wish. This is based on a study in '30 days' by Nicky Gumbel.

If you could be any age you wish, what age would you choose and why?

It surprised me, starting to visit the House of St Martin (for ex-offenders and those in danger of offending) how frequently I heard people say, 'It felt much safer in prison'. Can you understand this?

In a lesser way, many of us would sometimes like to be back at an age where someone else was in charge and made it safe and predictable for us.

Here are some common fears: which do you relate to?

- the future
- the dark
- being laughed at
- HIV/Aids
- bankruptcy or debt
- loneliness
- growing old
- death
- singleness
- relationships breaking up
- illness
- failure
- war

What is it that angels always say when they appear to someone (Eg Luke 1:13; 1:30; 2:10)?

This is the most common command in the whole Bible (occurring 366 times). Easier said than done?

Read: Psalm 91:1-2 (*This time it may help if everyone has an NIV or TNIV because translation of the Psalms is the most variable in the whole Bible*) Borrow some from church if needed.

Can you say verse 2 and mean it? Remember how we have seen that the fruit of the Spirit is to do with the *will*? But we are reasonable in needing evidence that the Lord will be trustworthy, so the psalmist testifies from his own experience: what **four names** for God are given in these first two verses?

- *everything under his control*
- *all powerful*
- *the universe is subject to him*
- *personal relationship*

Four nouns of security are also given in these two verses – spot them?

And **three verbs** of security too!

Read: verses 3-13. The psalmist speaks to us. Are you able to believe and receive? If not could you seek healing help from anyone?

3-6 Note all the protections offered. What might they be in modern language? Do they help with any of those fears listed above?

7-10 Individual protection. Is disaster 'coming near our tent' perhaps one of the things we fear most?

11-13 Supernatural protection is also offered. (*Where are vs. 11 and 12 quoted? Think NT, Jesus in desert...*)

Read: verses 14-16. The Lord speaks.

What eight blessings are promised? Being New Covenant people we have even more... long life becomes eternal life; salvation shown becomes salvation received.

Read: 1 Peter 5:7

Pray: As well as sharing your prayer needs, especially concerning any matters raised, one person pray tonight beginning something like this: 'In the name of Jesus, we submit our fears to you and claim your promises for this group here today'. Then read Ps 91 verses 3-16 slowly over the group, allowing gaps for people to apply it to themselves. Finish with 'Thank you Lord, in Jesus' name'.