Dear Open Door Family,

Have you ever longed for the shade? Have you ever wished you could find the shadow of something to get you out of the heat of the sun? Some of the short term Missions that I've led have taken me into areas where the temperatures were over 100 degrees. On those days when the sun was beating down we looked for shade anywhere we could find. We looked for a large bush, or a small tree, the shadow of a wall, anything to get us out of the sun. In the land of Israel, especially in the desert wilderness, shade from the sun was necessary for survival. Think in those terms as we look at these verses together.

Psalm 91:1-2 *(NLT) Those who live in the SHELTER of the MOST HIGH will find rest in the SHADOW of the ALMIGHTY. [2] This I declare about the LORD: He alone is my refuge, my place of safety; he is my God, and I trust him.*

As I read these verses I was trying to think through what the writer of this Psalm was trying to communicate. The word *SHELTER* means a covering or hiding place where there was protection because you could not be seen. The word *SHADOW* comes from the idea a mother hen gathering her chicks under the protection of her wings which she spreads over them. For a baby chick to receive that protection it had to be very close to the mother hen. The implication for us is that if we seek to be protected and covered by the Most High God we must be CLOSE to Him. The closer we are the greater the protection. There are all kinds of applications that spring from that imagery of seeking to be close to our God our Protector. Even God's name *MOST HIGH* tells us that He is above every other power. The name *ALMIGHTY* means our God is All Powerful. The conclusion the Psalmist comes to is in verse two. A declaration is made. God, and only God, is my refuge and place of safety. This concludes with a statement of purpose, God is MY God and I TRUST Him. One old song captured this imagery by relating the shadow to the cross of Jesus.

Beneath the cross of Jesus there I would take my stand,
The shadow of a mighty rock within a weary land;
A home within the wilderness, a rest upon the way,
From the burning of the noontide heat, and the burden of the day.

PRAYER: Lord God, help me to be able to say with the Psalmist that You alone are my source of security and safety. Lord help me to TRUST You. Lord I know that my ability to trust You is based on how close I stay to YOU. Please Lord, keep me Close - Keep me living in the shadow of Your cross.

Pastor Mark Kieft
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