

APRIL 2020



Dear Friends,

*'You will not fear the terror of night,
nor the arrow that flies by day,
**nor the pestilence that stalks in the darkness,
nor the plague that destroys at midday.***

*A thousand may fall at your side,
ten thousand at your right hand,
but it will not come near you.*

*You will only observe with your eyes
and see the punishment of the wicked.*

*If you say, "The Lord is my refuge,"
and you make the Most High your dwelling,
no harm will overtake you.'*

Psalm 91:5-10a

“

I fear because many of the people I know are extremely vulnerable to the disease... How do I allay those fears?

I received a screenshot of these few verses from psalm 91. It angered me (not just because I hate

spam), but because it actually says nothing about my faith at this time – it seems to indicate that if I trust in the Lord then Covid-19 will not come near to me! It is an empty promise because Covid-19 has already come to me.



Interventions Team 2 (The Interventions Team has grown from 2 to 5)

I fear because I'm in a country where the government hospitals couldn't cope before the virus, I fear because many of the people I know are extremely vulnerable to the disease. I fear because my family is far away and I can't do anything to help them (my Mom is at risk and my nephew's partner is due to give birth at any moment). I fear because the German volunteers left for home yesterday. These are scary times!

How do I allay those fears? Well Psalm 91 does actually tell me, if I read the whole psalm. It tells me that *'whoever dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty'* (v1). Even the first verse tells me that if I dwell with God, I will find rest (even though it's dark in his shadow). In the cool, dark shadows I am to trust him because *'He is my refuge and my fortress'* (v2). I can't trust in social distancing, nor can I trust in doctors, nor science, nor the government. But I can trust in God because he is faithful (v4). God promises that during the dark times he is **with those** who trust him: *'I will be with him in trouble, I will deliver him and honour him. With long life I will satisfy him and show him my salvation.'* (v15-16).

Death is an ever present reality and we will each and every one of us see it. It is both God's mercy and judgement. It is a mercy because we should never be made to live for an eternity in this broken world and it is a judgement on all who reject God's rule – if you don't want God in your life now why would you ever want to go heaven and spend an eternity with him there?

I thank God for my salvation, for my faith and for the fact that even though I am fearful I can turn to him in that fear and remind myself that he is in control (even of this virus), that he loved me enough to die for me, and that he is 'with me' not just here with the virus, but whenever I pass through any of those dark places.

Prayer points:

- Pray for C1 who is still waiting for a place of safety.
- Pray for Mel (my nephew's partner) and her baby as they prepare for delivery.
- Pray for my parents.
- Pray for South Africa as a nation to handle the outbreak as well as possible.
- Pray that these extraordinary times would bring about many Gospel conversations and opportunities for Christians to put their faith into practice as they 'love their neighbours'.
- Please pray for T1 to truly get to know Jesus, through his word.
- Please also give thanks for C2 & C3 (both have started drug out-patient programmes).
- Please give thanks for T2 who has detoxed and is staying with a family friend now.



Braai, Trio and Cam (We have completed the first year of Life on Life Discipleship, so had a party to celebrate)



Jax and Samuel (my friend's new son)