

Hurricane Proof Mothers  
Text: Psalm 16:1-11  
Series: Psalms [#3. Mother's Day]  
Lyle L. Wahl  
May 9, 2010

Theme: **People Who Take Refuge In God Are Unshakable.**

## Introduction

Hurricanes can be devastating and deadly. The most severe category of hurricanes have winds of over 155 miles per hour and storm surges of over 18 feet. In North America when we think about hurricanes we now think of Hurricane Katrina in 2005 where over 800 people died. The most deadly hurricane in the U.S. was the Great Galveston Hurricane in 1900 where somewhere between 6,000–12,000 people died. The most deadly to hit Canada was the Newfoundland Hurricane of 1775 in which over 4,000 people lost their lives. The most deadly hurricane world wide struck Bangladesh, in 1970 claiming 500,000–1,000,000 lives. Without doubt hurricanes are devastating and deadly.

Many mothers face hectic lives and hurricane-like storms. Being a Mom is a 24x7, swirling storm of meals, laundry, shopping, errands, cleaning, chauffeuring, attending meetings, volunteering at school, church, sports and community events, as well as teaching, encouraging, comforting, disciplining and mediating, along with, for many Moms, a part time or full time job outside of the home. And then ... there are the hurricanes.

In areas of the U.S. prone to hurricanes, there are building methods to make buildings *hurricane proof*. That is, to build from the foundation to the roof in ways that prevent buildings from being blown apart and swept away. What about mothers? Can there be *hurricane proof mothers*? Psalm 16 answers with a resounding “Yes!” King David says “I will not be shaken!”

This Psalm can help prevent mothers from being blown apart and swept away by hectic and turbulent demands and situations. The basic and vital truth for mothers, and all of us, is that *people who take refuge in God will not be shaken*.

## People Who Take Refuge In God.

The heading to the Psalm is “A Mikhtam of David.” What is a *mikhtam*? We don’t know with certainty. The word most likely comes from a term meaning *to cover*. It could then indicate the Psalm is about being *covered* by or secure in God. Then again it could indicate speaking with your lips covered, or quietly, even silently. We just don’t know.

The Psalm opens, “Preserve me, O God, for I take refuge in You.” Let’s begin by looking at the people who truly take refuge in God, and then move to God our refuge. King David describes several things about them.

First, they are people who make God their Lord. Look at the next verse. “I said to the LORD, ‘You are my Lord; I have no good besides You.’” Notice the first word LORD is in small

capital letters while the second one has an initial capital L. David used two different words here. The first is God's personal name stressing His eternal nature, and the second means master. King David is saying, "Eternal God, You are my Master."

There is a link between taking refuge in God in verse 1 and making Him my Lord in verse 2. The word refuge—referring to shelter, protection and trust—occurs 24 times in the Psalms, 20 of those coming from David. He found, and we find security, safety and protection in God when we bow our hearts in willing submission to His direction and control.

God is the eternal, sovereign Lord over all that exists. As David wrote in Psalm 24,

"The earth is the LORD'S, and all it contains, the world, and those who dwell in it. For He has founded it upon the seas and established it upon the rivers." (1-2)

And so we sing "He is Lord of heaven, Lord of earth. He is Lord of all who live. He is Lord above the universe."<sup>1</sup>

For us to find refuge in God we must give Him the rule, control and direction of our lives. This, as you know, is not a one time thing. It is living in all the hectic and calm, all the delightful and terrible moments under God our Master, relying totally on Him. David describes some of what this means at the end of verse 2, "I have no good besides You." We will see some of God's goodness later in the Psalm, but this goes beyond God's good gifts to God Himself. God is all that is good, all that is true and reliable to David, to everyone who finds God to be His refuge. I like the way he expressed this in Psalm 73:25, "Whom have I in heaven but You [God]? And besides You, I desire nothing on earth." These are more words that are easier for us to say than to live.

And so David set God continually before him (verse 8), that is He continually looked to and followed God. He also, verse 4 shows us, was careful not to follow after the ways and practices of people who worshiped manmade gods. Jesus put it this way,

"He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me." (Matthew 10:37-38)

In that day a person who took up, carried his cross was a dead man—sentenced to death by crucifixion. Jesus is speaking of death to looking to and following myself, anyone or anything other than Him. The force of Jesus' words is ongoing, which is clear in Luke 9:23, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and *take up his cross daily* and follow Me."

Then, in what might seem like a bit of a misfit at first, the person who takes refuge in God delights in God's people. The word *delight* is the same one we saw in Psalm 1:2, "But his [the happy one's] *delight* is in the law of the LORD..."

What does delighting in, finding pleasure in, seeing other believers as precious and desiring those relationships have to do with finding refuge in God? A core truth of God's creation and recreation in Christ Jesus is His design for people to live in fellowship and in meaningful relationships with each other as well as with Him. At creation God declared that "It is not good for man to be alone" and that nothing could take the place of people in his life (Genesis 2:18-24). God brought Israel into being to be "a kingdom of priests and a holy nation" to Him (Exodus 19:6). His pattern for their family, national and religious life included meaningful relationships with each other as well as with Him. The apostle Paul repeatedly made this point. We are individuals who are complimentary and necessary parts of God's family, the church, the *body*.<sup>2</sup> We need each other. We need to know, serve with, delight in each other to grow and function as we should.<sup>3</sup>

Part of finding refuge, part of finding shelter and security in God is being in meaningful relationships with other believers, valuing and delighting in them so that God can minister through them to you, and through you to them. To live this way is swimming upstream against the current of individualism in our time, of lives that are busy and too busy, of having relationships mainly with people with whom we feel comfortable. But swim upstream we must if we want to experience God as our refuge in a meaningful, deep way.

There is one more thing in this Psalm about people who truly find God as their refuge—they bless God. We think of God blessing us. To say that we bless God may sound unfamiliar or strange. Look at verse 7. "I will bless the LORD who has counseled me..." Some versions interpret this by using the word *praise*. The word David used here literally means to bless, and also to kneel. When God blesses us, He gives us grace and mercy. When we bless God we are saying good things about Him, giving good to Him. He does not need it, but it is an appropriate response to His grace and mercy.

So David says "I will bless the LORD..." (7). Then in Psalm 26:12 he writes "in the congregations I shall bless the LORD." When I am with other believers I will bless God. And he opened Psalm 34 with "I will bless the LORD at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth."

Have you been blessing God lately? *People who take refuge in God are unshakable*. They are people who bless God, who delight in God's people and who make God their Lord.

### **The God In Whom People Take Refuge ...**

Let's move from the people to God, the God in whom we take refuge. There are at least five things about God providing an unshakable refuge for us in this Psalm. To start, God gives people who take refuge in Him a beautiful heritage. Drop down to verse 5.

"The LORD is the portion of my inheritance and my cup; You support my lot. The lines have fallen to me in pleasant places; indeed, my heritage is beautiful to me." (5-6)

Some of us have a beautiful heritage we have received from our mothers, and from our families for generations. Values, sacrifice, critical choices, relationships that weaved a strong, beautiful fabric of heritage. We don't have extensive records of earlier generations in my family, although we can trace a few branches of the family tree back into the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Beyond the names and dates, the few stories of sacrifice and achievement that have survived, the thing that stands out the most, that is the most beautiful to me is a heritage of faith in God. I still cherish the time my grandmother told me a few years before she died at the age of 100, that every Sunday morning she had a special time of prayer for me, my Dad, her youngest son and the husband of one granddaughter because all of us were pastors. I guess it was her secret for many years because when I mentioned it to my Dad and uncle after she died, they were not aware of it. I have been blessed with a beautiful heritage of faith.

As beautiful as it is, it does not compare to the heritage that King David and we have as God's children. While others count property, bank accounts, prestige and power as their lot, eternal God Himself is our inheritance. This inheritance cannot be touched by the economy or the opinions and actions of others. God supports, ensures it forever. In Psalm 73:26 David tells us "... God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever." As the apostle Peter wrote, believers have been born

"to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for [them], who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." (1 Peter 1:4-5)

What can compare with this? God makes people who take refuge in Him unshakable with a beautiful heritage.

As well, and closely related to this, God supports and keeps them secure. Go back to verse 5 where David tells us that God supports his lot. Then go forward to the middle of verse 8, "He is at my right hand, I will not be shaken." Go on to the end of verse 9.

"My flesh also will dwell securely. For You will not abandon my soul to Sheol; nor will You allow Your Holy One to undergo decay." (9b-10)

God supports those who take refuge in Him. He keeps them secure. As David testified in Psalm 4:8, "In peace I will both lie down and sleep, for You alone, O LORD, make me to dwell in safety." Whatever has happened, whatever will happen, we are always and forever safe in God.

In verses 9-10 David writes that his flesh will dwell securely, that God will not abandon his soul to Sheol, or death, nor allow His holy one to undergo decay. In the first instance or tense of meaning he is speaking about himself. He knows that physical death is not the end, that he will then be with God. He could join Job in singing

“As for me, I know that my Redeemer lives, and at the last He will take His stand on the earth. Even after my skin is destroyed, yet from my flesh I shall see God; whom I myself shall behold, and whom my eyes will see and not another.” (Job 19:25-27a)

In the second instance or prophetic tense, David is speaking of Christ. Peter cited these verses in his sermon on Pentecost as a prophecy of Christ’s resurrection.<sup>4</sup> When Paul preached to Jews in the Synagogue at Pisidian Antioch he also cited this part of Psalm 16, stating that it was fulfilled by Christ’s resurrection.<sup>5</sup>

God supports and keeps all who take refuge in Him. They are unshakable because, as Jesus promised, “of all that [the Father] has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day.”<sup>6</sup>

Next, God counsels and instructs those who take refuge in Him. David’s testimony in verse 7 is that God “has counseled me; indeed, my mind instructs me in the night.” He knew that he could count on God’s counsel throughout every moment and circumstance. In Psalm 73:24 he tells God “With Your counsel You will guide me, and afterward receive me to glory.” David was doing for others what God was doing for him. He wrote in Psalm 32:8 “I will instruct you and teach you in the way which you should go; I will counsel you with My eye upon you.” Isn’t it great to know God will always counsel and instruct, will always guide you as you take refuge in Him?

Alex and Anita gave me a GPS for the car because I am magnetically or compass challenged. I used it again yesterday. It go me where I was going and back. It works! It helps! But it doesn’t always choose the shortest or best route. Its instructions have been good so far, but not perfect. God, who knows everything, perfectly counsels and instructs those who take refuge in Him.

Moving on, the king tells us that God also makes the path of life known to those who take refuge in Him. Drop down to the end of the Psalm, verse 11. “You [God] will make known to me the path of life.” What is this path of life? The wording might remind us of the two ways in Psalm 1, the way or the world and the way of the Word. It also might remind us of the two choices in Psalm 2 to rebel against God or to honor and follow Him. In each there are the polar paths of life and death.

King David is speaking about himself as one who already had chosen life, one who already had life in and with God. He knows from his past experiences that God will show him the way, show him how to walk in this path of life and relationship with his Lord. So he prayed in Psalm 139, “... lead me in the everlasting way” (24).

How does God do that? Psalm 119 tells us “Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path” (105). Related to this is the truth in Proverbs 10:17. “He is on the path of life who heeds instruction, but he who ignores reproof goes astray.” While this verse refers to

human instruction as well as God's, the principle is the same. God shows us the way and we are really living when we follow the instruction He gives.

We have no reason to fear God's paths for us. Psalm 25:10 tells us "All the paths of the LORD are lovingkindness and truth to those who keep His covenant and His testimonies." Do you really believe that all God's paths for you are lovingkindness and truth as you follow and obey Him? Or, are there times you think or fear that God's paths for you may not be that loving, not that accurate, at least in terms of what you think they should be? We can and should embrace and rejoice in all of God's paths for us because they *are* lovingkindness and truth.

God's way is the way to really live here and now that leads seamlessly to living with Him in heaven forever. Jesus told us "I came that they [all who come to Him] may have life, and have it abundantly" (John 10:10). The more we take refuge in God and follow Him, the better and brighter it gets in the calms and hurricanes. Proverbs 4:18 states that principle. "... the path of the righteous is like the light of dawn, that shines brighter and brighter until the full day." Your circumstances may not get better and better, your burdens may not get lighter and lighter. But the more you take refuge in God following His paths, the brighter and brighter your ways will be. As you continue to walk His paths you will see, as in the blazing noonday sun, His way of love for you, fullness and truth.

Finally, God in whom we take refuge gives us full joy and everlasting pleasures. Go to the last verse once more. "You will make known to me the path of life; in Your presence is fullness of joy; in Your right hand there are pleasures forever" (11). Isn't that beautiful? Remember Jesus' words. "These things I have spoken to you so that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full" (John 15:11). He prayed to the Father, "... now I come to You; and these things I speak in the world so that they may have My joy made full in themselves." (John 17:13)

Question: Do you know just these beautiful words, or do you also know the experience of God's joy, the experience of God's pleasures here and now? Your circumstances may be calm, but perhaps your joy and pleasure in God is like that—flat. Your circumstances may be like a hurricane and you may cry, even want to scream, "How can I have joy in a time like this! How can I know God's pleasures while I'm being battered to pieces!" The late Corrie Ten Boom said "When a train goes through a tunnel and it gets dark, you don't throw away the ticket and jump off. You sit still and trust the engineer."<sup>7</sup>

Whatever your circumstances, take refuge in God— make him your Lord in every area and circumstance, delight in Him *and* in His people, bless Him—and He will give you joy you cannot explain and pleasures with Him that are an appetizer of what it will be like with Him in heaven.

## **Conclusion.**

*Mothers, all people who take refuge in God are unshakable. As you go to God now, thank Him for your mother, whether she is with you or has already finished her course of life on*

earth, whether the memories are tender and warm or not. Then look carefully at your source of security and protection, your refuge. Ask yourself, “Who, what is really my refuge?” If anything or anyone has replaced God, confess that and truly, fully take refuge in Him.

---

<sup>1</sup> Twila Paris. *We Will Glorify*. © 1982 New Spring (Admin. by Brentwood-Benson Music Publishing, Inc.).

<sup>2</sup> e.g. Romans 12:4-5; 1 Corinthians 12:12-13.

<sup>3</sup> e.g. 1 Corinthians 12:12-27; Ephesians 4:12-16.

<sup>4</sup> Acts 2:25-28.

<sup>5</sup> Acts 13:33-35.

<sup>6</sup> John 6:39.

<sup>7</sup> Corrie Ten Boom. In *Grace for the Moment, Volume I* by Max Lucado. Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson Publishing, 2000, p. 187.

© 2010 Lyle L. Wahl

Scripture taken from the NEW AMERICAN STANDARD BIBLE®,  
Copyright © 1960, 1962, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995  
by The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission.