

Biblical Counseling Center publishes **eCounselor's Weekly** guide, to encourage counselors and all believers in discipleship and daily growth

## Living in God's Loving Protection (part 2)

By Karen Coulter, MA

A couple months back, I described three aspects of God's love and protection as a strong tower, being covered under His wings and as a secret place in Him. Below are three more ways that God expresses His loving care toward us and provides a refuge we can find in Him alone.

### My Rock!



**The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; The Lord lives; blessed be my rock; and let the God of my salvation be exalted (Ps 18:2a, 46).** Often I tell counselees that they need to have their lives and identity firmly planted on the Rock. A rock is solid, stable, and unwavering. Life changes; people come and go; circumstances change; sometimes it is stormy and sometimes it is calm. But the rock doesn't move; it remains the same.

In this life of uncertainty I'm glad I have the Lord Who does not change. I can depend on Him to be there for me. "When I need a shelter, when I need a friend I go to The Rock." My mom recently went to be with the Lord, which was sad but also a blessing since she is in Heaven and not suffering anymore. During this time I was holding on to my Rock. I remember driving down the road and singing "And though the storms may come, I am holding on, to The Rock I cling."

Psalms 61:2 says, *From the end of the earth, I will cry to You, when my heart is overwhelmed; Lead me to the Rock that is higher than I.* Some people hang on to money or other people or things that waver like the sand of the sea. But Psalm 62:6,7 tells a different story where it describes God as *my only rock and my salvation. He is my defense; I shall not be moved. In God is my salvation and my glory, the rock of my strength; my refuge is in God.* Another great word picture - *He brought me up also out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings (Ps 40:2).* We sing, "On Christ the solid rock I stand, all other ground is sinking sand, all other ground IS sinking sand." Are you standing on solid ground?

### My Shield!

**As for God, his way is perfect; the word of the Lord is flawless. He is a shield for all who take refuge in him (Ps 18:30).** A shield is a defensive barrier between you and the enemy, a protective screen that guards you from danger. No matter what Satan or the world throws at you, God is a shield of defense and protection. This doesn't mean that you will not have problems. The fact that you need a shield says that you are going to experience trouble. However, God will be with you in your trials. What seems impossible and overwhelming, discouraging and without an answer is suddenly an opportunity to trust God and see what He is going to do! *Our soul waits for the Lord; He is our help and our shield (Ps 33:20). Every word of God is pure; He is a shield to those who put their trust in Him (Pro 30:5).*

In counseling we talk about the pieces of armor in Ephesians 6. Without the shield of faith, we are bombarded by Satan's darts, lies or tricks and can only duck! Of course we must fight back with God's Word. Psalm 28:7 says that the Lord is our strength and shield and when we trust Him we rejoice and sing praise to Him. We sing, *Thou, oh Lord, are a shield about me, You're my glory and the lifter of my head (Ps 3:3)* and *You are my hiding place and my shield; I hope in Your word (Ps 119:114).* So when the darts are being thrown at us, our head does not have to hang low. We can sing knowing that He is our shield and hiding place. Do you respond to the enemy with your Shield in place?

### My Good Shepherd!

**We were like sheep going astray, but are now returned to the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls (1Pet 2:25).** Like sheep, we wander from God our Shepherd and go our own way without protection, heading to our death. Yet He loves us so much He sacrificed His life for us so that we could have eternal life. **I am the Good Shepherd; the good shepherd gives His life for the sheep (Jn 10:11).** He has redeemed us and brought us back to Himself.

A shepherd guards, defends, protects, leads and cares for His sheep. In Psalms 23, we see God providing for our needs, giving us rest, guiding and directing our path. He promises to be with us even in the threat of death. He corrects us for our own good. He guards and defends us from danger. Isaiah 40:11 says, *He will tend His flock like a shepherd; He will gather the lambs in his arms; He will carry them in his bosom and gently lead those that are young.* What a tender picture of how God cares for us! He loves us and gently leads us and even carries us when we can't go on.

He understands us and knows us individually. *I am the good shepherd, and I know my own and my own know me (Jn 10:14).* He knows our weaknesses and strengths, and our personality. God made us and knows what is best for us. *Know that the LORD Himself is God; it is He Who has made us, and not we ourselves; we are His people and the sheep of His pasture (Ps 100:3).* Often we think we should be in control and should be able to do our own thing. Like sheep we have a mind of our own and go off wandering our own way and do not realize the danger we are in. Our Shepherd gently warns us that we need to change our direction. Do you listen to your Shepherd, or do you continue on your own path?

God is my firm Rock on which I stand, my Shield of defense against the enemy of my soul, and my Good Shepherd Who watches over me until I'm Home safe. Do you know my God and have you found your refuge in HIM alone? He is waiting for you with open arms!

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