

EMMANUEL BAPTIST CHURCH

DEVOTIONAL FOR THE WEEK OF APRIL 1, 2020 – Pastor Barry Thiessen

PSALM 91: 2-4, “I WILL SAY OF THE LORD, ‘HE IS MY REFUGE AND MY FORTRESS, MY GOD IN WHOM I TRUST. SURELY, HE WILL SAVE YOU FROM THE FOWLER’S SNARE AND FROM THE DEADLY PESTILENCE. HE WILL COVER YOU WITH HIS FEATHERS, AND UNDER HIS WINGS YOU WILL FIND REFUGE; HIS FAITHFULNESS WILL BE YOUR SHIELD AND RAMPART.”

I was a young lad when I first heard the story of the prairie chicken hen who saved her chicks by hiding them under her wings as a wild fire roared over the landscape. The hen died in the blaze but her offspring were safe under her wings. I have thought of that story many times over the years and it all came back to me as I read this passage again this week. Whether the story is based on fact or fiction, I do not know. In any case it is a beautiful illustration of what God has done for his children.

Little chicks have so little life experience that they do not know the reality of fire and other life-threatening dangers. All they know is that when Mom makes a certain sound they must run and settle under her wings. One summer’s day, when I was a teenager, I was lying flat on my back watching a hawk circle high above me. I figured it had its eye on something fairly close to me but I had forgotten all about the hen and chicks that were just a few feet from me. About the same time I saw the hawk turn downwards and begin streaking toward the ground, I heard the mother hen desperately call her chicks to her. The last chicks were just arriving at her side when the bird arrived at ground level and, with talons out-front, the hawk hit the guy wire that strengthened the tension of the wash line pole. All the chicks were safe, but there was a shriek and feathers flying as the hawk gained his senses and flew off in defeat.

God built into that hen a method of protecting its children. So God has built into his plan for mankind a method of protecting his children. The verse written above reminds us of that place of refuge. Before time began, God knew that his children would need a place of refuge from the dangers and difficult issues of life. His plan was to send his Son to be the sacrifice for our sin issues and to create a place of safety. Even though King David only knew Jesus in a prophetic way, he understood this fact. This was not the first time he pictured a place of refuge, a safe place for God’s people. In Psalm 31: 5 David says, “Into your hands I commit my spirit.” He knew that the hands of God are safe and sound. He further comments on this in verse 15f of the same Psalm, “My times are in your hands.”

In these unprecedented times, we can say with David that our times are in God’s hands. We can talk to God about our frustrations, our fears and apprehensions, our joys and failures, knowing that we are in God’s hands and this is a safe place to be.

PRAYER: Lord, today I put myself with my worries, fears and frustrations into your hands knowing that they are connected to those everlasting arms. So Lord, thanks for wrapping me in your arms and providing that safe place for me and all those who love you. Amen.

Pastor Barry