

Series: God & Abraham #1135

Title: Various Scriptures

Safe to Walk with God (Part 3)

Thank you for joining me today from wherever you are and by however you listen as we meet together coast-to-coast here in the United States and all the way around the world. A hearty welcome to you on the final weekday in yet another week. When we left off last time we were reading Psalms of safety. And the reason for this is because we have been learning in Genesis chapter 12 that Abram felt safe with the Living God. In a few minutes I want to kind of step back from Genesis 12 and, in summary, touch on several points in Abram's pilgrimage with God when Abram really needed to know that God was safe. You will hear what I mean soon, but I cannot resist opening with Psalm chapter 91 (not all of it, but most of it). Listen, friends, to Psalm 91.

"He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will abide in the shadow of the Almighty. ² I will say to the Lord, 'My refuge and my fortress, My God, in whom I trust!' ...And under His wings you may seek refuge; His faithfulness is a shield and bulwark. ⁵ You will not be afraid of the terror by night, or of the arrow that flies by day; ⁶ Of the pestilence that stalks in darkness, or of the destruction that lays waste at noon...⁹ For you have made the Lord, my refuge, *even* the Most High, your dwelling place. ¹⁰ No evil will befall you, nor will any plague come near your tent. ¹¹ For He will give His angels charge concerning you, to guard you in all your ways."

Are you sensing the safety there is to be found in God? OK, good. I continue the reading now as Psalm 91, verse 12. **"¹² They will bear you up in their hands, that you do not strike your foot against a stone. ¹³ You will tread upon the lion and cobra, the young lion and the serpent you will trample down. (The Lord says) ¹⁴ 'Because he has loved Me, therefore I will deliver him; I will set him *securely* on high, because he has known My name. ¹⁵ He will call upon Me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble; I will rescue him and honor him. ¹⁶ With a long life I will satisfy him and let him see My salvation."**

This is God's Word to *you*, and I hope that someone(s) will be listening who really need to hear this. Amidst all the dangers we encounter in this life, and some of those are dangers we live with, amidst fear, anxiety, paranoia, stress, heartache, a grief perhaps...in whatever you are going through, Psalm 91 says that God is trustworthy. That under His wings you may seek refuge. His faithfulness is a shield and bulwark. Do not be afraid for the Lord is your refuge and your dwelling place. I know many people for whom this Psalm is essential. And I include myself among you.

This world can be a big, bad place – a dark place – but God is sovereign! He rules and He reigns and He is very interested in each individual, like *you*. I encourage you to run to Him at this hour. And can I recommend that you spend some quiet moments this weekend with Psalm number 91? Good. It is very good to hear the Word of God. We need it, boy do we need, in the times in which we live.

Let's get back to Abram. If you were to pick up your Bible and read through Genesis chapters 12-25 you will see how meaningful it was to Abram (who was renamed Abraham), how meaningful it is that it is safe to go walking with God. In Genesis 12 we learn that God said, **"Go"** and Abram **"went."** And then, later in Genesis 12 Abram and his wife and nephew and company come into the land of Canaan. And this was not safe! Verse 6 says, **"Now the Canaanite was then in the land."** The Canaanites were not a cultured, cosmopolitan people! These Canaanites were barbarous pagans.

No. You do not just march out of Ur and then Haran and whisk down upon the land of Canaan chalked full of Canaanites and march right through their territory and out the other side, which Abram does, without believing that God is going to keep you safe! Here is a question loved ones might ask us if we travel. A loving and caring mother, for example, might ask: "Is it safe to go there?" Well, the answer to Abram's Mama would be "no, the land of Canaan is not safe," but Abram could have assured her, "God is with us. And God will make it safe." And, read Genesis 12, God did. It is safe to go walking with God.

Then, because of a famine Abram goes to Egypt (not safe) and there Abram tells lies (not a safe thing to do), but God rescues him and Sarai, despite Abram's sinfulness. Back to the Negev, that is the south country in the land of Canaan, they safely go. And then there came that strife between the herdsmen of Abram's livestock and the herdsmen of Lot's livestock. And they were fighting each other while the

Canaanites and the Perizzites were watching. All these arguments and disputes do not make for a safe atmosphere and so something must be done. So, under the sovereignty of God, Abram and Lot agree that Lot will leave. Lot chooses to head down towards the valley of the Jordan, down there by Sodom (not safe). But Abram remains in the land of Canaan (*much* safer than Sodom) as Genesis chapter 19 reveals. God is keeping Abram safe.

We are tracing Abram's life and we come next to Genesis chapter 14 and all-out war. That's not safe! Basically, Lot gets kidnapped, taken captive. Let me read Genesis 14, verses 14-16 so that you can hear how much Abram trusted in God and found that God would keep him and his people safe.

Genesis 14, at verse 14, **"¹⁴ When Abram heard that his relative had been taken captive, he led out his trained men, born in his house, three hundred and eighteen, and went in pursuit as far as Dan. ¹⁵ He divided his forces against them by night, he and his servants, and defeated them, and pursued them as far as Hobah, which is north of Damascus. ¹⁶ He brought back all the goods, and also brought back his relative Lot with his possessions, and also the women, and the people."** Do you think Abram launches this rescue mission if he does *not* think God is safe? If Abram does not trust that God will keep them safe, does he do this? I do not think he does, even for his nephew. And we all like to help out our nephews.

Then, in Genesis chapters 15-21 we read about this all-important matter of Abram and his wife Sarai having a son. And all I have time to say about this today is that if you'll read these chapters you will see how safe it is to walk with God, and to trust that when the Lord makes you a promise, He keeps it! Abraham and Sarah speak to us from the pages of the Scripture and they testify how safe it is trusting the Living God, walking before Him all the days of our lives. These are such precious chapters and we will circle back to them.

But in Genesis chapter 22 we have the now famous true story of Abraham, under the command of God, preparing to sacrifice the promised son, Isaac. Most people have some vague idea about this Bible story. And we know enough to know this doesn't seem safe. God testing Abraham. Does that sound safe? Split wood for a burnt offering? Is this sounding safe to you? Ah, verse 6 of Genesis 22, I am reading, **"Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on Isaac his son, and he took in his hand the fire and the knife. So the two of them walked on together."** Look, I do not know about you, but just reading this I am doubting the safety of such an endeavor.

Isaac agrees, saying in verse 7, **"My father! And he said, 'Here I am, my son.' And [Isaac] said, 'Behold, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?'"** Isaac, by now, is feeling rather insecure, isn't it? But we can tell from his father Abraham's response that Abraham trusted God is safe! Verse 8 of Genesis 22, **"Abraham said [to Isaac], 'God will provide for Himself the lamb for the burnt offering, my son.' So the two of them walked on together."** Gulp! *Really*, Isaac must have been thinking, but he trusted his Dad who in turn trusted *God*!

And sure enough, Abraham did raise that knife to slay his son, but just then the angel of the Lord spoke, and there was a ram caught in the thicket by its horns. God provided. Isaac lived. Safety. It is completely safe to walk with God.

And, finally, in a quick look at the timeline of events in Abraham's life, in Genesis chapter 24 there is the pursuit of finding a bride for this young man Isaac. I do not have time to read from it, but you can. That journey Abraham's servant Eleazer took required safety, and God provided it. Here's a sneak preview: Eleazer brings back the bride and Isaac gets married!

Well, this has been a very safe week together here on *God Is*. My friends, if you are feeling *unsafe*, turn to God. A very simple, faith filled, believing prayer will do: "God, make me safe." Expectantly, wait and see, how God will provide safety for you.

Until we meet again next week, may God grant you His love and His grace so that you can safely go walking with Him. Join us on Monday because God Is.

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