

GOD OUR HABITATION

Psalm 91:9 *Because thou hast made the LORD, which is my refuge, even the most High, thy habitation;*

Psalm 91:10 *There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling.*

Happy are we if the Lord Jesus Christ is our address! If God is our address, we have the biggest house in the universe indeed. While Solomon's Temple was a wonder to behold, Solomon acknowledged that no building can ever dream of serving as God's house. "But who is able to build him an house, seeing the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain him? who am I then, that I should build him an house, save only to burn sacrifice before him?" (2Chron 2:6). The good news is this: while nothing humans can build will ever accommodate God, God invites one and all to dwell in him. Hallelujah! "Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me" (John 15:4). Moses, who wrote Psalm 91, did not seem to have any secure, permanent dwelling place made of mud and bricks once he killed the Egyptian man and fled to Midian. For forty years he wandered in the desert with the people of God. He became a nomad – the word comes from Latin "nomas" and means a wandering shepherd. When one gives up a secure, permanent dwelling place for the sake of the people of God, then God himself becomes your address. No wonder Moses declares confidently that no evil, nor plague shall come near those who make the most high their habitation. God was Moses' address!

Matthew 8:19 *And a certain scribe came, and said unto him, Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest.*

Matthew 8:20 *And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.*

A scribe was an individual who spent much of his time sitting comfortably on a chair in a house writing and interpreting scriptures. The Lord wanted this man to know that Jesus as the Holy Spirit fills the entire earth and the universe – the Lord must be his chair, pillow and house, if he desires to follow him. No wonder the apostles realized they would have to leave everything if they were to follow this God – he did not come to build permanent dwellings on this earth, he inhabits every place. The apostle John was known for his love of the Lord. "Then Peter, turning about, seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved following; which also leaned on his breast at supper, and said, Lord, which is he that betrayeth thee?" (John 21:20). John truly made the Lord his pillow and his habitation! He was very comfortable in his house. I

have had many pillows in my life but have never found one comfortable enough for my head. I am not sure if the problem lies with the shape of my head or the spine, but I do know this one thing: the sweetest pillow on which I lay my troubled spiritual head is the chest of the Lord Jesus Christ. How well did John sleep on that holy chest! May God be our pillow of sweet rest! Jacob was very troubled when he fled from his brother Esau and the security of his family home, but thank God, he slept in God's bosom at Bethel. The stones upon which he slept, turned out to be God's pillow.

Gen 28:11 *And he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set; and he took of the stones of that place, and put them for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep.*

Gen 28:12 *And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it.*

The pillar of fire and pillar of cloud moved without warning the Israelites in the forty years of wandering. God wanted them to learn to move in him at short notice. "For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring" (Acts 17:28). Those who would live in God will find that he moves about quite a lot, often at short notice. An Israelite in the desert could only dwell in a tent that could be quickly dismantled. God wants us to be always prepared to take down whatever we have quickly and keep pace with him. There was no time to think of the surroundings or the patch of land they occupied briefly. There was not time to sit and write nostalgic poems praising the landscape and no time to consider planting a garden. Reading the New Testament, it is quite striking how mobile the Lord Jesus was during his earthly ministry. He preached all over the Galilee, Samaria, Judea and even Lebanon.

Act 10:38 *How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.*

When God is our habitation it does not mean there will be no problems. The children of Israel dwelt in God in the wilderness, but they often encountered great challenges. Besides the lack of water and food, there were dangerous snakes and enemies like the Amalekites lurked everywhere. God wanted them to learn to live in him in faith. No one abandons his or her house because there are water or food problems, or the threat of burglars! No, rather we are determined to solve these problems and do everything in our power to restore the safety and stability we associate with our homes. How much more safe, secure and stable is the Lord

our God! “[A Prayer of Moses the man of God.] Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations” (Psalm 90:1). Once they stayed put in God, the desert flowed with abundance of water, the heavens rained down manna and Amalek was defeated as Moses lifted his hands. House owners cannot escape the worry that comes with owning a house: one worries about the roof, the kitchen, the toilets, the driveway, the garden and even rats that live rent-free and damage the house while never contributing to maintenance or renovation. There are no such worries in living in Christ!

2Cor 5:1 *For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.*

The New Jerusalem, while a literal city, is also symbolic of living in God himself. “And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof” (Rev 21:23). Remember the body of Christ is where the Church of Christ dwells! “For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit” (I Cor 12:12,13). When one understands this mystery, it will be easy to understand why the apostles left everything and dwelt with the Lord. Why will one hold on to corruptible buildings and dwellings when the eternal God is our refuge and underneath are the everlasting arms (Deut 33:27)? Have a look around you! Your bed, chairs, tables, rooms, offices will all disappear one day. Just as Noah knew the old world would soon be buried under the waters of the flood, we should know that God has reserved this present world for destruction.

2Peter 3:10 *But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.*

If this is the case, surely, we ought to interest ourselves in the only destruction-proof habitation – the Lord Jesus Christ! Let us obey the plan of salvation in Acts 2:38 and move in with the Lord!