



## “SAFETY IN GOD’S SHELTERS AND SHADOWS”

By Mary Mayko

**Psalm 91:1-2 CEV “Live under the protection of God Most High and stay in the shadow of God All-Powerful. Then you will say to the LORD, You are my fortress, my place of safety; You are my God and I trust You.”**

So many different kinds of storms come into our lives! Many are a danger to people in physical ways, as you hear about natural disasters, floods, tornadoes, winds and lightning injuring or killing people! News Reporters rush to a tragic scene to deliver first hand information! They ask survivors to describe their feelings or the accident while many are still in shock or reeling from all that has just happened! The victims are not afforded a private time to even gather their thoughts and ask God to calm their spirits!

It often seems the Reporters are more interested in filming disasters and *capturing* the devastating emotions than allowing the victim time to recover, at least somewhat before they are over run by strangers who want to know all the intimate details from them! What if one of those victims was your son or daughter, mom or dad! *Would you want to hear about it on the latest News Flash?* I am sure this has actually happened more than once!

The LORD has promised to be our shelter in times of storms, whether they are physical or otherwise! If we dwell constantly in His Presence, He can shield us from many of these unwanted intrusions into our lives. He does not promise we will never have suffering or tragedy in our lives, but He does promise to be there with us!

When I lived in Texas, a storm alarm would sound throughout our little town, alerting people of impending danger! Those homes that had storm cellars welcomed their neighbors to join them, so they too, could be safe in the midst of a storm! Many of those cellars had comforts that included oil lamps, snacks, board games, and battery powered radios to check when the “all clear” signals were given. Other cellars were quite rough, with unfinished walls, dirt floors and mostly without amenities.

I lived in a Mobile Home Park for awhile in Texas. One day the tornado warning sounded and I had no car to drive to a place of safety! I had no choice except to stay in my trailer! My first thoughts were of my two little girls and how to keep them safe! We went to the middle bedroom where I had the girls slide in between the mattress and springs. I lay on

the floor beside the bed and prayed! The tornado destroyed both homes on either side of ours, but we were safe! Our trailer shifted slightly, but remained a safe haven in the midst of a very devastating storm! God heard my plea for a safe shelter that day!

Since tornadoes were prevalent in our area of the country, most of the people there paid attention when they heard the storm warnings and headed for a safe shelter. *Do you heed warnings?* Whether you were in a comfy cellar or a crude one, you were safe from all the storms that raged above you. *During the storm, you were not concerned about your surroundings in the cellar!* Sometimes it was not possible to get to a shelter, so you soon learned where the safest place in your home was. Having survived more than one tornado without the benefit of a cellar near by, you start praying for protection! He heard me every time!

Sometimes we have been harassed by some real enemy or under spiritual attack! While a storm is indiscriminating, when you are *under the gun*, so to speak as an individual, the personal affront is very frightening! I am reminded of Isaiah 25:4 “You have been a place of safety for the poor and needy in times of trouble. Brutal enemies pounded us like heavy rain or the heat of the sun at noon, but you were our shelter.” This was a different kind of storm, but none the less, you needed a safe place, a shelter from the enemy!

Isaiah 32:1-2 “A king and his leaders will rule with justice. They will be a place of safety from stormy winds, a stream in the desert, and a rock that gives shade from the heat of the sun.” Our God is our King and our Rock! He always judges fairly! I thank Him daily that I belong to Him!

*God has been my shelter, my hiding place and fortress in many kinds of storms that have swirled about me at various times of my life!* That brings to my mind the thought of God’s shadow! You must have light to produce shadows! No light and no shadows means one is in utter darkness! Since God is Light, there is no darkness in Him at all! To dwell in the shadow of the Almighty means I have to remain close to Him! His shadow is my shade and my shelter! So I must follow Him closely at all times!

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## **EARLY MORNING MEETINGS**

By Mary Mayko

**PSALM 5:1-3 KJV “Give ear to my words, O LORD; consider my meditation. Harken unto the voice of my cry, my King and my God: for unto thee will I pray. My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord; in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up.”**

**Mark 1:35 “KJV “And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he [Jesus] went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed.”**

Jesus sought His Father early in the morning, before the crowds came or opposition rose up from His enemies! Since He felt the need to pray early and often, He reminds us that we too, need to look up to the LORD for new help and energies to face each new day!

As usual, I rise early each morning for a quiet time of looking up into the heavens and to meet with my LORD. Sometimes, it is still dark, but as I view the eastern sky today, the early morning light begins with scattered clouds across the horizon. The sun softly tints the dark purple clouds with lavender gray, and then a soft dusty rose followed by a burst of brilliant pink! The pink changes before my eyes into red-orange, then fades to pretty peach. As the sun breaks into full view, the clouds change to a golden glow and suddenly become silvery white. With the sun fully shining now, we have lovely fluffy clouds floating lazily along!

It is as if the morning has burst forth in glory and splendor to honor the Creator! It is a reminder of the beauty He has made for all to enjoy! As I meditate on His goodness, I thank God that in spite of my failures, He still loves me and showers me with His mercy each day!

**Lam.3:21-23 ASB “This I recall to my mind, therefore I have hope. The LORDS’ loving kindness indeed never ceases, for His compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is Thy faithfulness.”**

In that early morning meeting with the LORD, I prepare my heart for a new day. I talk with Him, and read His word, which talks back to me. Some times I am heart struck by

His message! I confess my faults to Him, and then thank Him for His love and forgiveness! Some days, I just sit in awe of the instruction or comfort I am receiving! Simply amazing truths that become clear to me in a new way! A new energy and peace helps settle some important issues I have to deal with. His wisdom guides me through a difficult decision or problem. Thank You LORD!

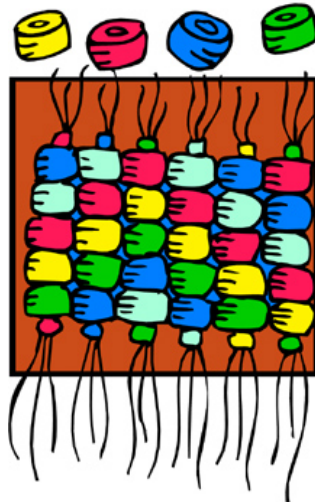
Now why can't I feel like that every single morning, when the Word says His mercies and compassions and love are a new gift to me each day? The very next day after that spectacular sunrise, the sky was overcast and dark clouds obscure the sun! There was a feeling of heaviness along with that ominous looking sky! But realistically, no two mornings ever seem to be exactly the same! When I "*get out of sorts*" over something, I am quickly reminded that I am human and *if I try to resolve that something without God's help, I mess up big time!* **Isaiah 44:22 ASB "I have wiped out your transgressions like a thick cloud, and your sins like a heavy mist."**

I go to Psalm 51 and read David prayer for cleansing. It is a call to humbling ourselves before a mighty God! He can create a clean heart in me! He renews a right spirit as I seek Him! He restores joy within and praise flows forth because of what He does for me and His children!

**Psalm 92:1-2 ASB "It is good to give thanks to the LORD, and to sing praises to Thy name, O Most High; to declare Thy loving-kindness in the morning, and Thy faithfulness at night."**

Whether the clouds are brilliant and beautiful or dark and threatening, we need to remind ourselves daily in our early morning meetings of God's love and His faithfulness to each of us! Where would we be without it?

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### **“THE FINE LINE OF COLOR”**

By Rev. J Kehl Golding

“Now don’t be a stranger!” These were her words to me as she held the door open with one hand, and patted my shoulder with the other.

Karen is a sweet young woman that owns a quaint needlework shop, “The Nimble Needle” in Moorestown New Jersey. Thread! Thread! Thread! If they spin it, she sells it!

All these strands of color and textures, one just wants to touch, and use them all. I visited her shop for some drab, dreary, stormy looking blue thread. I have a large stash of thread, but nothing as drab as I needed for this sky. I knew if such a color was made, Karen would have it.

Of course she did! I found a light and a darker drab blue. Now I could even blend the colors for a better effect. This needlepoint picture is a large snow scene; the side of a hill, children in bright winter clothes, sledding and skating, animals in different colors, many pine and fir trees in various greens, homes and barns in the background and people engaged in a variety of activities, all brightly colored on a white background of snow.

The sky running across the top has a sun about to set, with all the pink and purple hues of winter. But, moving it are those drab blue/grey winter storm clouds- they are surely predicting trouble. This picture was attractive before the drab ugly blue, but when that was started on ~ what a contrast!

The pink on the sky was more evident. The clothes on the man chopping wood were brighter. The prance on the horse came to life, and the black dormant trees stood out with a new determination. Those drab ugly threads were needed! As I looked at it all, I thought of what the Psalmist wrote: “We spend our years as a tale that is told.” Psalm 90:10

So many events are bright colorful occasions, weddings, new babies, graduations, family reunions and birthday parties. They all make happy memories, but we don’t live there.

They are simply “happenings” that dot the landscape of our life. If Christ is our Savior, these occur in a pure white life [background] as Isaiah wrote 1:18 “Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow: though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. [white]

But most of us live a mundane life, every day activities, earthly natural needs that must be taken care of. But, that every day activity, so drab and mundane is the very force that causes all else to be outstanding! As God is painting our life, we need to remember how much He loves color. Consider Exodus chapter 28. In verse 15, he gives instruction for the breastplate of the priest. It was to be made of fine twined linen in colors of gold, blue, purple and scarlet. Think how pretty that would be, then all the precious stones, 12, one for each tribe of Israel.

They were in four rows of three, beginning with sardius, a blood red stone, then topaz, a yellow color, carbuncle the last was an emerald, a lovely green. The second row was an emerald green, then sapphire, a deep blue stone, and finally a diamond or sardonyx, this stone consisted of alternating of light-colored chalcedony and reddish carnelian. The third row was a ligure stone- amber in color, then an agate- a variegated wavy quartz, it would be translucent, and an amethyst- a clear purple or violet color. The fourth and final row was a beryl. This was in all probability aquamarine, but it does come in emerald blue, yellow, pink and white. An onyx or beryl was next and could have been one of a variety of colors, last of all a jasper stone-red/brown or yellow quartz.

All these stones were set in gold. [Exodus 28:20] The priest wore this over his robe of blue.[v.31] But look at the hem of this robe, pomegranates of blue and purple and scarlet all the way round with a bell of gold between each pomegranate all the way around. [v.34] The bell sounded as he walked in the Holy of Holies, the innermost sacred area where the ark of the covenant rested. Only the High Priest could enter. All this beauty in a tent of badger skins! In a drab barren dry desert!! [Ex 26:14]

So, where are you in life right now? Are the threads of life a bright shimmering gold? A deep clear blue? A happy fast red? Or a drab brown? Maybe even a black death color? Whatever life “spins” in your direction, mountains too high to climb, rivers so deep they overflow, fog too dense to penetrate with human wisdom or eyes, or dragging the ugly scars of sin, our Lord Jesus Christ will take care of those problems. He is your answer and encourages us to come to Him.

“Come unto Me, all ye that labor and heavy laden, and I will give you rest.”  
Matthew 11:28

“Ask, and it shall be given you. Seek and ye shall find; Knock and it shall be opened unto you. Luke 11:9

Over and over we read in the Scriptures: “It came to pass.” No matter where you are today, it will come to pass!! If we are well, there will be sickness in our flesh down the road. If we are ill there will be recovery in the future. If it’s money, God will supply, and

a better time is coming. If there is turmoil, He the God that quiets the storm, brings peace. The storm will pass.

Wherever you are, **DON'T BE A STRANGER TO THE THRONE OF GOD!** Come often to the place of prayer and fellowship with Him. He is stitching a lovely picture of our life, and it will be fantastic when it is finished- trust Him!!

“The King’s daughter is all glorious within: her clothing is of wrought gold. She shall be brought to the King in raiment of needlework.” Psalm 45:13-14