



THE OVERSHADOWING OF GOD

INTRODUCTION

Have you ever worked to exhaustion in the heat of the noonday sun and felt sweat running down from your brow? Did you appreciate the shelter and refreshment found under the shade of a tree? Have you ever been caught in a blizzard, with the howling wind cutting through you like a knife and freezing hail beating on you unmercifully? Did you run for cover and find safety and comfort? Just as there are physical places of refuge, there is a place for spiritual refuge. That place is in God.

When toils seem endless and life's storms are overwhelming, God is the place of rest for your soul and a refuge from the tempest. God's overshadowing provides shelter to His people. He becomes the Refuge, the Hiding Place, the Fortress, the Shield, the Keeper and the Defense to us. Under His shadow we find rest, refreshment, fellowship, and friendship with Him. Sometimes He allows us to go through afflictions, sufferings, trials and tribulations so that through these we may grow in Him and experience His overshadowing. Difficult circumstances should provoke us to run to God for His protection. The Scriptures say this place is found under the shadow of the Most High. King David, who suffered persecution at the hand of his enemies, learned to run for protection under the shadow of His wings. In Psalm 36:7, he declared, *How precious is Your lovingkindness, O God! Therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of Your wings.*

THEME SCRIPTURE

He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty (Psalm 91:1).

SECTION I – Definitions

1. WRITE your own definition of *overshadowing*. _____

Dictionary Definition

The dictionary definition of *overshadowing* is to protect, to shade, conceal, screen or to shelter from light or heat, to give a place of refreshment, to be a close or constant companion, or to stay close to or follow, especially in secret, so as to observe the movements and activities of another.

Biblical Definitions

The Biblical Hebrew word for *shadow* is *tsel* to shade: defense, shadow. It is to hover over, to defend, or hide.

The Biblical Greek word for *overshadow* is *episkiazo* to cast a shadow upon: envelope in a haze of brilliancy. It is used to signify the bright cloud of the Transfiguration (Matthew 17:1-5), the power (metaphorically speaking) of the Most High to conceive upon the virgin Mary (Luke 1:35).

Scripture Descriptions

2. READ and MEDITATE on the following Scriptures. UNDERLINE words or phrases that describe God's overshadowing.

Psalm 17:8, 9 *Keep me as the apple of Your eye; hide me under the shadow of Your wings, from the wicked who oppress me, from my deadly enemies who surround me.*

Psalm 57:1 *Be merciful to me, O God, be merciful to me! For my soul trusts in You; and in the shadow of Your wings I will make my refuge, until these calamities have passed by.*

Psalm 61:3, 4 *For You have been a shelter for me, a strong tower from the enemy. I will abide in Your tabernacle forever; I will trust in the shelter of Your wings.*

Song of Solomon 2:3 *Like an apple tree among the trees of the woods, so is my Beloved [Jesus Christ] among the sons. I sat down in His shade [shadow] with great delight, and His fruit was sweet to my taste.*

Isaiah 25:4 *For You [God] have been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shade [shadow] from the heat; for the blast of the terrible ones [the wicked] is as a storm against the wall.*

Isaiah 49:2 *And He [the Father] has made My mouth like a sharp sword; in the shadow of His hand He has hidden me, and made Me a polished shaft; in His quiver He has hidden me.*

Matthew 23:37 *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I [Jesus] wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing!*

3. What did you learn about God's overshadowing from these Scriptures? _____

PERSONAL

How has what you have learned about God's overshadowing impacted you? _____

SECTION II

Christ Overshadows His Discouraged Disciples

READ Luke 24:1-53.

After Jesus' crucifixion, two of His disciples were sad, confused, discouraged and of mournful appearance because they believed that the Redeemer of Israel was dead. However, He had risen from the dead that very day as prophesied, and was hovering and watching over them as they walked away despairingly. Though they were unaware of His presence, He never ceased to be their close and constant Companion (Luke 24:1-12).

1. On Resurrection Day two of Christ's disciples (not of the twelve) greatly discouraged, walked away from the place of Jesus' crucifixion. Where were they headed and how far was it from Jerusalem (v. 13)?

2. Confused and despondent, the two disciples walked and talked together. How did Christ overshadow them (vv. 14-16)?

PERSONAL

WRITE about a time when you were despondent and lacking in faith and unknowing to you, Jesus drew near?

3. How did Christ gently enter into their conversation (v. 17)? _____

4. Surprised by the questions from Jesus, what did Cleopas,¹ one of the disciples, answer Him (v. 18)?

5. Jesus asked the two what were they referring to. Who did they understand Jesus to be (vv. 19, 20)?

What did they know happened to Him? _____

¹ Cleopas: this disciple could have been the father of James the Less, the husband of Mary, the sister of the mother of Jesus. The unnamed disciple could have been Luke due to the fact that he alone recorded this story in depth.

² Jesus of Nazareth: one of the earthly names of Jesus the Son of God, the Son of Man; raised in the town of Nazareth; the Nazarene.

³ prophet – Greek *prophetes* to foretell events: divine, speak under inspiration; exercise the prophetic office: one who is divinely inspired to communicate God's will to His people and disclose the future to them.

6. What was their hope (v. 21)? _____

How many days had passed since Christ's crucifixion? _____

7. It was Resurrection Day! What account did the women give to the disciples concerning Christ (vv. 22-24)?

4

8. How did Jesus firmly admonish them (vv. 25, 26)? _____

How did Jesus refer to Himself? _____

9. How did Jesus bring the two discouraged disciples under the shadow of His wings (v. 27)? _____

PERSONAL

What do you know about Christ before the manger? _____

⁴ certain women: Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, Salome (Mark 16:1; Luke 24:10).

LOOK DEEPER

As you MEDITATE on the following Scriptures, WRITE how God's Word brings you under the shadow of His wings.

Psalm 119:28 _____

Psalm 119:50 _____

Psalm 119:52 _____

Psalm 119:81 _____

Psalm 119:93 _____

Psalm 119:114 _____

Psalm 119:117 _____

Psalm 119:147 _____

Psalm 119:153 _____

PERSONAL

Which of these Scriptures brought you rest, protection, comfort, refreshment or to the Hiding Place?

10. Drawing near to the town of Emmaus with their hearts refreshed, Jesus took His leave to go further. What did the two disciples constrain Him to do (Luke 24:28, 29)?

How did Jesus respond? _____

11. How did Christ reveal Himself to them (vv. 30-32)? _____

After He vanished from their sight, what happened within them and to what conclusion did they come?

12. Having been overshadowed by Christ's presence, the two discouraged disciples were revived. Where did they hastily return? What transpired (vv. 33-35)?

⁵ burn – Greek *kaio* to set on fire: kindle, consume, burn, light.

SECTION III – Scriptural References of God’s Overshadowing

When we are weary from bearing a heavy burden, we need spiritual rest and refreshment that we might be restored and strengthened in our soul. Our place of refuge is under the Shadow of the Most High.

What do you learn about God’s overshadowing from the following Scriptures?

Psalm 33:20 _____

Psalm 36:7 _____

Psalm 57:1 _____

Psalm 63:7, 8 _____

Psalm 143:9 _____

Matthew 11:28-30 _____

THEME SCRIPTURE

WRITE the THEME SCRIPTURE.

_____ (Psalm 91:1).

*As the apple tree among the trees of the wood,
so is my Beloved among the sons.
I sat down under His shadow with great delight,
and His fruit was sweet to my taste.*

Song of Solomon 2:3

NOTES: _____

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