

Safe At Last Proverbs 18:10

How many of you remember having blocks when you were growing up or when your kids were growing up? The older blocks had letters and numbers. They were both educational and entertaining. Maybe you remember sitting on the floor with your toddler going through the alphabet and then stacking them one on top of the other. What was the first thing they wanted to do? You remember don't you? They wanted to knock it down. It didn't matter how much effort you put into stacking them. With a swat of the hand and a gleeful squeal, they smash your tower.

Someone has suggested that when toddlers play with blocks, they demonstrate the tenacity of a future demolition crew member. It doesn't matter how carefully you stack the blocks for them to be in awe of your building techniques, they are bent on bringing it tumbling down and with joyful delight.

When they reach preschool, they take a turn and find a flare for building designs that rivals architectural firms. There is something magical to them about creating a structure out of blocks or Legos for which they await your assistance and approval.

Go figure that someone would write an article about how to help your child build a tower from blocks. They suggest things like studying the blocks to become familiar with the building materials. Are they shaped the same? Are they slippery or rough, of the same material, are some heavier than others. Then sort by shapes or size or weight or color.

When you're ready to build your base layer, start with the heaviest blocks. Build your next layer by starting in the center with the next heavier blocks. The author of this article suggests that this helps to build a stable midsection of the tower as it gets taller. Continue adding a layer at a time starting

from the center outward. Stop building when the tower becomes too tall to maintain its status as a strong tower, basically when it begins to sway.

I've been up in the Statue of Liberty, the St. Louis Arch and the Empire State Building. I'm thankful that the architects took the time to build a strong base so that the tower would be strong.

What are some of the features you would look for in a strong tower? What characteristics would it have to have in order for you to feel secure enough to enter?

Does it have a secure foundation?

Are all the levels tied in to the level beneath it?

Did they use quality material?

Was it thoroughly inspected at every step?

Who designed it? Was he/she reputable?

Our verse for today is a simple but profound one, packed with immense potential for those who grasp its meaning. It's found in **Proverbs 18:10** and I would invite you to take your Bible and turn there with me as we dissect this verse together and uncover some important truths that we need to remember every day of our lives.

Here it is: **"The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous run to it and are safe."**

Repeat that with me.

Do you believe it?

How often do you run there?

Why is it a place we should run to?

Is He a sure foundation?

Does He have a good reputation?

Can He be trusted with my problems? Is He a God that is aloof and unconcerned about what's going on or does He really care about me in my world, where I live? How do I know I'll be safe?

Consider from this verse please three points:

The Person who is this tower

The People who go to this tower

The Purpose for this tower

I. THE PERSON WHO IS THIS TOWER

Notice first that His name is a solid name.

A. His Name Is A Solid Name

What is in a name anyway? It isn't just a title we call someone to distinguish them from someone else. If they have the same first name, we add their middle name or their last name or if necessary a surname.

If you were at the Luke and Sarah's wedding last weekend, you might remember that Sarah started her vows by saying "Luke Anthony Kremhelmer". She wanted it to be clear that she wasn't speaking to anyone else in the room who also might coincidentally have the name Luke. Now later on when she uses his full name he might need to run out and get some flowers or box of chocolates. How many know what I mean? But it wasn't just a name to her by which she knows him and identifies him. It is a name of endearment. If you listened to her vows she also included in them traits that identify him, characteristics by which she has come to know him: honorable, honest, hardworking (notice her alliteration – good girl); someone who is intelligent, kind and funny...[someone] with heart, integrity and character...provider, comforter, ally and best friend. And as their marriage grows, she will learn he has other traits to admire.

Notice from our verse that it "the name of the Lord that is our strong tower."

So what's in a name? What's in the name of the Lord that we should consider going to Him to be our strong tower?

It's not in our culture so much today but you will remember in Bible days a name equaled the person. It was synonymous with their reputation, who they were, what they did. It was an expression of their character, their nature, their qualities. Their name represented the sum total of who they were.

God's name reveals His character and we see this throughout the Old Testament as God reveals His character in different ways to different individuals. Here are some of the names by which he was known and what it reveals about Him. If you want to know why you should run to God you must know His names.

The very first verse of the Bible introduces us to **Elohim**. It means the God who creates. This shows both the power He has and the creative nature by which He has created.

Eloah (Not Aloha) is the living God in contrast to idols who cannot hear, see or speak. This One whose name is Eloah is the One that we are to worship because He is living.

El Shaddai – the Lord God Almighty, or all sufficient one. He is the One who completely and freely nourishes and satisfies. God revealed Himself to Abraham using this name in **Genesis 17:1**. Abram was 99 years old and God said "I am **El Shaddai - God Almighty**." It was then that God reminded Abram of the covenant He had made that he would be fruitful and be the father of many nations. Through this name He would show Abram that with Him all things are possible. It was that name by which God also revealed Himself to Isaac and to Jacob and the name that Jacob gave to his sons as they journeyed the second time to Egypt.

El Elyon – the Most High God. This name expresses the supreme sovereignty and majesty of God and His highest position. There is no one else that is above Him, there is no other being that is equal to Him. There is no being that is close to Him. Never get the idea or believe that angelic beings good or bad are somehow near Him in power or sovereignty. Satan is not the evil version of God. They all bow to Him just as we do.

Adonai – Lord or Master. It is a name by which Jesus was known as well. This was the name used

in the ten commandments given to Moses that we are not to take the name of Adonai/Lord God in vain. He is the God who is in control of everything conveying the idea of His absolute lordship or master over all things. It is the name by which He claims ownership over us as we surrender in obedience.

Most commonly we see the name **Jehovah** (Lord) used in the Old Testament. He is the God who covenants. It is a combination of three tenses and literally means “to be.” *This name reveals God as the One who was, and is and is to be.* It speaks of His being eternal. He always has been and always will be. If the sun did not rise tomorrow, God, Jehovah, would still exist. His existence is contingent on nothing.

Jehovah Jireh – the Lord provides. That is the name by which He revealed Himself to Abraham and Isaac at the time of God’s testing Abraham’s faith on the mountain. God will provide a ram.

Jehovah Ropheka – the Lord who leads.

Jehovah Rapha – the Lord who heals.

Jehovah Nissi – the Lord our banner. Moses recognized that it was under God’s banner that they defeated the Amelikes. “In battle opposing nations would fly their own flag on a pole at each of their respective front lines. This was to give their soldiers a feeling of hope and a focal point. This is what God is to us: a banner of encouragement to give us hope and a focal point.”

Jehovah Mekkaddishkem – the Lord who sanctifies.

Jehovah Shalom – the Lord our peace.

Jehovah Shammah – the Lord who is there.

Jehovah Sabbaoth – the Lord of hosts.

Jehovah Tsidkenu – the Lord our righteousness.

Jehovah Roi – the Lord who is our shepherd.

He is known as **Jah** signifying that God is the eternal One who inhabits eternity and is eternal. Our English translations miss so much of the rich meaning.

Dear people, I have spent this time sharing with you just some of the names of God to give you a glimpse of who He is and what He desires to be for you. If we have no idea who God is and the names by which describe His character we will never know that He is a strong tower to whom we can run. Know His names so that you can call on Him in your time of need. His is a solid name by which He has revealed Himself.

By what name have you come to know Him today? By what name has He revealed Himself to you in the past? Just as it was in the Old Testament so it is for us today that in any and all of life’s circumstances God will in some way reveal Himself.

He may be your guide on a dark and lonely journey in life, a path like long term injury or illness.

He may be your provider through unemployment or when as a single parent you face uncertain economic struggles.

He may be your peace when storms come or when you lose a loved one.

He is the One who sanctifies when you repent of some sin.

He is the One who is there when you feel alone and tired and burdened.

He is this and so much more as we get to know Him

He has a solid name that is dependable and trustworthy; a name by which when He speaks and makes a promise that promise will be kept. His is a name that is powerful. His Word is true and His name stands for truth.

It is a name in the New Testament by which men call on to be saved.

Acts 4:12 “Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.”

Have you called on this name to be saved? There is no other name under heaven or in heaven that can save, or that can keep you saved. His is a name you can count on. His is the only name, period. He IS

the WAY, He IS the TRUTH, He IS the LIFE. Run to that name today to be saved.

There is one other name by which we must know Him. It is the name He revealed to Moses at the burning bush. When Moses asked Him to reveal His name so that he could inform the Israelites who had sent Him, "God said, 'I Am that I am. Tell them I Am has sent you.'" **"I Am"** speaks of His existence and includes His desire to have a relationship with His people. When He used it of Himself He referred to being the One who redeemed them (**Exodus 6:6**), He was always faithful to them (**Exodus 34:5-7**) and He had made a covenant with them (**Genesis 15:18**). In that name He indicated that He is the One who is with His people in time of trouble and need. **"I Am"** is the summation of all God is for what we need.

O How I Love Jesus (#92)

There is a name I love to hear,
I love to sing its worth;
It sounds like music in my ear,
The sweetest name on earth.

O how I love Jesus! O How I love Jesus!
O how I love Jesus, because He first loved me!

It tells me of a Savior's love,
Who died to set me free;
It tells me of His precious blood,
The sinner's perfect plea.

It tells me what my Father hath
In store for every day
And, tho' I tread a darksome path,
Yields sunshine all the way.

It tells of One whose loving heart
Can feel my deepest woe,
Who in each sorrow bears a part
That none can bear below.

His name is a solid name.

His name is a strong tower.

B. His Name Is A Strong Tower

"The name of the Lord is a strong tower."

I'm not sure what images you conger up in your mind when you think of a strong tower. Maybe you wander back to the times of knights and castles and kings. They were a greater security in days past. Castles were usually built with stone and rarely made of wood. The size of the fortress itself depended largely on the amount of materials available from which to build the city that would be within. The walls were anywhere from 8-20 feet thick to provide an impregnable fortress to deter would be assailants. The height of the walls varied from castle to castle depending again on available materials. They were designed to be difficult to scale. Most had towers that stood much higher than the walls where sentries stood guard to look for impending danger. When the trumpet sounded or the bell pealed from the tower through the outlying village, everyone knew to run to the fortress. Inside they would be protected and provided for.

I like to look at old castles and marvel at their design and structure. They stood for the strength and protection of its citizens and against enemies. Many have withstood the test of time and endured for centuries as they stand as bastions of hope in an age of chivalry.

God's name is a strong tower. In it there is strength. In it there is safety and security. In it there is provision. Though the enemy stands strong and looks formidable, the name of the Lord is a strong tower, a place to defend against attacks.

His name is a solid name.

His name is a strong tower.

His name is a song of praise.

C. His Name Is A Song of Praise

Psalm 5:11 “But let all who take refuge in You be glad; let them ever sing for joy. Spread Your protection over them, that those who love Your name may rejoice in You.”

Psalm 8:1 suggests that it is a magnificent name, a name of splendor. “O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is Your name in all the earth!”

Psalm 52:9 “I will praise you forever for what You have done; in Your name I will hope, for Your name is good, I will praise You in the presence of Your saints.”

Take some time today or this week to reflect on the names of God and see by what names He has revealed Himself to you and then praise Him. We have taken a look at the person who is this tower; now consider the people who go to this tower.

II. THE PEOPLE WHO GO TO THIS TOWER

In Northern Somerset, England, there is a rocky gorge known as Burrington Combe where sheep and cattle roam the hills. Small villages cling to the valleys that look out toward the Severn River. One of these villages is Blagdon, where Augustus Toplady lived and served as a clergyman. While he was walking down toward the Combe one day, a violent thunderstorm sent him hurrying for shelter. In all the great gorge cut between towering cliffs, there seemed to be no hiding place. Then he saw a cleft in the rocky limestone near the gorge. He hurried toward it and found there was just enough room for him to stand within its shelter. He took refuge there as the rain came down in torrents and the thunder pealed. As he stood there in that tiny shelter safe from the surrounding storm, words flooded his soul. It is to this place every July that thousands of people come to stand outside the cleft in the rock and sing the song that has become loved by so many today:

Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee;
Let the water and the blood,
From Thy riven side which flowed,
Be of sin the double cure,
Cleanse me from its guilt and power.

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Who are the ones that come to the tower? Proverbs 18:10 provides us with the answer. They are the righteous. They are the ones who have found in all their search for meaning that there is only one place to go to be safe.

If you spend any time at all in the Psalms you will find that it was the place David often ran to. When being pursued by his enemies, David ran to the Lord who was his refuge.

Psalm 9:9-10 “The Lord is a refuge for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble. Those who know Your name will trust in You, for You, Lord, have never forsaken those who seek You.”

Psalm 20:1, 7 “May the Lord answer you when you are in distress; may the name of the God of Jacob protect you...Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the Lord our God.”

Psalm 33:18-22 “But the eyes of the Lord are on those who fear Him, on those whose hope is in His unfailing love, to deliver them from death and keep them alive in famine. We wait in hope for the Lord; He is our help and our shield. In Him our hearts rejoice, for we trust in His holy name. May Your unfailing love rest upon us, O Lord, even as we put our hope in You.”

Psalm 118:8 “It is better to take refuge in the Lord than to trust in man.”

Psalm 24:8 “Our help is in the name of the Lord; the Maker of heaven and earth.”

Why can we trust in Him as a strong tower? We can trust in Him because He is all powerful. In Him there is hope. In Him there is help. In Him there is security. In Him there is confidence. In Him there is strength.

It is the godly who run to Him. The godly are the ones who have a *devotion* to Him, a *desire* for Him and a *dependence* on Him. They know where to run. It is the first place they go.

There are many Christians today who don't know the power or protection He affords because they don't really know Him or His name. They only know that He saves. They don't know He protects or provides or guides. They've sought other things to be the tower they have gone to. It may be the tower of money or the tower of popularity or personality or intelligence or hard work or friends. Some Christians have come to believe that God doesn't seem to be around when you need Him, but unfortunately they found that when they ran to these other towers they offered no protection at all. Like the guy who built his house on the sand, it washed away when the real storms came.

Others have abandoned God because they believe that when they came to Him He didn't give them what they wanted, they didn't find Him to be the tower they thought He was. They thought Him to be uncaring, unconcerned, unavailable.

Still others don't run to Him, because if they did they would have to deal with some sin in their life.

Maybe you're one of those today. **What has kept you from running to Him? Has it been pride? Do you believe that you can make it on your own and if something really big comes along, that's too big for you to handle, then you'll go to Him? Is it because you don't know how? Is it because you don't want**

to? Do you believe that others will think you're weak and unable to handle things on your own? What is it? God wants you to run to Him, because He is that strong tower to help you with whatever you are going through today.

“The righteous run to Him.”

In that word run, I want you to notice two things.

A. It Is A Desperate Pace

The word implies that the matter is urgent that sends you running. You don't stop to make a list or pack a suitcase or send a text message to a bunch of your friends. When the house is on fire and you're inside you don't stop to do the dishes so the firemen won't find a dirty kitchen. You don't vacuum the carpet so they won't find dust bunnies. You RUN. When the trumpet blew around a castle, everyone stopped what they were doing and ran as fast as they could to the place they knew where they could be safe. There wasn't time to pick flowers or take the pot of stew off the fire. Danger was imminent.

Running also implies that in their haste they aren't carrying anything that slowed their pace, unless it was an infant. It is a desperate pace to safety.

B. It Is A Direct Path

There was no taking a road that was winding. They took short cuts to get to the tower of safety.

The message for us in this is not to take an indirect route. Verse 11 notes that the rich depend on their wealth. They think it is a formidable wall. Others depend on their self-righteousness or their health, or some other religion or no religion. They try different paths, but never the direct path. God is the last place they turn, if they go to Him at all.

Verse 10 warns that when danger comes we need to run to the name of the Lord, the righteous flee to Him. Don't try other things before you finally give in and go there. Take a direct path to Him. When

we run to Him we must recognize that we are to strip all that we are or have, to trust Him implicitly with all our heart. **(Proverbs 3:5-6)**
Those who are right with God know this.

There is a safe and secret place
Beneath the wings divine,
Reserved for all the heirs of grace;
That refuge now is mine.
The least and feeblest here may hide
Uninjured and unawed;
While thousands fall on every side, I rest secure in
God.

God is the person who is this tower.
The righteous are the people who go to this tower.
The purpose for this tower.

III. THE PURPOSE FOR THIS TOWER

“The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous run to it and are safe.” Have you found this to be true? Do you find rest? Do you find refreshment? Do you find reassurance?

A. It Is A Dependable Tower

How secure do you feel behind the walls of the place you run to? God is offering Himself based on His reputation and character that He is dependable, secure, impregnable. He is the shelter in which we can hide. He is the tower where we can run.

The words of John offer confidence in God for those who run to Him. **“And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.”** (John 10:28-29)

Again, I ask you, how safe do you feel behind the walls where you have run?
It is a dependable tower.

B. It Is A Desirable Tower

Why is it desirable? It is there that we are safe. It is there that we are protected. It is there that we are provided for. It is there that we are comforted. It is there that we are encouraged. It is there that we are accepted. It is there that we find contentment. It is there that we have all we need. He is the I AM.

“The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous run to it and are safe.”

I end this morning with the lyrics from the Christian band Kutless and their song *Strong Tower*.

When I wander through the desert
And I'm longing for my home
All my dreams have gone astray
When I'm stranded in the valley
And I'm tired and all alone
It seems like I've lost my way

I go running to your mountain
Where your mercy sets me free

[chorus]

You are my strong tower
Shelter over me
Beautiful and mighty
Everlasting King
You are my strong tower
Fortress when I'm weak
Your name is true and holy
And Your face is all I seek

In the middle of my darkness
In the midst of all my fear
You're my refuge and my hope
When the storm of life is raging
And the thunder's all I hear
You speak softly to my soul

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The door of this tower stands open, ready to receive you for whatever might be your need. All who come to Him He will not cast out. Run there and find God to be your strong tower.