

What are you thinking of the LORD today? If you think He gave you the trouble you are presently in, or an illness to teach you humility, then it is time to change what you believe about Him. God is most certainly not the author of your problems - He is the solution to them.

Be like the psalmist who declared: "I will say of the LORD, "He is my refuge and my fortress; my God, in Him I will trust."" The Hebrew word for "refuge", *machaceh*, refers to a shelter from storms and danger. This shelter is like the bunkers that many Jews have in their homes in Israel today to shelter them from small-scale attacks. In the figurative sense, when you say the Lord is your *machaceh*, you are also declaring that He is your place of hope. The Lord is also your fortress. In Hebrew, the word used for "fortress" is *matsuwd*. It refers to a castle or stronghold, a place of defense and protection against large-scale attacks. Isn't that a beautiful picture? Whatever you might be going through right now, you can declare that the Lord is your refuge and your fortress - your protection against both small as well as big attacks.

Perhaps you have not been saying that God is responsible for your troubles. Perhaps you are not saying *anything* about the Lord at all. Perhaps God seems far away, and you feel cut off from Him. God is not distant; sometimes you are just too busy or distracted to hear His voice or sense His loving presence. Take a moment and see yourself in His secret place. Abide under His shadow. Savour His favour. Receive His wisdom, and find rest for your troubled soul and spirit. The feeling of being distant from God is only a feeling, nothing more. He has promised in His Word that He will never leave you nor forsake you. (Hebrews 13:5)

Our Lord Jesus paid for you to have access to God's constant presence. At the Cross, He cried out: "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" when God turned His back on Him. (Matthew 27:46) He took our place and was rejected by God when He carried our sins so that today, we can take His place of being in the constant presence of the Father, and take Him as our refuge and fortress.

Psalm 91:2 "I will say of the LORD, "He is my refuge and my fortress; my God, in Him I will trust.""