

Psalms 36:7

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

How excellent is thy lovingkindness, O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings.

Analysis

The exclamation 'How excellent!' (Hebrew 'yaqar,' precious, rare, valuable) expresses wonder at God's lovingkindness. The imagery 'shadow of thy wings' evokes both the cherubim's wings over the mercy seat (Exodus 25:20) and a mother bird protecting young (Psalm 91:4, Matthew 23:37). Trusting 'under' these wings indicates finding refuge in God's protective presence. This intimate imagery contrasts sharply with the wicked's autonomy (vv. 1-4), showing that security comes from dependence on God, not independence from Him.

Historical Context

The mercy seat in the tabernacle/temple, where God's presence dwelt between the cherubim's wings, provided the primary referent for this metaphor. God's people found safety in proximity to His holy presence.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. What does it mean for you to practically 'put your trust under the shadow of God's wings'?
2. How does dependence on God's protection differ from self-reliance?

Interlinear Text

מֵה H4100	קָרַךְ H3368	חַסְדֶּךָ H2617	אֵלֹהִים H430	וּבְנֵי י H1121
	How excellent	is thy lovingkindness	O God	therefore the children
אֲדָמָה H120	בְּצֵל H6738	כַּף יָדְךָ H3671	יִסְתְּיוּ H2620	
of men	under the shadow	of thy wings	put their trust	

Additional Cross-References

1 John 3:1 (References God): Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.

Psalms 86:5 (Parallel theme): For thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee.

Psalms 91:4 (Faith): He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler.

Ruth 2:12 (Faith): The LORD recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the LORD God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust.

Psalms 139:17 (References God): How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them!

Psalms 31:19 (Faith): Oh how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men!

Exodus 34:6 (References God): And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth,

Psalms 86:15 (References God): But thou, O Lord, art a God full of compassion, and gracious, longsuffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth.

Psalms 17:8 (Parallel theme): Keep me as the apple of the eye, hide me under the shadow of thy wings,

John 3:16 (Faith): For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

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