

**Welcome, Introduction and Prayer**

Welcome everyone and a special welcome to our guest speaker this morning, my dear Brother Akintunde Atanda and his beautiful family who are also here with us: his wife Achi Nyemachi, his sons Akinkumi and Akinkunle and his daughter Princess who will be playing a song for us late on the cello. This is our last worship service of the year and we are saying goodbye to 2020. What a year! A tough and difficult year for so many of us and we had to adapt to so many changes and restrictions. We are glad that in a couple of days it is going to pass and our prayer is that together with the year this virus will also pass and that soon we will be able to go back to some kind of normality. Specially being able to sing at our church services, have communion and fellowship with coffee and tea after the service. This is all a big part of our church life that we miss and many other things we could number here. But we also have so many things to thank God for as He has been faithful in providing, protecting and blessing us in so many ways. He has been present and teaching us to value many things we took for granted before and making us close to him. ***“God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble.” Psalm 46:1***

**Let us pray**

Dear Heavenly Father,

Thank you for your presence throughout this year. God you have been faithful and we thank you for your protection, provision and uncountable blessings you have poured over us all. We want to worship you with all our hearts this morning. Despite of all the troubles your presence was constant and tangible. Our hearts are full of gratitude and thanksgiving for carrying us this far. In a few days we are going to say goodbye to 2020 and we have a lot of faith and hope for 2021. May it be a blessed and prosperous year for your church. May we see a revival and many people turning back to God and accepting Jesus as their Lord and Saviour. Bless our service this morning and fill us with your Holy Spirit. In Jesus name we pray. Amen

**Song 1 – You Are My All in All**

[https://youtu.be/q\\_FtEzXu5J8](https://youtu.be/q_FtEzXu5J8) Click on the link or copy and paste to your browser in order to hear and follow the song on YouTube.

*You are my strength when I am weak  
You are the treasure that I seek  
You are my all in all  
Seeking You as a precious jewel  
Lord to give up I'd be a fool  
You are my all in all*

***Jesus Lamb of God worthy is Your name  
Jesus Lamb of God worthy is Your name***

*Taking my sin my cross my shame  
Rising again I bless your name  
You are my all in all  
When I fall down you pick me up  
When I am dry You fill my cup  
You are my all in all*

## **Song 2 – Great is Thy Faithfulness**

<https://youtu.be/Ok1WhFtVp0o> Click on the link or copy and paste to your browser in order to hear and follow the song on YouTube.

*Great is Thy faithfulness, o God my Father,  
There is no shadow of turning with Thee;  
Thou changest not, Thy compassions, they fail not  
As Thou hast been Thou forever wilt be.*

***Great is Thy faithfulness! Great is Thy faithfulness!  
Morning by morning new mercies I see;  
All I have needed Thy hand hath provided  
Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!***

*Summer and winter, and springtime and harvest,  
Sun, moon and stars in their courses above,  
Join with all nature in manifold witness  
To Thy great faithfulness, mercy and love.*

*"Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth,  
Thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide;  
Strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow,  
Blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside!*

## **Preaching and Teaching God's Secret Place by Brother Atanda**

### **Introduction**

People have secret places where they keep and hide their treasures like gold, money and the most precious things. Some even ask others to be in custody of their precious things for them. They go to banks or safe storages to keep their things so others might not see. God himself the creator of heaven and earth also has a secret place. I would like you to join me in this journey of discovering together God's secret place. Our main text today is taken from the Book of Psalm and we are going to read **Psalm 91:1-16** together and I'm using the New King James version of the Bible that reads...**1He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. 2 I will say of the Lord, "He is my refuge and my fortress; My God, in Him I will trust." 3 Surely He shall deliver you from the snare of the fowler and from the perilous pestilence. 4 He shall cover you with His feathers, and under His wings you shall take refuge; His truth shall be your shield and buckler. 5 You shall not be afraid of the terror by night, nor of the arrow that flies by day, 6 nor of**

***the pestilence that walks in darkness, nor of the destruction that lays waste at noonday. 7 A thousand may fall at your side, and ten thousand at your right hand; but it shall not come near you. 8 Only with your eyes shall you look, and see the reward of the wicked. 9 Because you have made the Lord, who is my refuge, even the Most High, your dwelling place, 10 No evil shall befall you, nor shall any plague come near your dwelling; 11 For He shall give His angels charge over you, to keep you in all your ways. 12 In their hands they shall bear you up, lest you dash your foot against a stone. 13 You shall tread upon the lion and the cobra, the young lion and the serpent you shall trample underfoot. 14 "Because he has set his love upon Me, therefore I will deliver him; I will set him on high, because he has known My name. 15 He shall call upon Me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him and honour him. 16 With long life I will satisfy him, and show him My salvation."***

In verse 1 it says that God has a secret place and we can dwell continually there under His shadow. If you notice of what has been described, there are dangers everywhere; destruction is walking around in darkness, even during the day. There is danger everywhere in the morning and in the night. Even when we sleep there is danger, danger of demons, danger of chiefs wondering around, danger of accidents, danger of house breaking, and danger of house wickedness of people in your own household. During this pandemic period statics says that there was an increase of domestic violence, the people that loves you, flesh of your flesh. Still can come back and cause you harm. If we look at those verses we will see that there are pre-conditions established by God in order for us to be able to enjoy the benefits. The benefit of His protection, His shielding and His deliverance and if these pre-conditions are not satisfied one cannot enjoy these benefits. That is the way that God works and we see on God's pact with His people Israel through Moses. He says if you obey my commandments than this will happen to you, however if you don't obey this will happen to you, which are the blessing and curses of the law. God is setting up some condition for one to enjoy His secret place. His yoke is very light and it is not difficult.

What is the **shadow**? A shadow forms when a light's ray shines upon a located object. The reflection of the sun in this object forms a shade. God commands many things because He is the creator of everything. ***"But to you who fear My name the Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in His wings;..." Malachi 4:2a*** and also in the book Isaiah we read... ***And I have put My words in your mouth; I have covered you with the shadow of My hand,...* Isaiah 51:16a**

When we talk about the **wings** in verse 4 says... ***4 "He shall cover you with His feathers, and under His wings you shall take refuge;"...*** If we see birds making their nest and laying their eggs, they will sit upon their eggs for a long period of time until they hatch, during this time if they see a danger coming close they will spread their wings in order to protect the chicks. God also has wings to only protect His children. If you dwell in under my shadow I will also use my wings to protect you and you can take cover and refuge in God. ... ***"His truth shall be your shield and buckler."***

What does the bible tells us about the **truth**? The truth of God is Jesus Christ. Jesus will be our shield and buckler. ***"Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."* John 14:6.** If you want to be under the shadow of the Father, we can only go to the Father through Jesus. If you are under

the shadow of somebody, this infers that you carry that person all around with you. For example, if I am the prime minister, I have my complimentary card. I have the first contact with my minister Pr. Claudio and I've given him my complementary card, then he goes to Central Bank and he says it is from the Prime Minister, showing the card, with my signature behind it, giving him free access. This is because he's carrying me with him and he is under my shadow. The same thing happens when you see a mentor and trainee or a leader and an apprentice; they are under the shadows of their coaches and mentors. The apprentice works under the shadow of the leader. The trainee works under the shadow of the mentor. The mentor will be overlooking to make sure they don't make any mistakes. The same way God wants us to be under His shadow, so he can watch every step we take. He wants to guide us and he doesn't want us to make mistakes. God is saying enough is enough, stop the cycle of making the same mistake again and again. Jesus is saying: ***"Come to Me, all you who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."*** Matthew 11:28-30

### **I – What Are The Benefits?**

What are the benefits of dwelling in God's secret place and abiding in the shadow of the Almighty? The benefits are unlimited but here are just a few: rescue, observation, peace, long life, salvation, satisfaction, protection, health, fortress, warmth, honour, refuge, safety, power, deliverance, trust, sound mind, immunity, rest, assurance, love, path of life, answers, etc. care angels.... ***v11 "For He shall give His angels charge over you, to keep you in all your ways."*** If we know where you are standing and if you are dwelling in God's secret place, nothing will stop God for sending angels to minister to you.

### **II – Who Can Get There?**

There are some conditions, not everybody can get to the secret place of the Almighty God. You can only access the secret place of God if you are a believer. Who is a believer? ***"But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him."*** Hebrews 11:6 If we don't believe that God exist than why looking for His secret place. There is no point if you don't believe in Him. You must believe that He exist and you must have faith in Him. For example, if you don't have faith in the pilot you will not enter in the plane. You have faith in the pilot and that is the reason you enter into the plane. The same thing when you see a driver, there's a display of a huge faith. You don't ask for the driver license, you just enter believing that the driver can drive and he's licensed. We don't ask for his driving license. We just enter the vehicle by faith. How much more the creator of heaven and earth, the one that created the driver, the license, the vehicle and we don't have faith in Him. Believers have faith in God and that is why they are called believers. ***"But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."*** John 1:12-13 So, if we believe in Him he has given us this certificate that we are His children. Now we know how to get there because these are the conditions.

### **III – Where is God Secret Place?**

The secret place of God is in His presence. The bible says: ***"You will show me the path of life; in Your presence is fullness of joy; at Your right hand are pleasures***

**forevermore. Psalm 16:11** God is inside of us and is also outside of us. What do I mean by saying God is in us? **“God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.” John 4:24** and the bible also tell us: **“On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you.” John 14:20** You can only come to the Father through Jesus, the Father is in Jesus. If we have Jesus in us so the Father is in us. When we accept Jesus Christ as our personal Lord and Saviour the Holy Spirit enters in us immediately. Before Jesus ascended to heaven he said he would send the Holy Spirit. Every child of God has the Holy Spirit in them. If the Holy Spirit is in us it means that Jesus is in us and if Jesus is in us the Father is in us. And that is the way we carry the presence of God in us and we carry this presence all around because His presence is inside of us. God can be also outside of us. When God gave Moses the assignment to deliver His people from the oppression of the Egyptians, Moses said to God I am not going anywhere except if your presence go with us. Because he knew that if the presence of the Almighty God is with him nothing would stop him. If we look the journey of the Israelites God was with them throughout their journey to the promise land even given them a pillar of fire in the night and clouds during the day guiding and protecting them. **“But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.” Mathew 6:6 “If you love Me, keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever—the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you. I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you. John 14:15-18** This should be very comforting for believers because we are carrying power but some of us are not aware of what is inside of us. It is like a lion growing up with dogs or with cats. The lion will start behaving like a dog or a cat, because he believes he is the same. But when the lion grow up and becomes an adult and he sees that he is not the same and he realizes he is different. The some with Christians, the bible says that we are in the world, but we are not of the world. We move around with a lot of non believers and the power we carry we don't exercise it because we already joined and become like them. If we don't join them and exercise the power in us and we see how much God has deposited in us and we stop underperforming. God doesn't want us to underperform because He already put a lot of benefits into us and we just need to discover ourselves what he has already deposited in us.

#### **IV – How do I Get There?**

As a believer there is a relationship now and you want to know how to get there. For non-believers they first need to become believers. You can't jump this step because the bible says that God knows his children and His children they know Him and when He speaks they hear His voice. That is what Jesus says when he talks about the sheep. The sheep follow and hear the shepherd. For those who don't believe the first thing you need to do is to repent, the bible says: **“...God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble.” James 4:6** When somebody is proud you don't want to have anything to do with that person. God resists anyone who is proud. So, the first thing is for one to repent. **“Come now, and let us reason together,” Says the Lord, “Though your sins are like scarlet, They shall be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They shall be as wool. Isaiah 1:18** God the Father is inviting us to reason with Him. God has freely given us His forgiveness and the book of Romans we read: **“that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For with the heart one**

**believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. Romans 10:9-10** A small step is what is required. You just need to accept your own shortcomings, believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and confess that Jesus is Lord and you will be saved. His yoke is very light and it is not difficult. Confessing our sins brings salvation to us. The second one is the Word of God. **“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” John 1:1.** What is the word we talk about? The Word here is Jesus and if read this passage the Word here is written in capital letter W. Jesus is the living word. It is the Lord Jesus Christ. He was there in the beginning of Creation and he himself is the Word of God. **“And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.” John 1:14 – “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”** Why this had to happen? God created human being at the beginning and he placed them on the Garden of Eden, God gave them a condition. Do not eat from this tree. Pride came in them and gave a way to disobedience and over the course of history we lost our touch with God. Let me call my people back to me, so God sent His son. That is the reason why Jesus came. Jesus came to reconcile us back to the Father. Christmas is the gift given! And third is prayer. One of the shortest verses in the bible says that we should ...**“pray without ceasing,” I Thessalonians 5:17** What does it mean? It means that we should be in constant touch with God through prayer, carrying His presence all around and we should call upon Him all the time. To get to the secret place of the most high we need to repent, then we need to have His word in our hearts and we need to pray.

### **Conclusion**

God has a secret place and this secret place is actually His presence. His presence is in us and outside of us. For us to be able to access the presence of God we need to become a believer, we need to repent of our sins and confess Jesus as our personal Lord and Saviour. When we do that at the same moment we receive His Holy Spirit inside of us. We have the Father, the Son and The Holy Spirit in us. Hezekiah didn't want to die so he pleaded to God for God to preserve His life and God gave him 15 more years to live in peace. God answers prayers. **O You who hear prayer, To You all flesh will come. Psalm 65:2** So we reflect to this word we need to respond and make our minds what we're going to do. God is inviting us to come to Him, the one that omnipotent God, omnipresent and omniscient God.

### **Response Prayer**

Thank you God for inviting us to come into your secret place, I pray that today people would believe and come to your presence and receive all the benefits of being a child of God. We also pray for believers, who are still struggling with the same sin again and again. I pray for deliverance and that your Holy Spirit will fill us with your presence and that we may carry you everywhere we go. In the mighty name of Jesus, I pray. Amen

### **Poem – A Shinning Light By Richard Trander**

*I write this poem all quite and rested  
2020 will go down as the year we were tested.  
I think it might be the hardest of years*

*People were frightened and crying with tears.  
People at home all nervous and scared  
Believing there alone and nobody cared.*

*This year's been hard with no end in sight  
But God's in our hearts still shining a light.  
One thing I know with tough time of the day  
Jesus is with us every step of the way.  
God wants us to know when life gives you a scare  
Is to look in the bible the answers are there.*

*To say thanks to God for the love that He sent  
is to open your heart when you need to repent.  
One thing will should do is we all need to read  
is to go to the verse that you think that you need.  
Be strong in your faith and the end of the year  
We need God in our lives the message is clear.*

*Jesus gave us a sign to keep our hearts still  
Is to keeps us align and follow his will.  
Glory to God for all that He's showing  
and have peace in your hearts because He's all knowing.  
Don't go through life thinking you can do it alone  
Admit all your sins and receive His atone.*

*God gave me so much and I know that I'm growing.  
I'll tell you next Sunday in part two of the poem.*

### **Final Words and Apostolic Blessings**

Next Sunday is our New Year Celebration! Happy New Year! Please write your name to book a place and invite others to come. There is an offering plate available at the exit for those who wish to contribute and give your tithes.

### **Let me finish the service by praying the priestly blessing over us all**

*“The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face towards you and give you peace.”*

See you all on Sunday

### **Let us finish the service by praying the Lord's prayer together:**

Our Father who art in heaven,  
Hallowed be thy name.  
Thy kingdom come.  
Thy will be done,  
On earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our trespasses,  
As we forgive those who trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation;  
But deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom,  
And the power, and the glory,  
for ever and ever. Amen.

**Song 3 – Postlude “The Blessing” by Saulo & Becky Moises**

<https://youtu.be/uZ55mDL7dA0> Click on the link or copy and paste to your browser in order to hear and follow the song on YouTube.

*The Lord bless you and keep you  
Make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you  
The Lord turn His face toward you  
And give you peace (2x)  
Amen*

*May His favour be upon you  
And a thousand generations  
And your family and your children  
And their children and their children (4x)  
May His presence go before you  
And behind you and beside you  
All around you and within you  
He is with you  
He is with you  
In the morning, in the evening  
In your coming and your going  
In your weeping and rejoicing  
He is for you  
He is for you*

*Amen*