

V.O.C. – October 2018

October 14, 2018: Our security and God! [Prov. 18:10]

Dear Listeners,

We're living in a broken world, and when I say this it's not meant as a *cliché*. We see it everywhere, all around us: in Syria, in disaster areas following a fire, an earthquake, a typhoon. Every day there is one reminder or other, it seems, that tells us that we're people of a day, people like a mist, whether we're young or old. It can come as close as your own business, house, health, you name it; it makes us all so vulnerable, so insecure! Just as last time, I would like to look at this situation again in the light of one of the *proverbs* in this book of wisdom written by Solomon. It's a book that stands in the midst of life, of our life and our world. It's so realistic, so concrete, and at the same time so *wise*! In the midst of this reality of brokenness, this world in which we're so vulnerable, the proverb says: "The Name of the LORD is a strong tower; the righteous run to it and are safe!"

Evidently, dear listeners, this *proverb* must be seen against the background of its own time first of all. We may know of towers, like church towers or Trump towers, or we may be aware of castles in history-rich countries that we see on pictures of Europe or so; yet, those are not the towers Proverbs speaks about. In Bible times they had towers on walls, as part of the fortification of a city. At the approach of an enemy the people would run to the city and find refuge inside the walls, especially in the *towers* on the walls! Those towers gave people safety and security. Their lives were very vulnerable, and the evils that threatened them were so many, they needed such special protection. People would run to those towers to be safe, secure! Also in the history of many a European city, walls and towers like that provided safety and a refuge in times of danger. As time went on, however, things changed. Ever since the 16th/17th century these gates, walls, and towers became futile. With the development of gunpowder and the construction of canons, towers lost their use for refuge. Indeed, with the invention of airplanes and automatic weapons and missiles, you're not safe anywhere!

Let's start here as we consider this proverb. For the longest time it may seem as if we have our *securities* in place. We have our solutions ready in case of trouble; we have our ways of securing our situations, solving our problems. We use our education to guarantee a career, our medical system to secure a good health, our mortgage arrangements to solidify our monies; yes, we feel very secure. You see, then Proverbs shows us so very clearly how insecure we are, how vulnerable. Yes, it shows us our insecurities in those very common, concrete, and everyday situations, in the dangers that threaten us, the evils that surround us, and yes the weaknesses that are in us! Then God says in His Word: do you realize that? Towers that seemed secure lose their purpose! Our securities are made of stone, of money, of electronics, of knowledge, of intelligence, and of social systems; they're beautiful, even gifts of God, yet they're dead in themselves! At one point in time they don't mean a thing!

Therefore, dear listeners, this *word of wisdom* says: seek your life outside of yourselves; seek your refuge in the LORD! As I explained before, the Name LORD is the Name God uses for people with whom He has a very special and personal relationship. Hence, when this proverb says that the Name of the LORD is a strong tower, God is holding up His Name, this very personal relationship, so that you might cling to it and be safe in Him! Is that possible, that a Name could be a hiding place? Yes, it is, for a name is more than just a name; it's a world of meanings. We know that from our everyday life and world too: names stand for something,

for what a person does. The papers are filled with names of leaders, athletes, celebrities; yet, what's so remarkable about all those names: sooner or later they're gone, these people are dead. They're history, except for *one name*: the name of God, the Name of God as He is known by those believers who have a special relationship with Him: the LORD (i.e. the God who is there for you); or the Name of the Lord Jesus, the Son of God, who died and rose again! God's Name stands, in Jesus' Name the church remains, and in His Name your life obtains security!

"The Name of the LORD is a strong tower," dear listeners, "the believer runs into it and is safe." So that's the question which is of life-saving significance: do *you* want to find security with God the Father in Jesus Christ? Whatever ways man designs and whatever securities man selects, they're only temporary. Only those who seek refuge with God and find shelter under the wings of the Most High, will be safe and secure. As in Noah's case, the flood won't touch them; as in David's situation, a Goliath cannot subdue them; and as the church of the Old Testament, they are secure and safe even as they go through the Red Sea or through the river Jordan! When you seek your security with God, in Jesus Christ as the only Name of Him crucified, you will find in Him salvation, a crown of glory, like Paul did, even though his life was beaten, his spirit crushed, and his mind perplexed. It's through Jesus Christ who suffered, was crucified, buried, but who rose again, that you have *life*, and have it *safely* and *securely*!

When you believe in Jesus Christ, dear listener, who has made known the *Name of God* to us, you will find security with God in this broken world. You will have this safety and security when you find your life in Jesus Christ! It's vulnerable sinners like you and I, who are living in brokenness, who will find their righteousness with God in Christ. They are the ones who share in Christ's death and resurrection. Do *you* believe this? Can *you* go on in this assurance and with this security in your life? Or do you have your doubts, your reservations? Still, this is the Word of God, whom you can trust as you can learn from His Word! Hence, it's very important that you *know* that Word, study that Word, and hear the proclamation of that Word! That's what the church is all about: that's where you hear the Voice of the Church expounding that *Word* to strengthen you in your faith!

Yes, dear listeners, we are vulnerable and weak, even in our *faith*. Hence, for all that and for every need in our life we are to *run* to the LORD! We need to *run*, because the danger is threatening; we need to *run*, because it's our whole life that's at stake! *Run* and *keep running*, and don't think that this is just a matter of once and you're safe. No, the moment you think you've made it, licked it, and you become complacent in your life, you're in danger of life's brokenness again! The Voice of the Church, therefore, reminds you of the Word of God, saying, "When I am weak, then I am strong, because *God's power* is manifest in my weakness." That's why the church confesses every Sunday, "Our help is in the Name of the LORD who made the heavens and the earth!"