

亲近神

住在至高者隐密处的，必住在全能者的荫下。我论到耶和华说：“祂是我的避难所，是我的山寨，是我的神，是我所倚靠的。”——诗篇 91:1-2

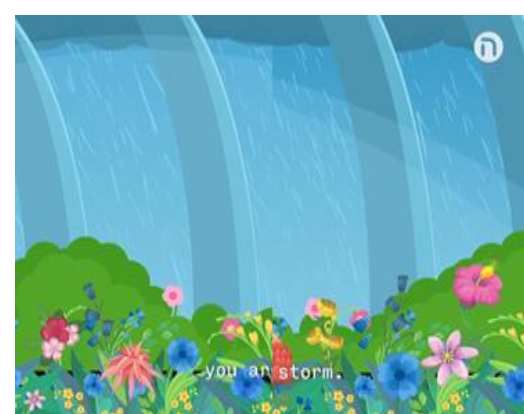
嗨，孩子们！这张照片上的是新加坡一个非常著名的地方，你知道这是哪里吗？我想你猜到了，这是滨海花园。在滨海花园里种植着各种各样不同的植物，其中许多植物是来自其他很远的国家，那些国家的气候与新加坡的气候可是非常不一样噢！



为了使这些植物能够很好地生长，它们种植在温室里面，避免它们不适应新加坡所处的高温和湿度大的热带气候。在滨海花园里你会看到一个巨大的玻璃圆顶，制造这样一个巨大的温室，一切都是为了确保这些珍贵植物的生长环境合宜，保证水要刚刚好，阳光也要刚刚好，甚至连室内温度都是温控的。在穹顶内，新加坡的天气如何变化并不要紧，即使外面非常热、潮湿，甚至刮风下雨，也不会影响到在这个玻璃特制的建筑里面的植物。



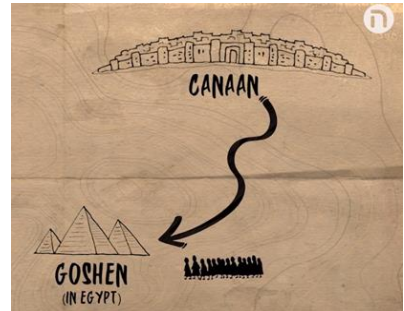
想象一下，有一天，你来观赏这些植物，外面正刮着狂风暴雨，但你可以惬意自在的站在这间温室里面，观看外面劈里啪啦的闪电和狂啸的风暴，你可能还听到呼啸的风声、哗啦啦的雨声和轰隆隆的雷声，你可以看到和听到外面所发生的一切。但在这个受保护的地方，你可以远离风暴，无论外面发生什么，都不会影响到你，因为你在里面是安全的。是不是觉到好奇妙？！



今天的圣经故事是关于圣经中的一个地方，在那个地方神的百姓能够得到保护，使他们脱离发生在他们周围的患难和危险。那个地方名叫歌珊(Goshen)，歌珊是在埃及。我们第一次听到歌珊这个地名是在创世纪第 45 章约瑟的故事中，当时约瑟是埃及的宰相，也就是一人之下万人之上的主管。作为宰相，约瑟的职责是负责储存埃及所有的粮食，这是一份非常重要的工作，因为当时到处都处于可怕的饥荒当中。



当时约瑟的父亲雅各却住在迦南地(Canaan)，他的日子过得很艰难。在创世纪 45 章 10-11 节告诉我们，约瑟给他父亲捎来信息，是这样说的：“你要来住在歌珊地(Goshen)，与我相近，你和你的孩子们、你孩子的孩子们以及你的羊群、牛群和所有，我都会在那里奉养你……”



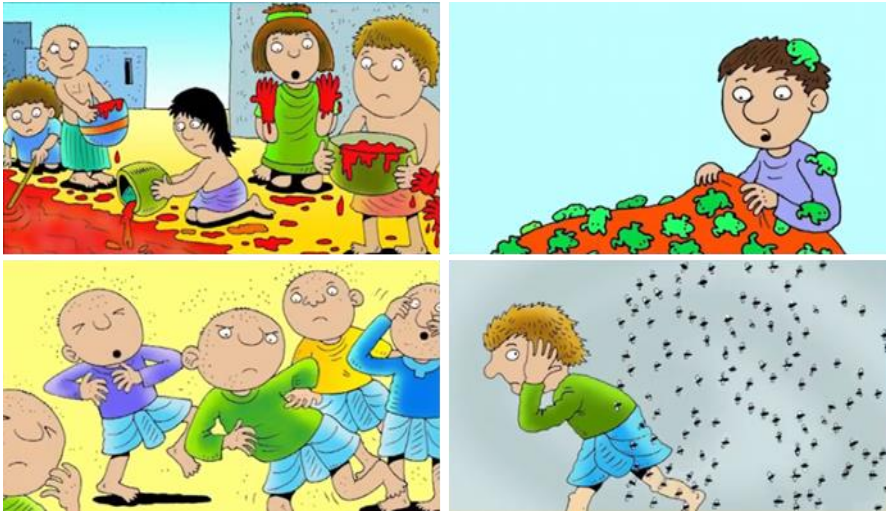
哇！当时几乎每个人都因为没有食物而挨饿，约瑟却邀请他的家人住在靠近他的歌珊地，这样他就可以照顾他们，给他们所需要的食物。于是，雅各全家搬到埃及，住在歌珊地。以色列人在歌珊住了将近 400 年，一直到摩西时代。神的子民又面临着另一个新难题——就是他们受到了埃及人的奴役。



于是，摩西就去告诉法老，是时候让神的百姓离开此地了。接下来的故事情节，我们非常熟悉。每一次，当摩西对法老说：“请让神的百姓离开这里！”法老都是说：“不允许！”



就在那个时候，埃及地发生了许多可怕的事——所有的水都变成了血，青蛙遍满全地，无数的虱子附在人们身上，然后是扑天盖地的苍蝇飞来。但是，看看圣经是怎么说歌珊地的，在出埃及记 8 章 22-23 节说：“到那日，我必分别我百姓所住的歌珊地，使那里没有成群的苍蝇，好叫你知道我是这天下的耶和华。我要将我的百姓和你的百姓分别出来……”歌珊地却没有扰人的苍蝇，是如此的特别，这是因为神把它与埃及和其他地方区别开来。它被区别对待，这样每个人都会看到它是在上帝的特别保护下，当其他灾难不断临到埃及时，住在歌珊地的以色列人继续受到保护。



埃及的牲畜都病了死了，歌珊的牲畜却生机勃勃；冰雹落满了埃及，歌珊却阳光灿烂；当黑暗笼罩埃及全地的时候，歌珊地的以色列人家家都有亮光。在埃及人身上所发生的任何灾难都没有影响到歌珊地的人和牲畜，歌珊地是神分别出来受到祂特别保护的地方。



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现在，让我们揭晓歌珊故事最激动人心的部分，就是我们发现了“歌珊”得到特殊保护的秘诀。原来秘诀在“歌珊”这个词的意思上，它是“走近”的意思，它里面隐藏着“走近了”就可以“亲近”，可以紧紧地拥抱。在歌珊地，神与祂的百姓亲近；在歌珊地，以色列人亲近神得以脱离埃及所发生的灾难；在这个亲密的地方，他们得到了特殊的保护，这是他们周围的世界所没有的。

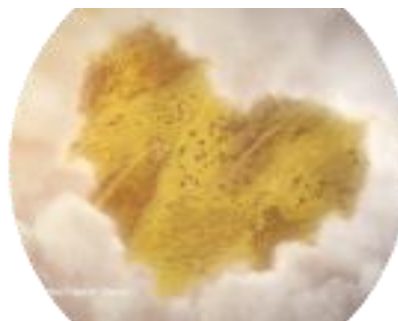


现在你知道了这个秘诀，让我告诉你今天真正的好消息。好消息是——在今天，我们仍然有这个特殊的地方与我们的上帝亲近，在那里我们享受着特别的保护；而最激动人心的部分是，这个特殊的地方可不是地图上的某一个地点，而是会跟随着我们而移动的，即是无论我们走到哪里，这个亲密的地方都跟着我们一起走。这就是诗篇 91 章 1-2 节所说的：住在至高者隐密处的，必住在全能者的荫下。我论到耶和华说：“祂是我的避难所，是我的山寨，是我的神，是我所倚靠的。”

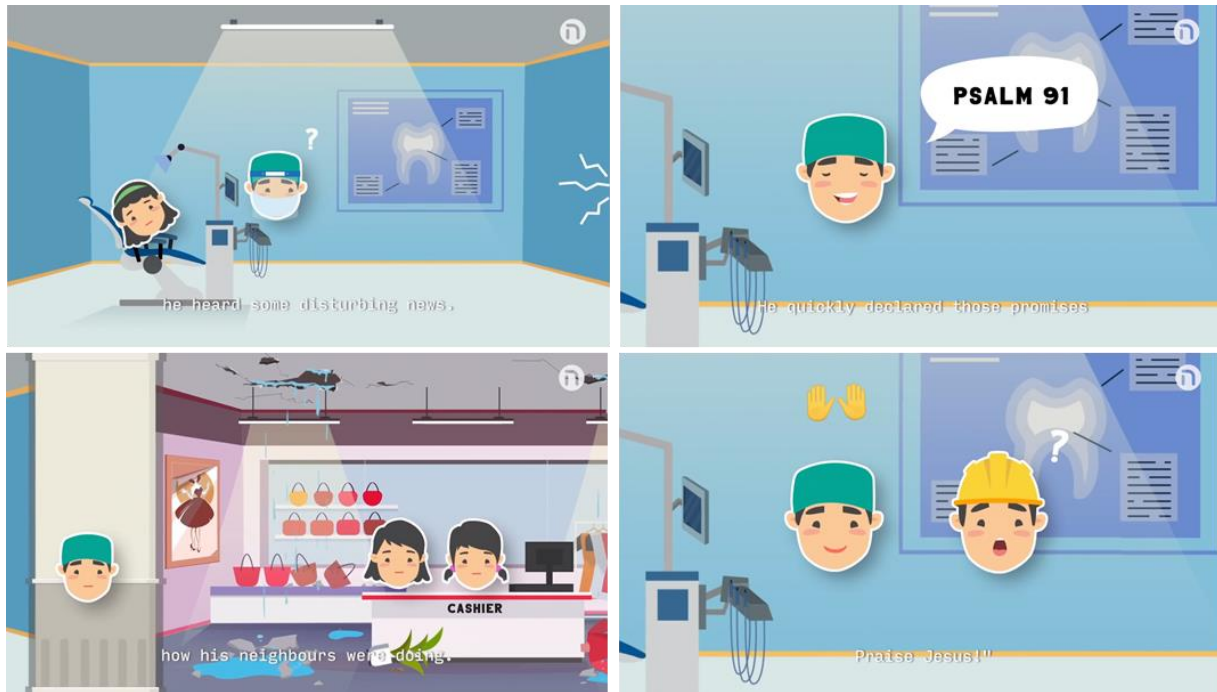
今天，神的子民仍然有一个特殊的地方与我们的神亲近，在那里我们可以亲近他，诗篇称它为“至高者的隐秘处”。当我们住在这个隐秘的地方时，感觉就像一个小孩被他高大强壮的爸爸紧紧地抱在怀里一样，我们只知道我们是如此的安全，因为我们是如此备受宠爱！那么，我们如何才能寻到和住在这个隐秘的地方呢？很简单：

- 每当我们祷告与神对话时
- 每当我们歌颂敬拜神时，
- 甚至当我们记起神的良善和祂对我们的爱时，

我们都是处在那个特殊的受亲密保护的地方！



接下来 让我们来分享见证。这个见证是来自我们教会的一位弟兄，他是一名牙医。有一天，当他正在给一个病人检查牙齿的时候，他听到了一个令人不安的消息，他诊所周围的办公室和商店的天花板正在漏水。“哦，糟了！怎么办？我该如何保护我的诊所？”这些问题一下子涌现在他脑子里。突然，他想起了诗篇 91 篇中有关于神保护的应许，于是，他赶快宣告这篇诗篇的保护应许临到自己和他的诊所上。

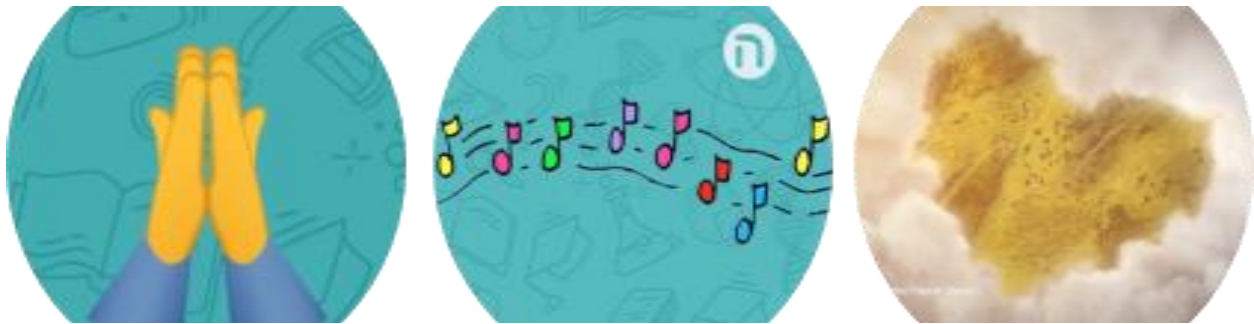


过了一会，他有空了，他就出去看看隔壁商铺的情况怎么样。令他震惊的是，他看到隔壁商铺的天花板装饰破了，穿洞了，所有东西都被水浸透了。于是，他又回到自己的诊所去仔细检查，但令他惊讶的是，他的诊所一点都没有湿！当工作人员来检查整栋楼层漏水的损坏情况时，工作人员简直不敢相信，这家诊所居然没有受到任何影响？！这位牙医弟兄只是简单地告诉他们：“是上帝保护了我和这里的一切！赞美耶稣！”

哇，今天我们所听到的好消息真是太棒了！我们学习了：亲近我们良善慈爱的阿爸天父，就会受到一种特殊的保护和**安全**！在歌珊地的故事中，神使他的百姓与埃及所发生的一切灾难隔绝，无论埃及的情况多么糟糕，歌珊地的人都幸免于难。我们还学习了：“歌珊”这个名字的意思是“走近”，这意味着，今天，我们所受的保护不仅仅局限于地图上的一个实际的地方，我们受保护的秘诀是亲近我们慈爱的父神。



诗篇 91 告诉我们，当我们住在至高者的隐密处时，我们是住在全能者的荫下。也许你们中有些人会很疑惑地问：“但我怎样才能亲近神呢？”思考一下，那你平时是怎样和你所爱的人保持亲密关系的呢？——你会花时间和他们在一起，你会和他们谈心交流，你告诉他们一些秘密，告诉他们甚至一些你都不肯告诉别人的心事，因为你信任他们。所以，道理很简单，与神保持亲密的关系也是如此——要花点时间和我们良善的阿爸天父在一起，阅读圣经去听祂的话语，歌颂敬拜祂，常常祷告和祂交流，告诉祂那些你会告诉你最最好朋友的心里话！



所以，当有糟糕的事情发生在你周围时，或发生在你身上时，使得你惊呼“哦，糟了”时，你不必害怕慌张，记住，你是在我们良善慈爱的阿爸天父强大而有力的怀抱中，你是如此的安全受保护，这样，你可以放松下来，依偎在阿爸父的身上，对祂说：“你是我的避难所，是我的山寨，是我的神，是我所倚靠的！”所有孩子们一起说：“阿门！”



孩子们，如果你正在听这个故事，你从来没有邀请耶稣进入你的生命，成为你的主和救主，你现在可以这样做，跟着我重复这个祷告：“亲爱的主耶稣，感谢你为我死在十字架上。你是神的儿子，你死了，也被埋葬，第三天又复活了。你宝血洗去了我所有的罪，使我得以永远与阿爸天父在一起。我请求你现在进入我的生命里，成为我的主和救主，我永远是个义人，永远是有福的，永远是神的孩子。奉耶稣的名，阿门！”

CLOSE TO HIM

He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of Almighty. I will say of the LORD, "He is my refuge and my fortress; my God, in Him I will trust." --Psalm 91: 1-2, NKJV

Hey Rock Kidz! This is a picture of a very famous place right here in Singapore. Can you guess where it is? Yes! It's the Gardens by the Bay. All kinds of different plants can be found at Gardens by the bay. Many of these plants come from faraway countries where the climates are very different from the one in Singapore.

To help these plants grow well, they are kept in conservatories to protect them from the heat and the humidity in tropical Singapore. These are the huge glass domes that we see at the Gardens. Inside these giant conservatories, everything is done to make sure that the conditions are good for these precious plants. The water is just right. The sunlight is just right. And even the temperature is controlled. Inside the domes, it does not matter what the weather is like in the rest of Singapore. Even if it gets really hot, or wet, or even windy outside, nothing affects the plants inside these special glass buildings.

On a stormy day, you can stand inside the conservatory and see everything that is happening outside. You can see the storm clouds, you can see the heavy rain and the lightening. You might even hear the thunder. You can see and hear all that is happening outside. But inside this protected place, you are safe from the storm. Whatever happens outside cannot affect you because you are safe inside.

Today's Bible story is about a place in the Bible, where God's people were kept safe the dangers and troubles that happened around them. This place was called Goshen. Goshen was in Egypt. We first hear about Goshen in the story of Joseph in Genesis 45, when Joseph was the Prime Minister of Egypt. As Prime Minister, Joseph was in charge of storing all the food in Egypt. This was a super important job, because there was a terrible famine everywhere.

Look at the message in Genesis 45: 10-11 that Joseph sent to his dad, Jacob, who was struggling in the land of Canaan: "You shall dwell in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near to me, you and your children, your children's children, your flocks and herds, and all that you have. There I will provide for you ..."

Wow! In a time when everyone was starving because there was no food, Joseph invited his family to live in Goshen near to him, so that he could take care of them and give them all the food they needed. And so Jacob and his whole family moved to Egypt and settled in Goshen. The Israelites stayed in Goshen for almost 400 years, all the way to the time of Moses, where God's people faced a different kind of problem.

This was also the time when Moses told Pharaoh to let God's people go. You know the story ... each time Moses said, "Let God's people go!", Pharaoh said, "No!" Terrible things happened in the land of Egypt during that time. All the water turned into blood, frogs showed up everywhere and millions of lice attached the people. Then came the flies. But look what the Bible says about the land of Goshen. In Exodus 8: 22-23, it says: "And in that day I will set apart the land of Goshen, in which My people dwell,

that no swarms of flies shall be there, in order that you may know that I am the LORD in the midst of the land. I will make a difference between My people and your people ..." There was no flies in Goshen. Goshen was different because God had set it apart from the rest of Egypt. It would be set apart so everyone would be see that it was under God's own special protection! When other troubles came upon Egypt, the Israelites living in Goshen continued to be protected.

The animals in Egypt got sick and died. But not in Goshen. Hail fell all oven Egypt. But not in Goshen. When darkness covered the whole land of Egypt, all the Israelites in Goshen had light in their homes! It was good to be in Goshen. Nothing that happened to the Egyptians affected the people or the animals in Goshen, the place God had set apart for His special protection.

Now we come to the most exciting part of the story of Goshen. This is the part where we find out the secret hidden in the name of "Goshen". You see, the name "Goshen" means "drawing near". To draw near, means to come close, like this! In Goshen, God was near to His people. In Goshen, close to God, the Israelites were safe from the troubles that happened in Egypt. In that place of closeness, they received special protection that the world around them did not have.

Now that you know this, let me tell you the really good news for today. The good news is that we still have this special place of closeness with our God, where we enjoy special protection. That's right! The really good news is that our place of closeness in not located on a map. Our place of closeness with the Lord follows us wherever we go. Psalm 91 verse 1-2 says, and you can highlight this as well, **"He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of Almighty. I will say of the LORD, "He is my refuge and my fortress; my God, in Him I will trust."**

God's people today still have a special place of closeness with our God, where we can draw near to Him. Psalm calls it 'the secret place of the Most High'. Just like a little child being hugged close in the arms of big, strong Dad, when we dwell in this secret place, we just know for sure that we are so, so safe, because we are so loved. **Each time we pray and talk to the Lord, each time we sing praise and worship to Him, and even when we remember His goodness and His love for us, we place ourselves in that special place of closeness and protection.**

Let me tell you what happened to a man from our church one day. He was a dentist, and one day while he was in the middle of fixing a patient's teeth, he heard some disturbing news. water was leaking in the offices and stores around his clinic. Oh, no! what could he do? How could he protect his clinic? Then suddenly, he remembered the promises of protection in Psalm 91. He quickly declared those promises over himself and his clinic.

As soon as he could, he went out to see how his neighbours were doing. He was shocked to see their ceiling boards broken and everything soaked with water. He went back to check on his own clinic, but to his amazement, his clinic was completely dry! When the workers came to check on the water damage, they could not believe that the clinic was not affected at all! The detist simply told them, "The Lord protected me. Praise Jesus!"

What good news we have heard today! We heard that close to our good and loving God, there is a special protection and safety. We saw that in the story of Goshen, where God set His people apart from all troubles happening in Egypt. No matter how bad things got in Egypt, the people in Goshen were spared. We also learned that the name "Goshen" means "drawing near". This is good news for us because today, our protection is not limited to an actual place on a map, but our protection is found close to our loving Daddy God.

Psalm 91 tells us that when we dwell in the secret place of the Most High, we abide or stay under the shadow of the Almighty. Maybe some of you are now asking, "But how do I stay close to God?" Well, how do you stay close to the people you love? You spend time with them. You talk to them. You tell them things, even things that you don't tell anyone else because you trust them. So spend time with our good, good God. Listen to His word. Read your Bible. Sing praises to Him. Talk to Him as well. Tell Him the things that you would tell your bestest, best friend.

So when things happen around you, or to you, that make you go, "Oh, no!", you don't have to be afraid. You are safe in the big, strong hug of our good and amazing God. And Just like that, you can relax, snuggle up, even closer to your Daddy God and say, "You are my refuge. You are my fortress, My God, in You I will trust!" And all of Rock Kidz say, "Amen!"

Hey Rock Kidz, if you are listening to this story and you've never asked Jesus to come into your life to be your Lord and Saviour, you can do so now. Just repeat this prayer after me, "Dear Lord Jesus, thank You for dying on the cross for me. You are the Son of God, who died, was buried and on the third day, you rose again. Your precious blood washed away all my sins making me forever right with Daddy God. I ask You now to come into my life to be my Lord and Saviour. I am forever righteous, forever blessed, forever a child of God. In Jesus' name," and everyone say, "Amen."