

**Rhema Christian Center
Triumphant Tuesday-Bible Study
April 17, 2022
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The Book of Psalms: Psalm 46**

***The LORD Almighty is with us;
the God of Jacob is our fortress. Psalm 46:7***

How can I find stillness while the world around me seems to be in an uproar? Whether it is busyness, chaotic world events, wars and rumors of wars, family struggles, or work challenges. It seems like there is always some part of our lives that is dealing with the stress of life. Psalm 46 reminds us that there can be a calm in the middle of the storm.

Outline and Historical Background

The psalm is divided into two sections each ending with the refrain, **"The Lord of host is with us"**, in verses 7 and 11. The first section focuses on God's city and the second on God's works.

The central verse line is found at verse 6, **"Nations are in uproar, kingdoms fall, He lifts His voice, the earth melts."** In this short statement we encounter the central idea of the psalm. The world may be in an uproar but God's power is so great that He calms the storm with just the word of His mouth.

"The historical background is probably God's deliverance of Jerusalem from the Assyrians in the time of King Hezekiah (2 Kings 18–19).

God's people have always depended on the hidden spiritual resources that come from God alone. Whenever Israel turned to a pagan nation for help, they ended up in worse trouble.

"Jerusalem was indeed the Holy City, set apart by God, and His sanctuary was there, but these things were no guarantee of victory. The king and the people needed to turn to the Lord in confession and faith, and He would hear and save them, and this is what they did. God did help Jerusalem when the morning dawned (v. 5 "right early," kjv), for the angel of the Lord killed 185,000 Assyrian soldiers and sent Sennacherib home."

(Be Worshipful-Psalms, Warren Wiersbe)

2 Kings 19:35 (The Message)

"And it so happened that that very night an angel of God came and massacred 185,000 Assyrians. When the people of Jerusalem got up next morning, there it was—a whole camp of corpses!" Jehovah is God Most High!

Psalm 46(ESV)
To the choirmaster. Of the Sons of Korah. According to Alamoth. A Song.

1 God is our refuge and strength,
a very present help in trouble.

2 Therefore we will not fear though the earth gives way,
though the mountains be moved into the heart of the sea,
though its waters roar and foam,
though the mountains tremble at its swelling. Selah

4 There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God,
the holy habitation of the Most High.

5 God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved;
God will help her when morning dawns.

6 The nations rage, the kingdoms totter;
he utters his voice, the earth melts.

7 The Lord of hosts is with us;
the God of Jacob is our fortress. Selah

8 Come, behold the works of the Lord,
how he has brought desolations on the earth:
9 he makes wars cease to the end of the earth;
he breaks the bow and shatters the spear;
he burns the chariots with fire.

10 Be still, and know that I am God.
I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth!

11 The Lord of hosts is with us;
the God of Jacob is our fortress. Selah

God Is Our Refuge
We will not fear

God's presence
brings safety

Be Still
God's works
bring peace

← The only words
spoken by God

Central Theme: Verse 6

Key Words

- **Refuge;** (vv. 7, 11) – Normally speaking, a refuge (v. 1) or fortress (vv. 7, 11) It is a place where people are safe from calamity and combat. Remarkably, in this psalm the refuge is not a place but a Person, namely, the God of Jacob. Finding our refuge in God is a common theme in the Psalms (14:6; 61:3; 62:8; 73:28).
- **River** (v. 4) – In both the ancient and modern worlds people tend to build cities by rivers or other large sources of fresh water. Think of Cairo on the Nile River, Babylon on the Euphrates River, and New York on the Hudson River. Yet, the irony here is that Jerusalem is not situated on the banks of a river. The Jordan River is approximately 1,860 miles to the east of the city walls of Jerusalem. In the days of the sons of Korah, Jerusalem's main source of water was the Gihon spring, yet in faith they trust that the LORD is in their midst, He Himself will provide for them. A discovery occurred in 2011, in the process of digging a new railway line workers discovered a river flowing underneath Jerusalem.
- The **LORD** of hosts (vv. 7, 11) – God's personal name is **Yahweh**, or **I AM WHO I AM** (Ex. 3:14), or the **LORD**, as it is often printed, about 250 times in the OT and twice in this psalm. God's personal name is combine with "hosts" to form Yahweh Sebaoth. A host is a big army or a large multitude of creatures. Thus, the LORD of hosts is the supreme commander of the armies of heaven (i.e., the angels) and all the nations and creatures on the earth. God Is Our Refuge-We will not fear.

Psalm 46:1 **"God is our refuge and strength,** (the emotional or mental qualities necessary in dealing with situations or events that are distressing or difficult).

What more do we need? Yet, how do we convince our heart of this truth?

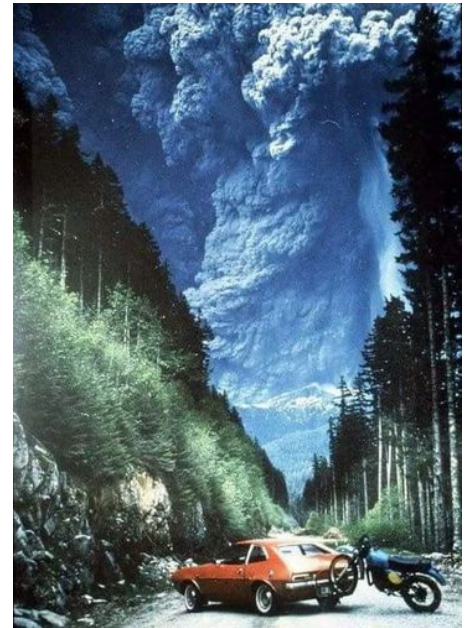
I know God is able to deliver me from the calamities of this world. The question is, "Will He?" If I truly believed this then I could say with the psalmist:

**"Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way
and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea,
though its waters roar and foam
and the mountains quake with their surging." Psalm 46:2-3 (ESV)**

If we fear, then do we fully trust that God will be our refuge? Where can we find this peace? What is fear? Why do we fear?

Anyone who has lived through an earthquake, a volcanic eruption, a tornado, or hurricane, flood, forest fire or such, may have experienced the ultimate level of fear. According to this Scripture, the earth may not be as immobile and permanent as it appears. Some of you may remember the event in Washington state, when the eruption of Mount Saint Helens, in the early 1980's. The volcano erupted, blown to smithereens, and scattered fine dust across the face of the p. 2

earth. Twelve hundred feet of the mountain's summit is missing, whole glaciers are gone, and there is now a gaping gouge in the mountain's north and northeast sides. Nothing on earth is as permanent and unmovable as it seems, even a giant mountain like Saint Helens.



Some Facts About the 1980 Mount St Helens Eruption

- Fifty-seven people were killed; 250 homes, 47 bridges, 15 miles (24 km) of railways, and
- 185 miles (298 km) of highway were destroyed.
- A massive debris avalanche triggered by an earthquake measuring 5.1 on the Richter scale caused an eruption, that reduced the elevation of the mountain's summit from 9,677 ft (2,950 m) to 8,363 ft (2,549 m), leaving a 1 mile (1.6 km) wide horseshoe-shaped crater.

Fear can be overwhelming and destructive, but it's also incredibly difficult to control. We fear what we do not know and what we feel we cannot overcome. Sometimes we don't even know what we are afraid of.

The disciples experienced fear while Jesus was with them in the midst of a storm.

22 One day he got into a boat with his disciples, and he said to them, "Let us go across to the other side of the lake." So they set out, 23 and as they sailed he fell asleep. And a windstorm came down on the lake, and they were filling with water and were in danger. 24 And they went and woke him, saying, "Master, Master, we are perishing!" And he awoke and rebuked the wind and the raging waves, and they ceased, and there was a calm. 25 He said to them, "Where is your faith?" And they were afraid, and they marveled, saying to one another, "Who then is this, that he commands even winds and water, and they obey him?"

What does the Bible say about overcoming fear and anxiety?

Failure

So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand. (Isaiah 41:10)

Rejection

There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love. (1 John 4:18)

Loss of Control

God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea. (Psalm 46:1-2)

Loss of Security

In God, whose word I praise—in God I trust and am not afraid. What can mere mortals do to me? (Psalm 56:8)

Bodily Harm

But Jesus on hearing this answered him, "Do not fear; only believe, and she will be well." (Luke 8:50, ESV)

First, the Bible says, 2 Timothy 2:7. **“For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind. (Self-control)** This lets us know it is a weapon of our enemy, satan.

What are your fears?

Here are some fears that we all will face or have faced:

Failure – We fear finding out we’re not smart enough, strong enough, or good enough. We fear losing a job, not being able to provide for our family, or simply not measuring up.

Rejection – We’re not just afraid of messing up; we’re afraid of people seeing us mess up. We fear letting down our guard and then not being accepted or loved.

Loss of Control – We fear facing circumstances we can’t fix; a job offer we can’t get to materialize, a car crash we can’t prevent, or a question about the future we can’t answer.

Loss of Security – We fear our money or material goods getting stolen, lost, or damaged. More than that, we fear not being able to protect ourselves and our families.

Bodily Harm – We fear getting hurt or seeing our loved ones hurt, whether from injuries, sickness, and death.

Yet if we believe that God is ultimately in control, is completely powerful and completely omniscient, and has a perfect plan of salvation for all humanity, then what is there to be afraid of?

The Bible shows us that this faith in God as our protector is *incompatible* with fear. There is nothing physical from which God cannot protect us. And yet we can know this intellectually. Yes, I know, God is all-powerful, He loves me, I have nothing to fear, and yet still struggle against that deep-seated emotional level of fear.

So what does the Bible say about how to overcome it?

The first step to overcoming fear may seem strange—because it's *fear*.

It is fear of a very different kind: **the fear of God**. Fear of God is the foundation of our faith. It comes with understanding, having no illusion, about the immensity of His power, compared with the power of any created thing.

But fear of God can take us further than just being in awe of His power. The Bible shows that properly fearing God leads us to obey God, because we recognize His divine intervention in our lives, as well as the positive outcomes for obedience to Him.

Deuteronomy 5: 29 “Oh that they had such a heart as this always, to fear me and to keep all my commandments, that it might go well with them and with their descendants forever!”

The outcome of godly fear is the opposite of worldly fear, because we know that our righteous actions will eventually have a good outcome. Even if things don't always go as planned, or even if we experience hard times, when we are obedient to God, we can trust that God, the omnipotent, omniscient, and eternal, will ultimately reward us for it.



We can then say, as David said, **“The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?”** (Psalm 27:1).

But there is another step. The Bible shows God wants more than obedience just based upon fear of consequences. Fear ceases where perfect love begins.

The apostle John wrote, **“There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love” (1 John 4:18).**

”Instead, we have to increase in the motivation of *love* (2 Peter 1:5-7).

“But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love.”

Add to your faith virtue: We begin our life with God with **faith**, but faith progresses into **virtue, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, brotherly kindness, and love** – love being the capstone of all God’s work in us.

God’s Presence Brings Safety- Psalm 46:4-7- ESV.

4. There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy habitation of the Most High.

5. God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved; God will help her when morning dawns.

6. The nations rage, the kingdoms totter; he utters his voice, the earth melts.

7. The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress. *Selah*

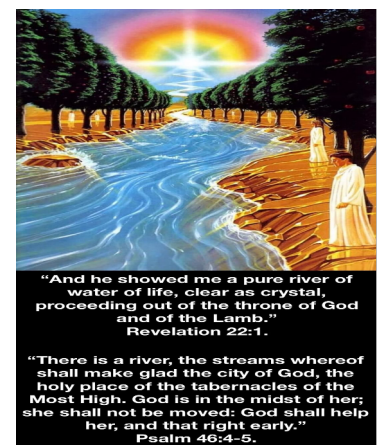
In verses 4-5 the psalmist describes the city of God:

- It has a river that brings gladness
- It is where God dwells
- God will be her help

In [Revelation 21-22](#) we read about a city of God from which flows a river of healing. Where is this city? It may be that the image in Revelation is about a literal city at some future date, but we don’t have to wait for this city. God dwells right now among His people. The Holy Spirit flows as a river through His people to bring peace and healing even today.

God’s life that comes to us like a river isn’t a tiny, trickling stream but more like a powerful, rushing river. In the book of Revelation, the river runs from God’s very throne, from God’s presence (Rev. 22:1-2)

**“Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb
2 through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life^[b] with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.”**



**“And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.”
Revelation 22:1.**

**“There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High. God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved; God shall help her, and that right early.”
Psalm 46:4-5.**

God never leaves us; he's always with us. God, the Most High, makes his dwelling place (his people) holy. God is with his people. The city (God's people) will never be shaken or disturbed or thrown off because God **"will help her."** God will help her with his personal presence.

In verse 6, God speaks, and the enemy is defeated. In creation, God spoke and brought forth light out of darkness. (Genesis 1:3) In Revelation 19:15, **"Out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, and with it He should strike the nations"**. The sword is symbolic of the judging power of the Word of God. **"He utters His voice, the earth melts."** He is (v. 7) the **"Lord of Hosts", (Lord of the armies of heaven and earth).** **"The God of Jacob"**. That is, He is in a covenantal relationship with His people, that is, a blood covenant that He contracted with the biblical patriarchs, and that maintains to this day with Israel. This same GOD who fights on behalf of His people, destroys their enemies with their weapons. He is "Immanuel, GOD with us". (Matthew 1:23)

God's Work Brings Peace - Be Still - Psalm 46:8-11(ESV).

Come, behold the works of the LORD, how he has brought desolations on the earth. 9 He makes wars cease to the end of the earth; he breaks the bow and shatters the spear; he burns the chariots with fire. 10 "Be still, and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth!" 11 The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress. Selah

In the second section we are told to look, observe the work of God - the "desolations He has brought on the earth." This is a picture of final judgment. Considering the earlier image of God's voice melting the earth and now the use of the term desolation, you might expect a description of warfare and destruction. But instead the image is one of peace. God's power has destroyed the world's power to make war. He has ruined their weapons. The desolation of God is to end war and bring peace.



We do not need to make war with the world or with any of the struggles we have in life. God is with us and He will be the one to bring peace. And this leads to the only words spoken by God Himself, written in quotation marks, in Psalm 46:

**"Be still, and know that I am God;
I will be exalted among the nations, who will
I will be exalted in the earth."** [Psalm 46:10](#)

The command to **"Be still"** comes from the verb, *rapha* (meaning to be weak, to let go, to release), which might better be translated as, "cause yourselves to let go" or "let yourselves become weak". But to what end are we to "be still," "let go," "surrender," and even to "die to ourselves"?

We are admonished to, (a) Obey the command of 'be still'. God doesn't request our input to win the war. He only needs us to trust Him. **He** will fight and we will see His greatness. If he needs help he wouldn't call you or me, for **He** is the Most High who does whatever he pleases. He brings glory to His Holy Name.

(b) Live a life of submission and surrendering to God, which will in turn help us to be at peace when faced with a dilemma or challenges. A life that is devoid of godliness would seek for a negative solution during crisis, and may not hear 'be still' even when the voice of the Lord is constantly calling.

If GOD is our refuge, if His people are to dwell in a city with Him, if He is our defender, then we can **"be still."** **If we allow God to rule in our lives then we no longer need to fear or fight.**

Biblically speaking, the triune God will surely be exalted: **"Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."**

(Philippians 2:9-11)