

## THE PSALMS

### Series: Selected Psalms Phase 2

### Psalm 46: God our Dependable Stronghold – Our Refuge and Conqueror

#### Today's Study: Psa. 46:1-11

1. Believe in God Your Refuge and Strength Psa. 46:1-3.
2. Boldness and Confidence, Base on the Reality of God's Presence Psa. 46:4-7.
3. Behold the Works of the LORD – Great and Mighty is He! Psa. 46:8-9.
4. Be still! Wait and Hope in the LORD of Hosts! Psa. 46:10-11.

#### INTRODUCTION

##### 1. Highlights from Psalm 45.

###### (a) The Royal Bridegroom Psa. 45:1-9.

###### (1) Addressing the King . . . An imagery of Jesus Christ Psa. 45:1-2.

- The psalmist was thrilled to be given the opportunity to write about the glorious King. Observe how the writer described the nature of his task:
  - He wrote from the heart. Writing this song was not a duty for the psalmist but a delight, not just a routine job but a joy.
  - He wrote from a heart overflowing with love, gratitude, and admiration for the beloved king.
  - Etc.
- The main subject of the psalmist's song, that is Psalm 45, is the **King**. Scholars note that **King** used here, Psa. 45:1, refers to the future Messiah, the great person to whom the Old Testament looked forward, and whose glory they were anxious to see and describe (see Rom. 16:25; 1 Cor. 2:7; Col. 1:21-29, NB Vv. 26-27).

###### (2) Accomplished and Victorious Warrior Clothed with Glory and Majesty Psa. 45:3-5.

- The King was armed, prepared for battle and conquest. The Messiah is introduced as a conquering King, preparing to go forward to subdue the nations to Himself, aroused to set up a permanent kingdom.
- He is seen as a great King, takes the battlefield with abundance of pomp and magnificence – His sword, His glory, and majesty.
- Christ, both in His person and His gospel, had nothing of **external** glory or majesty, nothing to charm men (“ . . . for He had no form or comeliness . . .” Isa. 53:2 NKJV), nothing to awe men, for He took upon Him the form of a servant (Phil. 2:6-7); **His was purely spiritual glory, spiritual majesty!**

###### (3) Absolutely Righteous and Just Ruler Psa. 45:6-9.

- Inspired by the Holy Spirit, the psalmist prophetically speaks of Jesus Christ. The **King**, as implied here (Psa. 45:6) is referred to as righteous, He is eternal and just; indeed, Jesus Christ's kingdom and reign will be eternal; notice also the psalmist addressing the King as **God**.
- Because of His distinctiveness, His infinite holiness, He was anointed with the oil of gladness above everyone else (Psa. 45:7b). This anointing refers to the glory, blessedness and anointing given to Him by God. The **"oil of gladness"** is directly related to His anointing with the Holy Spirit (See Matt. 3:16-17; Acts 10:38; Heb. 1:9).

(b) **The Royal Bride Psa. 45:10-15.**

(1) **Counsel Given, Charm and Commitment Prioritized Psa. 45:10-12**

- The bride counselled to leave everything behind and devote herself totally to her Bridegroom.
- The word **"forget"** (Psa. 45:10), is not suggesting absolute forgetfulness or that she was to cast of **all** affection for those who reared her, but the meaning here is that she was **not** to pine after them (her parents . . . the family).
- **In summary:** The bride, when she marries should make up her mind, while she cherishes a proper regard for her old friends, and a proper memory of her past life, to identify her interest with her husband's; to go where he goes; live as he lives; and to die, if such be the will of God, where he dies, and be buried by his side.
- **As applicable to the Church – the bride of the Lamb** – the idea here is that we find so often enforced in the New Testament, that they who become followers of the Savior must be willing to forsake **all for Him**, and identify themselves with Him and His cause (Matt. 10:37; Luke 14:26).
- **As followers of Christ, we are called out to a life of complete separation! The strongest earthly ties are to be made subservient to a higher and stronger tie; we are now genuinely true followers of Jesus Christ (Luke 9:59-62).**

(2) **Clothed, Compensated and Filled with Joy! Psa. 45:13-15.**

- The bride (Psa. 45:13-15) was not one who was beautiful externally but internally as well. The word **"within"** (Psa. 45:13) enforces the fact that her beauty (the bride) was not limited to her garment but one being holy and pure – a glorious and lovely heart.
- Spurgeon notes:  
*" . . . her beauty is not outward only or mainly; the choicest of her charms are to be found in her heart, her secret character, her inward desires. Truth and wisdom in the hidden parts are what the Lord regards; mere skin-deep beauty is nothing but to the eyes. The church is royal extraction,*

*of imperial dignity, for she is a King's daughter; and she has been purified and renewed in nature, for she is glorious within."*

(c) **The Royal Blessings Psa. 45:16-17.**

(1) **Children of the King and His Bride to Rule Psa. 45:16.**

- A blessing is pronounced on the marriage of the anointed King. The fathers have passed away, but will be replaced by the sons that come from the marriage.
- Commenting on Psa. 45:16b, Barnes notes:  
*"Referring to the Messiah, is that His luster and dignity on earth would not be derived from a distinguished earthly ancestry, or from an illustrious line of kings from whom He was ascended, but from the fact that those who would derive their authority from Him would yet possess the world, and that their authority under Him would extend to all lands."*

(2) **Continued Dynasty Throughout All Generations Psa. 45:17.**

- The King's legacy passes from generation unto generation. This ongoing work means the name of the King will **be remembered in all generations**.
- The King's name will also be remembered, because He was given a name that is above every name (Phil. 2:9-11); and as noted in our text (Psa. 45:17), it will be a perpetual name which shall endure forever (Psa. 71:17); no wonder even His enemies acknowledged, ". . . **truly this was the Son of God.**" (Matt. 27:54)

2. **Introduction to Psalm 46.**

*"This psalm encourages us to hope and trust in God, and His power, and providence, and gracious presence with His church in the worst of times, and directs to give Him the glory of what He has done for us and what He will do! . . ." (Matthew Henry)*

(a) **Author**

The author of the psalm is unknown. It is not attributed to David, but to "**the Sons of Korah,**" and there is no indication in the psalm that David was the author, or that it refers to his time. There is reason to believe that most of the psalms attributed to the "Sons of Korah" were composed subsequent (following after) to the time of David.

(b) **Title**

The title of the psalm is, "**To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of the Sons of Korah**" (NKJV). The KJV has it as: "**To the chief Musician for the sons of Korah, A Song upon Alamoth.**"

The phrase "**To the Chief Musician,**" has been discussed in other lessons, for example see introductory notes on Psalm 42/43, 45, etc. The word "**Song**" in the title also appears in other psalms, for example, Psalms 45, 65, 66, 67. Etc.

**“Song”**, as used here does not say anything specific in regards to the nature and character of the psalms where it is found.

The word **“Alamoth”** occurs only here (Psa. 46) and in 1 Chronicles 15:20. In 1 Chron. 15:20, it is found in connection with the mention of certain singers or musicians, and is possible referring to some kind of musical instruments and believed to have similar application in Psalm 46. The type of musical instrument is unknown.

(c) **Occasion**

In regards to the occasion Barnes notes:

***“It is not possible now to ascertain the occasion on which the psalm was written.*** (Emphasis mine). *It was evidently in view or trouble, or some impending calamity of some time when the nation was in danger, and when it was felt that their only refuge – their last hope – was in God. . . . .*

*The main thought of the psalm – the central idea in the psalm, is that, amidst these general and far-spreading agitations and convulsions among the nations of the earth, the people of God were safe. **They had nothing to fear, even though those convulsions and agitations should be multiplied and increased; even though they should be carried so far that the very foundations of the earth should be shaken, and the mountains removed and carried into the midst of the sea.*** (Emphasis mine).

One sentence from Barnes, in reference to Sennacherib’s invasion of Jerusalem:  
*“. . . It is possible that the psalm refers to the invasion of the land of Israel by Sennacherib, and to the miraculous destruction of his host as recorded in 2 Kings 19 and Isa. 30 and 37. . . . .”*

3. **Encountering Adversity or Devastating Affliction.**

Throughout history, there are those who have experienced testing, trials, tribulations, and various adverse situations. One outstanding example and frequently referred to is Job’s experience.

The Book of Job vividly presents to us the unpleasant experiences of suffering that is regarded unmerited, and **despite how we may feel during the process of these situations there are valuable lessons to be learnt.** As observed, in the Book of Job, he is the primary character, without overlooking God who is always above everyone and everything. Job tries to understand why he lost everything, including his children, wealth and health, although he lived a life faithfully committed to God.

Obviously, living a righteous life does not exempt us from trials, trials, temptations, tribulations, etc. but as noted in Job’s example there are lessons to be learnt; some examples are:

- (a) **Maintain the right attitude:** Suffering is not always because of sin and experienced wholly and solely because of one's transgressions, as Job's friends implied. In reality, even in our sufferings we learn how to properly respond to God in times of need (Phil. 2:5; 1 Peter 4:12; 5:10; etc.).
- (b) **Accept suffering calmly,** do not worry, do not become anxious. Beloved, we can express our grief in prayer with supplication and thanksgiving! (Phil. 4:6; Psa. 55:22; 2 Tim 1:7; etc.).
- (c) **Irrespective of what, "Don't Lose Faith in God!"** Nothing comes to us, unless it goes through God, and if He allows it, there is a reason! As long as we hold on and continue in faith, looking steadfastly to Him, our LORD!! (John 16:33; Rom. 8:35-39; James 1:2-4; etc.).
- (d) **Do not become disquieted or despaired;** even in such situation we can give God thanks that Jesus suffered for us to redeem, strengthen and be with us through any situation. (Psa. 42:5, 11; 43:5; Rom. 5:3-5; 8:17-18; 1 Peter 4:12-14).
- (e) **Etc.**

It is noted that Psalm 46 was written during a time of overwhelming turmoil in Jerusalem. We noted above a few lessons learnt from Job's suffering as well as from suffering in general. Note three main themes evidently noticed in Psalm 46: trust, thanksgiving and God's strength and presence.

(a) **Trust**

The psalm (Psa. 46), emphasizes that God is a refuge and can be trusted, even in the face of rage and strife. It assures that God will protect Israel and that people need not fear, no matter what happens.

(b) **Thanksgiving**

The psalm begins with praise, acknowledging God as our *refuge* and *strength* and always available to us. It ends with praise, because He who is "**the LORD of hosts**" *is with us*; He will never forsake us and always ready to deliver, regardless of the challenges confronting us! All worshippers of God are to consider the peace, consolation and care He gives to all who trust in Him!!

(c) **God's Strength and Presence**

The psalm emphasizes that God's presence and power are with us at all time and that one day will judge mankind and get rid of all hostility. The psalm also suggests that God is with His chosen nation Israel, as their protector and guardian; and beloved, this is also applicable to the Bride of Christ (Rev. 19:7-9; 21:2).

Preacher's Outline and sermon Bible notes:

*"At some point in our lives, we will face circumstances that we feel are more that we can handle. We will know the hollow, helpless feeling of being able to do nothing to change the situation. The Lord has given us Psalm 46 for these times. This great psalm was the inspiration for Martin Luther's great hymn, 'A Mighty Fortress Is Our God.'"*

Barnes notes:

*“This psalm has been called Luther’s Psalm. It was that which he was accustomed to sing in trouble. When the times were dark; when the enemies of truth appeared to triumph; when disaster seemed to come over the cause in which he was engaged and the friends of the Reformation were dispirited, disheartened, and sad, he was accustomed to say to his fellow-laborers, ‘Come, let us sing the 46<sup>th</sup> Psalm.’”*

#### 4. Divisions of Psalm 46

(a) The General Consensus of Scholars:

There are three main divisions (or strophes, stanzas, verses, etc.) Each end with **“Selah.”**

(1) First, Verses 1-3.

(2) Second, Verses 4-7.

(3) Third, Verses 8-11

(b) I will be using four divisions for our lesson (as noted earlier).

(1) Vv. 1-3: **Believe in God Your Refuge and Strength.**

(2) Vv. 4-7: **Boldness and Confidence, Base on the Reality of God’s Presence.**

(3) Vv. 8-9: **Behold the Works of the LORD – Great and Mighty is He.**

(4) Vv. 10-11: **Be Still! Wait and Hope in the LORD of Hosts!!**

## THE EXPOSITION

### A. Believe in God Your Refuge and Strength Psa. 46:1-3.

#### 1. Present Help, Ready and Able to Deliver Psa. 46:1

*“God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.” (46:1 NKJV)*

(a) **Place of safety: God is for us a place to which we may flee for safety; a source of strength to us in danger.** (Psa. 46:1a).

(1) The word **“refuge”**, based on the Hebrew usage means: “flee”, “to flee to,” or – “to take shelter in” – **it indicates a place to which one would flee in time of danger – as a lofty wall; a high tower; a fort, a fortress.**

- Psa. 18:2 NKJV

*“The LORD is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer; My God, my strength, in whom I will trust; My shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.”*

- The idea here is, that the people of God, in time of danger, may find Him to be a place of safety no matter the threatening situation.

(Take some time to read carefully Psalm 18 . . . The Theme there is:

**“Gratitude for Deliverance and victory. The only way to be delivered from surrounding evil is to call upon God for help and strength.” (LASB)**

- (2) The word **“strength”**, implies that God is the strength to those who are weak and defenseless; or that we may rely on His strength “as if” were our own; or that we may feel as safe in His strength as though we had strength ourselves. **We may make it the foundation of our confidence as genuinely as though the strength resided in our own arm!**
- (3) God is our refuge to whom we may flee, and in whom we may be safe and think ourselves so; secured upon good grounds. (Psa. 27:5; Isa. 25:5; etc.)
- (b) **Present and reliable help! God is always there even in times of trouble! “. . . A very present help in trouble.”** (Psa. 46:1b NKJV)
- (1) The word **“trouble”**, actually refers to all that can come upon us which would give us anxiety or sorrow.
- We all face situations beyond our control, but we do not have to face them alone. In the hymn, **“I Won’t Have to Cross Jordan alone”**, verse 3 states:  
*“Oftentimes I’m weary and troubled and sad  
 When it seems that my friends have all flown  
 There is one thought that cheers me and makes my heart glad  
 I won’t have to cross Jordan alone.*
- (2) The word **“present”**, conveys the meaning: “is found”, or has been found”; that is God has “proven” Himself to be help in trouble.
- (3) The word **“very”** or “exceedingly” is added to qualify the concept being shared in Psa. 46:1, to be emphatically true! It was true in the most eminent sense that God had always been found to be such a helper, and “therefore” there was nothing to fear in the present distress (Psa. 46:2).
- (4) Spurgeon notes:  
*“. . . in distresses He has been found, He has been tried and proven by His people. He never withdraws Himself from the afflicted. He is their help, truly, effectually, constantly; He is present or near them, close at their side and ready for their succor, and this is emphasized by the word ‘very’, in our version, He is more present than friend or relative can be, yea more nearly present than even trouble itself. . . . . He is not as the swallows that leave us in winter; He is a friend in need and a friend indeed! When it is very dark with us, let brave spirits say, “Come let us sing the forty sixth Psalm.”*

## 2. Purpose in Heart to Stand – No Time to Fear! Psa. 46:2.

*“Therefore we will not fear, Even though the earth be removed, And though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea.”* (46:2 NKJV)

### (a) Confidence focused on the All-powerful God. (Psa. 46:2a)

- (1) Our confidence in God ought to be unshaken and abiding!
- Having Him for our refuge and strength (Psa. 46:1), we have nothing to fear (Psa. 56:3).
  - **“. . . Even though the earth be removed, . . .”** (46:2a): or “in the changing of the earth;” that is though the earth should be changed.

- The possible meaning conveyed here: Though the earth should change its place or its very structure in these convulsions (*vibrations, quakes, etc.*); even though it should be destroyed altogether.
  - The idea conveyed, is that they would not be afraid, though the convulsions occurring in the world should continue, to the extent that the world is destroyed. Even in such situations God would remain their friend and protector, and they have no reason to fear.
- (2) Irrespective of what disruption on earth, we will trust in the all-powerful arm of God. “. . . **we will not fear, Even though the earth be removed, . . .**” (46:2a), possible earthquake referred to here; some believe it’s political commotions.
- Disasters that shake the earth to its core cannot shake us when we take our refuge in the LORD.
  - Beloved, those that have a holy reverential fear for God need not become bewildered and afraid because of the power of hell. **“If God be for us who can be against us.”** (Rom. 8:31)
- (b) **Catastrophic events on earth . . . I will remain focused on God** (Psa. 46:2b).  
*“. . . And though the mountains be shaken and slip into the heart of the seas”*  
 (Amp. Bible).
- (1) Great emphasis has been placed here (Psa. 46) by the psalmist that we should not fear when we experience difficulties. Disasters that shake the earth to its core cannot shake us when we take our refuge in God.
- (2) Spurgeon notes:  
*“Let the worst come to the worst, the child of God should never give way to mistrust; since God remaineth faithful there can be no danger to His cause or people. When the elements shall melt with fervent heat, and the heavens and the earth shall pass away in the last general conflagration, we shall serenely behold ‘the wreck of matter, and the crash of worlds,’ for even then our refuge shall preserve us from all evil, our strength shall prepare us for all good.”*

### 3. Prevailing Faith Irrespective of the Threatening Conditions Psa. 46:3.

*“Though its waters roar and troubled, Though the mountains shake with its swelling.”* (46:3 NKJV)

#### (a) Continuing the theme of assurance, despite troubling and terrifying conditions. (Psa. 46:3a)

- (1) As noted in verses 1-2, even in the face of catastrophic situations, God’s people can trust in His goodness and faithfulness, protection and His Divine presence!
- Psalm 46:3 expresses confidence in God’s presence and protection during turmoil. The verse uses imagery of the sea and mountains to describe the threatening circumstances that could drastically change the psalmist’s life.

- The psalmist, refers to four type of natural disasters that can produce highly destructive tragic experiences. Please see Psalm 46:2-3:
  - **“Though the earth be removed . . .”** (46:2a). Powerful earthquakes, with the potential to alter the face of the earth and generates the ground to completely collapse.
  - **“Though . . . the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea”** (46:2b). Hurricanes so strong and long-lasting that even the mountains are submerged in water.
  - **“Though . . . the waters . . . roar and be troubled . . .”** (46:3a). Enormous tidal waves or tsunamis frequently crashing against the land.
  - **Though the mountains shake with swelling . . .”** (46:3b), Various ideas conveyed here, for example: *Fiery volcanic eruptions from the mountains surging or swelling with lava.*”
- Preacher’s Outline and Sermon Bible notes:
 

*“These violent disasters also point to the day of the Lord when God’s judgment will fall upon the earth, leading up to return of Christ. Scripture repeatedly warns that God will exercise His power over the forces of nature when He pours out His wrath on a world that has rejected Him and His Son (Isa. 24:18-23; Nahum 1:2-8; Rev. 6:12-17; 11:13, 18-19).”*

**(b) Chaotic conditions, may prevail but the child of God remains steadfast and unmovable!** (Psa. 46:3b).

(1) Not even the roaring, foaming, and swelling of the ocean or any other catastrophic situation can cause God’s people to fear and lose hope!

(2) Matthew Henry notes:

*“If the earth be removed, those have reason to fear who laid up their treasures on earth, and set their hearts upon it, but not those who have laid up for themselves treasures in heaven, and who expect to be most happy when the earth and all the works that are therein shall be burnt up. Let those be troubled at the troubling of the waters who build their confidence on such a floating foundation, but not those who are led to the rock that is higher than they, and find firm footing upon that rock.”*

**B. Boldness and Confidence, Base on the Reality of God’s Presence Psa. 46:4-7**

**1. Refreshing Experience and Joy of the LORD Relaxes His People! Psa. 46:4**

*“There is a river whose streams shall make glad the city of God. The holy place of the tabernacle of the Most High.”* (45:4 NKJV)

(a) Peace, joy, comfort, and security despite existing conditions (Psa. 46:4a)

(1) In verse 4a, we are seeing a different situation in contrast to verse 3; here instead of roaring, troubled waters we see God’s quiet, gentle river. While it is believed that the river (Psa. 46:4a) may refer to the waters of Siloam (or Shiloah), which went softly by Jerusalem (Isa. 8:6, 7) (this was a

gentle flow of water from the spring of Siloam); there is also a spiritual significance. Note the following quote by Matthew Henry:

*“. . . this must be understood spiritually; the covenant of grace is the river, the promises of which are streams; or the Spirit of grace is the river (John 7:38, 39), the comforts of which are streams, **that make glad the city of our God**. God’s word and ordinances are rivers and streams with which God make His saints glad in cloudy and dark days. God Himself is to His church a place of **broad rivers and streams**, (Isa. 33:21). The streams that make glad the city of God are not rapid, but gentle, like those of Siloam (Shiloah).”*

(2) The facts presented here give a vivid description of the wonderful truth that God’s peace, joy, comfort and refreshment are available to all of us in the midst of overwhelming trouble. Oh beloved, let us take our eyes off our problems and focus on the problem solver and enjoy His precious gift freely given!!

(b) **Place where God is revered, highly esteemed, glorified and presented.** (Psa.46:4b).

(1) The word **“tabernacle”** is associated with **“tent”**, where the Most High is supposed to dwell (Ex. 25, **NB Vv. 8-9**; etc.). In general, the word means “dwelling place”; in Scripture it is applied especially to the sacred tent erected by Moses in the wilderness and later removed to Mount Zion by David (Ex. 25; 33:7; Num 9:15-23; etc.)

(2) **The holy place of the tabernacle of the Most High** (Psa. 46:4b NKJV). Spurgeon notes:

*“. . . Our God is here called by a worthy title, indicating His power, majesty, sublimity, and excellency; and it is worthy to note that under this character He dwells in the church. We have not a great God in nature, and a little God in grace; no, the church contains a clear and convincing a revelation of God as the works of nature, and even more amazing is the excellent glory which shines between the cherubin overshadowing the mercy-seat which is the center and gathering place of the people of the living God. To have the Most High dwelling within her members, is to make the church on earth like the church in heaven.”*

## 2. Refuge in God Assures Victory Over the Adversaries Psa. 46:5.

*“God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved; God shall help her, just at the break of dawn.”* (45:5 NKJV)

(a) **Indwells and protects His city and its occupants.** (Psa. 46:5a)

(1) This verse begins with: **“God is the midst of her, . . .”**

- Here (46:5a), **“God** is named **Elohim**; The basic meaning is one of strength or power of effect. Some uses the term “the mighty God.” **Elohim** is the infinite all-powerful God who shows that He is creator and sustainer, and supreme judge of the world.

- In his most difficult hour, the psalmist reaffirms that irrespective of the situation his God who is all-powerful is also all-present!
- (2) **“Her”** (Psa. 46:5), refers to Jerusalem, the city of God where His people reside.
- Whenever they come under assault, God Himself is within her walls with the full power of His might.
  - He dwells there by the visible symbol of His presence, **“The Shekinah.”** (1Kings 8:11; 2 Chron. 7:1-3; etc.)
  - He dwells there, “actually” as a help and protector (Deut. 33:29; Psa. 121; Psa. 46:1-7; etc.).
  - As long as He abides there the inhabitants had nothing to fear (Psa. 23:4; Isa. 41:10; Heb. 13:6; etc.).
- (3) This is evidently clear: Jerusalem was secured because of God’s presence. Nothing could **“move”** (Psa. 46:5), the city because He was protecting it.
- (b) **Imparting (God) hope for a new day . . . He is their help!** (Psa. 46:5b).
- (1) **“Help”** (Psa. 46:5b), the Hebrew usage conveys the meaning: “to support, to sustain, to uphold.” The message herein is that they (Jerusalem . . . the people of God) are made to be like an unshakeable pillar in the temple – sturdy and strong! God gives them the stability they need in their present troubles. (See Psa. 46:1)
- (2) The thought shared in the phrase, **“God shall help her...”** (Psa. 46:5b): **“her”** or **“Jerusalem”**, is a promise seen in other Scriptures, for example, Isa. 41, **NB Vv. 10, 13-15**; here, God pledges to ever uphold His people, otherwise they would surely have reason to fear. See also Psa. 54 **NB v. 4**, there it is stated: **“Behold God is my helper . . .”** Oh, Beloved! God is the sole sustainer of His people!!
- (3) *“God will not abandon them that trust in Him; He will maintain His own cause; and if His church should at any time be attacked, He will help her, and that right early – with the utmost speed. As soon as the onset is made, God is there to resist. As by the day-break the shadows and darkness are dissipated; so, by the bright rising of Jehovah, the darkness of adversity shall be scattered.”* (Adam Clarke)

### 3. **Rage of the Enemy Results in their Destitution Psa. 46:6.**

*“The nations raged, the kingdoms were moved; He uttered His voice, the earth melted.”* (46:6 NKJV)

#### (a) **Passion, motivated by animosity and characterized by commotion** (Psa. 46:6a).

- (1) **“The nations rage . . .”**: The nations were in commotion, or they were agitated like the waves of the sea.
- **The Amplified Bible:** *“The nations were in uproar . . .”*
  - **The Message Bible:** *“Godless nations rant and rave . . .”*

- (2) The word **“rage”** (**“uproar”**), indicates that these evil powers were breathing threats against God’s people. They were ready to inflict great damage upon them (See Isa. 36 and 37).

All God’s people are surrounded by threatening dangers but God is with us and able to deliver!! (Psa. 34; 121; etc.).

- Despite the rage and fury of the enemies of God’s people (as in our text, referring to Jerusalem) they were safe and secured under God’s ultimate protection and had no need for fear!!

(b) **Power and providence of the all-sufficient Almighty God!** (Psa. 46:6b).

- (1) **“He uttered His voice . . .”** (46:6b): God spoke; He gave command; He expressed His will!

The phrase (Psa. 46:6b) refers to God speaking out above the chaos caused by the nations in conflict. He overrules the threats of Kings and the marching armies. He raised His voice to subdue the nations.

- (2) The psalmist notes that God raised His voice and **“the earth melted.”** This represents the result of His divine decree. His voice causes defeat of the godless nations ready to wreak havoc on Jerusalem. God intervened and the invading forces that threatened Israel melted. (See also Psalm 12; etc.).
- (3) It was as if the very earth melted or dissolved before Him. Everything became still. The danger passed away at His command, and the raging world became calm.

The Bible abounds in language of this kind, showing the absolute power of God, or His power to control all the raging elements on the land and ocean by a word. God is the Master even over nature (Psa. 107:27, 29; Matt. 8:26; etc.).

- (4) How grateful we should be that the voice of God remains stronger than the uproar (Psa. 46:4-7) of the surrounding nations and threatening situations. He can calm the raging tempest, the turmoil, etc. spiritually, physically and as necessary. God still cares, He is willing and able to deliver, **in-spite of!!**

- May we meditate upon God’s supreme authority over the nations, and all world conditions. May we consistently focus upon omnipotence over whatever threatens His people. May we rest in His protection and care!
  - There is security for the people of God; in Him all our needs are met; in Him there is power, might, glory, and all that we need!!
- See 1 Chron. 29:11-12; Isa. 25:8-9; Matt. 28:18; Col. 1:16; Rev. 4:11; etc.

4. **Remember! The LORD of Hosts is Your God!! Psa. 46:7.**

*“The LORD of host is with us; The God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah.”* (46:7 NKJV).

(a) **Commander of the heavenly hosts is with us!** (Psa. 46:7a).

- (1) The psalmist, addressing the people, confidently emphasized that the LORD of Hosts – the Commander of the heaven’s armies – is their God. (Josh. 5:13-15; 1 Kings 22:19; Psa. 24:7-10; 80:7).

Note a few highlights on “The LORD of Hosts.”

- Herein we see, God’s power and authority: The LORD of Hosts is the all-powerful ruler of the universe, with absolute power and authority.
- There is also His role in protecting: The LORD of Hosts is a protector and defender who fights for His people and gives them strength to face their enemies.
- He is always available and will answer our prayers: The LORD of Hosts is available to hear and answer the prayers of His people!
- Etc.

(2) Emphasis, as noted in this verse (Psa. 46:7), is referring to God, the one who has ultimate control over all armies (*God’s celestial armies*); or **all** that can be regarded and described as a “**marshalled host**”, in heavenly bodies and angels, and earth (the earth is His!).

Having such Sovereign and Divine Being for a protector, the people of God have nothing to fear! (See Psa. 46:11).

(3) Adam Clarke notes:

*“We feeble Jews, were but a handful of men; but **The LORD of Hosts** – the God of armies, was on our side. Him none could attack with hope of success, and His legions could not be over-thrown.”*

(b) **Covenant keeping God, is faithful to His promise!** (Psa. 46:7b).

(1) “. . . **The God of Jacob . . .**” (46:7b): Emphasis is being placed here on God’s covenant with Israel. The title, “**God of Jacob**”, has several significant meanings; note a few examples:

- **God’s covenant with Israel.**  
The title emphasizes the covenant God made with the Israelites, and their special place as God’s chosen people. (Deut. 29, NB. Vv. 1-9, 10-13; Jer. 31:31-34; etc.).
- **God’s promises to Jacob.**  
The title refers to God’s promise, to keep the agreement He made to Jacob and his descendants (**Gen. 32: 9-17, 24-31**; also applicable to the promise made to Abraham, Gen. 12:1-7; 14-18; etc.).
- **God’s presence.**  
The title refers to God’s presence with the people of Israel, and that no power on earth could destroy them (Ex. 33:12-17; Josh. 1:1-9; etc.).
- **God’s fortress.**  
The title refers to God as a fortress for the people of Israel, and they can rest in Him (Psa. 91:1-2; Joel 3:16; etc.).

(2) “**The God of Jacob**”: or “The God to whom Jacob acknowledged, and whom he found to be his friend, is with us!”

- He is the God who appeared to Jacob in his troubles, appeared also for his descendants, and has satisfactorily proved to us that He has not forgotten the covenant made.

- “. . . *our refuge*.”: in essence a high place, as a tower, far above the reach of our enemies. **“The name of the LORD is a strong tower; The righteous run to it and are safe.”** (Prov. 18:10 NKJV)

(3) One of the comments made by Preacher’s Outline & Sermon Bible on Psa. 46:7b):

*“Because of Israel’s relationship with God through His covenant, He was their refuge. God Himself was their stronghold, fortress, high tower, the place where no enemy can reach them. **Refuge** (misgab) here is a different Hebrew word than in verse 1. This word emphasizes that it is a place of safety due to its height.”*

### C. Behold the Works of the LORD – Great and Mighty is He! Psa. 46:8-9.

#### 1. Works of the LORD God Almighty! Psa. 46:8.

*“Come, behold the works of the LORD, Who has made desolations in the earth.”* (46:8 NKJV)

##### (a) Supernatural works of God. (Psa. 46:8a)

(1) After assuring the people of their security in God, the psalmist calls on them to consider the works of the Lord.

This is an invitation for people to consider the things that God has done to help people through difficult times. Focusing on victories that have been experienced because of God’s intervention will help people worship God and have confidence in Him, even during difficult times.

(2) The psalmist wanted the people to reflect both on God’s faithfulness to their nation and also on His future plans for them.

God **never** sits idly in heaven, a mere passive spectator of world events. He is not distantly removed, never off duty, renouncing His throne.

He does not abandon the world to run its own course. Instead, God remains on the throne, ever alert, ever active, continually intervening into human history. Take a close and careful look, and see what God has done.

#### **Psa. 66:5 NKJV**

*“Come and see the works of God; He is awesome in His doing towards the sons of men.”*

See also Psa. 26:7; 40:5; 111:4; etc.

##### (b) **Sure, victory over all opposing forces.** (Psa. 46:8b)

(1) We will briefly define **“desolation”** base on the Hebrew usage.

- Some associated words are: astonishment, desolate, waste, etc.
- The word means ruin, astonishment. The primary meaning is that of ruin and wasting.

(2) As used in our text (Psa. 46:8) **“desolation”**, is possible referring to any “ruin” or “overthrow,” which God had brought upon the land of Israel, or the nations abroad – the destruction of cities, towns, or armies, as proof of His power, and His ability to save those who put their trust in Him.

(3) Note two quotes:

- Spurgeon

*“In every place where His cause and crown have been disregarded ruin has suddenly followed; sin has been a blight on nations, and left their palaces to lie in heaps. In the days of the writer of the Psalm, here had probably occurred some memorable interposition of God against Israel’s foes; and he saw their overthrow, he saw his fellow citizens to come forth and attentively consider the terrible things in righteousness which had been wrought on their behalf.”*

- Preacher’s Outline & Sermon Bible

*“Before declaring that God, will bring peace to earth, the psalmist revealed that this peace will not come through some treaty or agreement between nations of the world. It will come as the result of God’s judgment on the nations. Desolations is also translated as destruction or devastations. It is frequently used in Scripture to describe the devastating results of God’s judgment (Isa. 64:10; Joel 2:3).”*

## 2. Wars Will Cease – Peace Comes at Last!! Psa. 46:9.

*“He makes wars cease to the end of the earth; He breaks the bow and cuts the spear in two; He burns the chariot in the fire.” (46:9)*

### (a) Wars will cease – peace experienced!! (Psa. 46:9a)

- (1) The enemies will be conquered and He will put away His sword, bringing an end to wars among the nations and crown them with peace. It will not be because the leaders of the nations sought peace but such was forced upon them by Him who gives peace (Psa. 29:11; Isa. 57:19).
  - War and peace depend on His word and His will, as boisterous waves and stormy seas (see Psa. 107:23-32, NB Vv. 25, 29-32) . . . peace comes from God; it is of God (Phil. 4:7; Psa. 29:11; etc.).
  - The word **“cease”** (Psa. 46:9) – base on the Hebrew usage has several words associated, of which one is **“sabbath”**; this word means, “to rest, to cease from labor.”  
As noted in our text, God causes threatening wars to come to an end; the oppressive enemies were stopped in their tracks and peace realized.
- (2) The context of this verse (Psa. 46:9) is a celebration of God’s protection for Jerusalem and His people of the nation of Israel (note Psa. 46:1-7). The meaning is not that God would stop all combat at that time (the period related to our text), but His people (Israel) would experience victory over the enemy and enjoy a time of peace.
  - **It must also be remembered that in the future, God’s kingdom will triumph and there will be an end to all wars** (see Psa. 46:9; Isa. 2:4; Hosea 2:18; Zech. 9:10).  
Isaiah 2:4, for example, predicts a time when warfare will end and peace will prevail. The Messiah will reign and He will bring everlasting **“peace”** (Isa. 9:6).

- Base on Isaiah 2, Judah who have often been obscured by defeat and historical circumstances, have received God’s promises that they would experience a grand and glorious day!
    - **It will be a day when glory outshines shadow, when joy extinguishes sorrows, when peace silences violence, when rebellion cedes to obedience – a time of hope, peace and joy!!!**
    - In the Bible “**peace**” is the absence of internal and external strife. It is not related to circumstances, but rather an action of conforming to Christ and reaching out to others.
- (b) **Weapons of warfare will be destroyed!!** (Psa. 46:9b)
- (1) The imagery of the LORD destroying military equipment and leaving them charred and useless is a symbol of His absolute power.
- An example of God’s dominion over everything and that which might have inspired the writing of this psalm (Psa. 46), may be the annihilation of 185,000 Assyrian soldiers in their attempt to destroy Jerusalem and its people (see 2 Kings 18 and 19, NB 19:29-36, highlight v. 34-36).
  - By His divine efficiency (Rom. 11:36), He is able to deliver His people irrespective of the challenging situation, for our good and His glory!! According to Psa. 103:19, **God has absolute power and dominion over everything**. As observe in Gen. 1:1, we have such declaration because He is Creator and is the rightful Ruler of everything.
- (2) Spurgeon notes:
- “ . . . All sorts of weapons He piles heaps on heaps, and utterly destroy them. . . . Blessed deed of the Prince of Peace! . . . . Already the spiritual foes of His people are despoiled of their power to destroy; but when shall the universal victory of peace be celebrated, and instruments of wholesale murder be consigned to ignominious destruction?”*

#### D. Be Still! Wait and Hope in the LORD of Hosts!! Psa. 46:10-11.

##### 1. Exalted Above the Nations and All the Earth Psa. 46:10

*“Be **still** and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth.”* (46:10 NKJV)

##### (a) **Serenity emphasized . . . allow God, He is able** (Psa. 46:10a).

- (1) “**Still**”, conveys several ideas, for example: to cast down, to let fall, etc. It also means: to be relaxed, slackened, etc. In our text (Psa. 46:10) it refers to: not making an effort, not putting forth exertion, etc. expressing the idea of leaving matters with God, or of being without anxiety about the issue.
- (2) This verse (Psa. 46:10) implies that trust and submission are key to “**knowing that I am God.**”
- It is a direct command from God to stop our futile efforts in dealing with things that are His domain.

- He asks us to put down our weapons of war and stand in awe of Him and His mighty power. As God, He is sovereign, faithful, omnipotent and unfailing!
  - We are to stop fighting in our strength and surrender to Him who will help us fight our battles. Our human strength cannot match God's and it's futile to fight when we would rather leave the matter in God's hand.
- (3) This does not mean to sit quietly, listen and wait; that is remain seated, passively waiting until something happens. In our lesson on Psalm 27, I noted some highlighted pointers on **"Waiting on the LORD"**:
- We wait on the LORD by trusting Him (Psa. 27:1, 3, 4, 10).
  - We wait on the LORD by seeking Him (Psa. 27:4, 8).
  - We wait on the LORD through prayer . . . **note David's example in Psa. 27:7-14:**
    - He asked for wisdom and direction (v. 11).
    - He sought God's protection (v. 12).
    - He wholly believed that he would see the goodness of God (v. 13).
    - He knew the benefit of waiting on God and strongly advice that we do the same (v. 14).
  - **Those who "wait on the LORD" can fully expect Him to fulfill their hopes. (Isa. 3:18; Lam. 3:25; etc.)**  
*Taken from Selected Psalms Phase 1, Psalm 27, Part B, Page 22.*
- (4) The emphasis noted here (Psa. 46:10): There is no need for anxiety; let there be calm, confiding, trustful state of mind, taking into account manifestations of the divine presence and power. The mind should be calm, in view of the fact that God had interposed, and had shown that He was able to defend His people when surrounded by danger.
- (b) **Superiority of the Almighty God!** (Psa. 46:10b)
- (1) Scripture reference to **"the nations"**, often means the Gentile world: nations other than Israel. We have within this context a message that need to be heard by the entire world.
- See for example Psa. 2, NB Vv. 10-12: There we see for example, kings and rulers of the earth are to make a wise decision: change their rebellious attitude and come to friendly terms with the LORD's anointed Son.
  - The LORD advises the nations to be wise, to be warned, to serve the LORD with fear, to rejoice with trembling, and to kiss the Son. **Beloved, one way or the other, God will be properly honored by all people and in all places on earth** (Psa. 135:6; Isa. 45:23; Phil 2:10-11; etc.).
- (2) Spurgeon notes:  
*"I will be exalted among the nations . . . They forget God, they worship idols, but Jehovah will be honored by them. Reader, the prospects of missions are bright, bright as the promises of God. Let no man's heart fail him; the solemn declaration of this verse must be fulfilled.*

*'I will be exalted in the earth!' Among all people, whatever may have been their wickedness or their degeneration. Either by terror or by love, God will subdue all hearts to Himself. The whole round earth shall yet reflect the light of His majesty. All the more because of sin, and obstinacy, and pride of man shall God be glorified when grace reigns unto eternal life in all corners of the world."*

## 2. Enduring, Everlasting Presence of the Almighty God Psa. 46:11

*"The LORD of hosts is with us; The God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah: (46:11 NKJV).*

**You may want to review comments made on Psa. 46:7 (Both verses are identical)**

### (a) Presence of the All-powerful God, gives assurance. (Psa. 46:11)

(1) **"The LORD of hosts . . ."**: The Phrase refers to **"Yahweh."** Meaning here is, "The LORD of Armies" with reference to God's almighty power. (1 Sam. 17:45; Psa. 46:6-7; 48, NB v. 8; etc.)

- This name denotes His universal sovereignty over every army, both spiritual and earthly. The LORD of Hosts is the King of all heaven and earth (Psa. 24:9-10; 84:3; Isa. 6:5; etc.)
- This encouraging psalm concludes by comforting us with a great truth: **"The LORD of Hosts is with us."**

Isa. 12:6 Amplified Bible

*"Cry aloud and shout joyfully, you women and inhabitants of Zion, for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel."*

(See also Gen 28:15; Ex. 33:14; Deut. 20:11; Isa. 43:2; Matt. 18:20).

(2) We can have the confidence that the same God exalted in all the earth is **with us!** What more do we need? We have the presence of the God who is **All-powerful** and **All-sufficient!!**

(3) Matthew Henry notes:

*"This sovereign Lord is with us, sides with us, and has promised He will never leave us. Hosts may be against us but we need not fear then if the Lord of hosts be with us."*

### (b) Protection of the covenant keeping, guaranteed! (Psa. 46:11b)

(1) The people of God are covered under His covenant and guaranteed His ultimate protection; He is not only able to help them but is committed in honoring and faithfully help them.

(2) Mathew Henry notes:

*"He is the God of Jacob, not only Jacob the person; nay, and all praying people, the spiritual seed of wrestling Jacob; and He is the refuge, by whom we are sheltered and in whom we are satisfied, who by His providence secures our welfare when without are fighting and who by grace quiet our minds, and establishes them, when within are fears. . . . ."*

(3) Spurgeon notes:

*“Reader, is the LORD on thy side? Is Emmanuel, God with us, thy Redeemer? Is there a covenant between thee and God as between God and Jacob? If so, thrice happy art thou. Show thy joy in holy song, and in times of trouble play the man by still making music for thy God.”*

**The hymn: “A Mighty Fortress Is Our God.”** By Martin Luther.

A mighty fortress is our God,  
A Bulwark never failing;  
Our Helper He, amid the flood  
Of mortal ills prevailing:  
For still our ancient foe  
Doth seek to work us woe;  
His craft and power are great,  
And armed with cruel hate,  
On earth is not his equal

Did we in our strength confide,  
Our striving would be losing;  
Were not the right man on our side,  
The man of God’s own choosing:  
Dost ask who that may be?  
Christ Jesus, it is He;  
Lord Sabbath His name,  
From age to age the same,  
And He must win the battle.

And through this world, with devils filled,  
Should to undo us,  
We will not fear, for God doth will  
His truth to triumph through us:  
The Prince of Darkness grin,  
We tremble not or him;  
His rage we can endure,  
For lo! His doom is sure,  
On little word fell him.

That word above all earthly powers,  
no thanks to them, abideth;  
The Spirit and the gifts are ours  
Through Him who with us sideth;  
Let good and kindred go,  
This mortal life also;

The body they may kill:  
God's truth abideth still,  
His Kingdom is forever.

**DO NOT JUST READ THE BIBLE STUDY AND OBEY IT!!**

**2 Tim. 2:15 NKJV**

“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”

**2 Tim 3:16 NKJV**

“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof. For correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.”

**PSALM 46**  
**Review Questions**

1. Complete the following:  
Matthew's commentary on Psalm 46.

*"This psalm (a) \_\_\_\_\_ us to (b) \_\_\_\_\_ and trust in God, and His (c) \_\_\_\_\_, and providence, and gracious (d) \_\_\_\_\_ with His church in the (e) \_\_\_\_\_ of times, and (f) \_\_\_\_\_ to give Him the (g) \_\_\_\_\_ of what He has (h) \_\_\_\_\_ for us and what He (i) \_\_\_\_\_ do!"*

2. Although we do not know upon what occasion Psalm 46 was written, what is considered the central idea of the psalm?

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3. In our brief discussion on encountering adversity, I noted several lessons that can be learnt from suffering; as it relates to this subject briefly note three themes observed in Psa. 46.

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4. Why is Psalm 46 referred to by some as Luther’s Psalm? (Martin Luther)

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5. Briefly explain what message is conveyed in (a) *“refuge”*, (b) *“strength”*, as used in Psa. 46:1.

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6. In Psa. 46:1b: *“A very present help in trouble”*; what message is presented herein... with emphasis on *“very”*?

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10. In Psa. 46:5a: (a) We noted that **“God”** as used here refers to **“Elohim”**, briefly explain its meaning and message conveyed. (b) **“Her”** as used here (46:5a) who is referred to and what assurance given?

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11. Explain what the word **“rage”** expresses as used in Psa. 46:6.

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12. Note at least three facts conveyed in the phrase: **“The LORD of hosts.”** (Psa. 46:7)

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