

Psalm 46 Our Refuge

- 1 God is our refuge and strength, A very present help in trouble.
- 2 Therefore we will not fear,
Even though the earth be removed,
And though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea;
- 3 Though its waters roar and be troubled,
Though the mountains shake with its swelling.
Selah
- 4 There is a river whose streams shall make glad the city of God,
The holy place of the tabernacle of the Most High.
- 5 God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved;
God shall help her, just at the break of dawn.
- 6 The nations raged, the kingdoms were moved;
He uttered His voice, the earth melted.
- 7 The Lord of hosts is with us;
The God of Jacob is our refuge.
Selah
- 8 Come, behold the works of the Lord,
Who has made desolations in the earth.
- 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.
- 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 refuge.
Selah

Have you felt a little stressed lately? – How about a lot stressed?

A)I am not one that usually gets stressed about much of anything –

B)I am a pretty low key person – pretty mellow. –

C)But last week – Staycation – I realized – more stressed than I realized –

1)My brain was must fried - Suffering from intense mental fatigue

There is a reason for that –

A)Dr. Thomas H. Holmes and his colleagues from the University of Washington

B)Have done considerable research into the who subject of stress.

C)Change in your life is a big cause of Stress

They came to the conclusion that an accumulation of two hundred or more “life change units”

A)in any year may mean more disruption than and individual can stand.

B)So your Cap is 200 units for the year

1)They created a scale where certain changes in your life amounted to a certain degree of units

C)For example

- On their scale, death of a spouse equals 100 units. – **Half for the year**
- Divorce equals 73 units.
- Moving to a new location equals 35 units.
- Christmas equals 12 units.

D)When these “life change units” begin to pile up in the course of a year, it can create unbelievable stress.

I wonder where the shutdown of the entire world because of a pandemic would rank on their scale ?

A)500 life change units

B)THIS IS STRESSFUL -I Remembered – my dad died a couple of weeks before all this started?

C)Biggest challenge for me as Pastor here has been – Vision – Where are we going? –

1)Are Indoor gatherings going to be banned again?

D)what is going to be allowed 2 months from now

What is going to happen – when Flu season hits again?

A)Focused Wednesdays again – how do we do that when we can't even do groups right now?

B)STRESSFUL – LORD HELP US!

C)in Psalm 46 – we have an answer for our stress.
Setting of the Psalm – Sons of Korah – possibility

A) But many Bible Scholars believe it was actually penned by King Hezekiah

B) The King was facing an invasion from the strongest & meanest army on the face of the earth at the time – THE ASSYRIANS

C) Led by a merciless King -Sennacherib -2 Kings 18-19

1) Assyrian army was camped outside the walls

Sennacherib sent a letter to King Hezekiah demanding his surrender.

A) Suicide was more preferable to being a captive of the Assyrians because they were so cruel to their captives.

B) They would physically mutilate their bodies.

- They would cut off their ears or their noses,
- they would pull out their tongues,
- they would put hooks through their lips and lead them away captive thru the desert

C) History records, when a city was surrounded by Assyrians and they saw there was no escape

1) there would often be mass suicides within the city.

D) That was the situation that Hezekiah was facing in 2 Kings 19 –

Hezekiah took that letter into the temple and spread it before the Lord – Prayed for Help

A) One Angel in the night – killing 185,000 Assyrians

B) That incredible deliverance of God inspired Hezekiah to pen this Psalm

C) The Song has 3 verses – carefully divided by the word Selah – pause and think about this

D) Divided in this way

#1 God is our Refuge

#2 God has a River

#3 God gives us an invitation to Rest

#1 God is our Refuge

➤ Refuge – machaceh = A shelter from danger

A) A place to go quietly for protection

B) Refuge and Strength –

1) The Key in running to the Lord as our refuge is not escapism – Hide me protect me – Get me out of here.

C) Not escapism but rejuvenation – We come to God as our refuge in order to go out into Life again –

1) and Stand – Flourish

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

A) Here the word trouble means "in tight places." Places that are hard to get out of.

B) It is the place where you are feeling squeezed – Squeezed right now?

1) COVID / Finances / Relationship / Your Job / Warfare

C) But God our refuge is a very present Help – "The secret of the confidence is the consciousness of the nearness of God." (G Campbell Morgan)

See when I believe that God is with me and for me – especially when I am feeling squeezed – it changes everything.

Therefore we will not fear, - NO FEAR – PEACE – GOT THIS

No matter how bad it may get

Even though the earth be removed,

And though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea;

3 Though its waters roar and be troubled,

Though the mountains shake with its swelling.

Selah

Thru every conceivable disaster – our world is literally falling apart - we will not fear BECAUSE GOD is our refuge and Strength

A) BECAUSE – he is a very present help in times of trouble..

B) Our tendency – when we are being squeezed – when our world seems like it is falling apart is to think – God has abandoned me – Us

C) But Jesus said: I will never leave you or forsake you

D) The question is – Will we believe that? – FAITH

See we must learn to be moved by our Faith in God's truth and not our feelings about our circumstances

A)1 John 5:4 - this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.

B)Our faith in God's faithfulness – our Faith in God's word is what makes us overcomers

⁵Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

C)Think for a moment of OUR LORD in Contrast to the God of the pagans

1)The pagans make their gods; their gods do not make them.

D)They carry their gods; their gods do not carry them.

1)They protect their gods; their gods do not protect them.

E)They sacrifice to their gods; their gods do not sacrifice for them.

But our God...made us, carries us, & sacrificed Himself for us!

God is our refuge and strength, A very present help in trouble. 2Therefore we will not fear,

A)No matter how bad the situation gets – I am not going to give into fear – I am going to trust -

B)Know tonight you have a refuge in God

C)SELAH – LET THAT SINK IN A MOMENT

D)So GOD IS OUR REFUGE

#2 God has a River

V.4 There is a river whose streams shall make glad the city of God,

The holy place of the tabernacle of the Most High.

5 God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved;

God shall help her, just at the break of dawn.

IT wasn't until I visited Israel that – I truly began to understand how critical water is there.

A)It is such a dry and desert climate - Without water almost nothing can exist there.

B)Jerusalem is one of the great ancient cities that was NOT founded on a river.

C)It wasn't until Hezekiah dug his famous tunnel that Jerusalem had a water source within the city walls.

D)Come with us to Israel next Spring - WALK THROUGH THIS TUNNEL –

E)Walking in Water – hewn out of solid rock, underground into a reservoir 1,749 feet

The water ran from the Spring of Gihon in the Kidron valley

A)into the Walled city of Jerusalem – Water source for the city

B)Absolutely - Amazing

C)The psalmist says here that though Jerusalem is not situated beside a river, it has a River.

1)It was this secret river that kept the city strong.

D)But the Psalmist has something deeper in mind here- than a physical river

V4bAnd it comes from the Holy Place, from the throne of God. 5 God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved;

There is a sustenance & refreshment that comes only from God – refreshes our hearts

A)God the father is set before us as a fountain

Jeremiah 2:13 “For My people have committed two evils: They have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters, and hewn themselves cisterns — broken cisterns that can hold no water.”

B)A cistern was a container made of stone that was used for storing water

C)They made cisterns - - Mindset – we will take care of ourselves

D)The Problem is the cisterns break – cracked – they leaked

The indictment Instead of finding their satisfaction & refreshment in God

A)they sought it in broken vessels

B) Vessels that couldn't even hold the refreshment that they were looking for.

C) That is exactly what we are doing when we seek lasting refreshment/ satisfaction in things outside of God

In things like sex outside of Marriage / In a career / in a possession – in a place -

A) Broken Cisterns that cannot satisfy – leave us thirsty for more

B) When We walk after emptiness and become empty ourselves

C) Digging broken cisterns also highlights our desire for immediate satisfaction

1) on demand and on terms we can control.

We make cisterns when we are ruled by urges to feel good now.

A) I personally think this is one of the biggest dangers of the time that we are currently in.

B) We want to feel good now – we want our trial to *be over* – CAN'T HANDLE THIS ANYMORE

C) We try turn to things that are only going to bring a momentary relief

1) But ultimately end up making us even more thirsty

D) All the while the Lord is seeking to do something deep within us

1) Something that will be as lasting as Hezekiah's tunnel – 3000 yrs

E) Something that will bring continual and lasting fulfillment to our thirsty souls

Something that can only be found in our relationship to him as our Refuge and strength

A) In John 4 Jesus told a woman who had tried to find satisfaction and fulfillment in relationships with men – 5 husbands

B) Currently living with a guy who was not even her husband

C) She was spiritually thirsty – looking for love in all the wrong places

“Jesus said to her, “Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, 14 but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life.” John 4:13-14

D) A perpetual and satisfying flow – of refreshment –

1) Provided by the Holy Spirit in our hearts

We have a marvelous river within –

A) The Holy Spirit has come down from the throne of God

B) to fill our hearts and provide us with a deep, unfailing reservoir of satisfaction and spiritual supply.

C) We have a Refuge in our Lord – We have a River from our Lord

#3 We have an invitation to Rest in our Lord

8 Come, behold the works of the Lord,
Come behold – CHECK IT OUT AND BE AMAZED

Who has made desolations in the earth.

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.

NO ONE CAN STAND AGAINST HIM - ONE ANGEL 185K

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 refuge.

Selah

Be Still and Know that I am God!

A) The idea here is means more than just being inactive or quiet

B) The Hebrew word translated "be still" actually means "take your hands off."

C) Intriguing to me because we can stop moving – stop doing –

1) but still have our hands all over something in our minds/ hearts -

D)God is saying to us, "Take your hands off, and let Me be God in your life."

1)So often we want to manipulate and control.

E)We talk about those who are "hands on" people.

TODAY God is saying to many here (WATCHING online) – Let go and let me be God – take your hands off

A)Release it – Bitterness / unforgiveness / release the fear

B)Release your urge to control everything

C)Today God wants us to Know that in Him we have a Refuge – that we can run to –

1)And be Strengthened and rejuvenated

D)IN Him we have a River – you can drink from – be satisfied – deep within your soul – each day

We have an invitation to REST in the reality of who He is.

A)But in order to do that we have to take our hands off and let him be God in our lives

B)Like Hezekiah put that letter from the Assyrians King – before the Lord

1)we need to put our situation before him as well.

C)Do that today!