

God Our Refuge

A Modern Day Lesson From Psalm 46

Psa 46:1 God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

- Literally, God is a shelter and strength, a fervent, present aid when we get in a tight spot. To say that God is passionate about being there when things go sour for His people, we can realize how focused He is on one those He considers His own, just as any parent would be to their own children.

Psa 46:2 Therefore we will not fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea;

- With the thought of God vehemently protecting His own, why **should** we fear? “If God be for us, who can be against us?” (*Rom 8:31*) The psalmist could have been speaking literally but the language here says otherwise. When earthquakes, mountains and sea are mentioned in prophetic language they stand for the disruption of nations and people. Basically, even **if** the political powers that be were to be disrupted, the children of God should never fear because God is with us no matter who is in control politically, as long as we remain faithful. Remember, it is God who ultimately has power over **all** nations no matter how atheistically pompous their leaders may be. In the end, all will be humbled. Notice Jehoshaphat’s rhetorical question.

2Ch 20:4 And Judah gathered themselves together, to ask *help* of the LORD: even out of all the cities of Judah they came to seek the LORD. 5 And Jehoshaphat stood in the congregation of Judah and Jerusalem, in the house of the LORD, before the new court, 6 And said, O LORD God of our fathers, **art not Thou** God in heaven? and **rulest not Thou over all the kingdoms of the heathen?** and **in Thine hand is there not power and might**, so that **none is able to withstand Thee?** (*Emp. Added*)

Psa 46:3 *Though* the waters thereof roar *and* be troubled, *though* the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Selah.

- Though restless humanity be in a state of confusion when the power and authority on earth are in their control and is expanded like a volcano expands land mass, God’s people are not to fear. To the Israelite of the psalmist’s day this would have been a comfortable thought. They had seen authorities change through the wars and resulting carnage they left in their wake. Simply put, when people in power are in a state of turmoil it is because they have forgotten God and God will in turn forget them.

Isa 57:20 But the **wicked** are like the **troubled sea**, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. 21 *There is no peace*, saith my God, to the wicked. (*Emp. Added*)

- Rome was one such nation. Her Caesars arose from restless humanity.

Rev 13:1 And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast (*Caesar*) rise up out of the sea (*restless humanity*), having seven heads (*Caesars that ruled between 27 BC to 81 AD*) and ten horns (*Herods and other puppet kings of Rome*), and upon his

horns ten crowns (*authority received from their puppeteer, Rome*), and upon his heads the name of blasphemy (*“Caesar is God”*).

Rev 17:1 And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great whore (*Rome*) that sitteth upon many waters (*puppet kingdoms*):

Rev 17:15 And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.

Jude 13 Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever.

- Selah- Pause to ponder what was just said.

Psa 46:4 *There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most High.*

- Every river has a head, where it originates. Rivers throughout the O. T. often represented God's grace through the abundance of blessings and the streams feeding them give the idea of a continual supply of His abundant gifts.

Psa 36:8 They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of Thy house; and Thou shalt make them drink of the river of Thy pleasures.

- Unlike the seas which above represent restlessness, this river is calm. To find a river or stream while wondering would be a blessing because of the physical life it would give to the people, their animals and plants for food. Of course all blessings flow from God.

Jas 1:17 Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with Whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

- Isn't it a welcome thought to know that, unlike the seas, God does not changes? But it also has a spiritual meaning to it.

Joh 7:37 In the last day, that great *day* of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink. 38 He that believeth on Me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.

- City of God represents the faithful people of God throughout time. In the Old Testament here it represented Israel along with those who “were a law unto themselves” (*Rom 2:14*). In the New Testament it represents the church of Christ.

Rev 20:7 And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, 8 And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. 9 And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the **camp of the saints** about, and the **beloved city** (*the church of Christ*): and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them. (*Emp. Added*)

- When we understand the plurality of the tabernacles of this verse we aren't to think of it as the one single tabernacle where the ark of the covenant was housed. Tabernacles were dwelling places, tents that the Israelites lived in that were easily dismantled in order to move camp when it was time to according to God while in the wilderness.

Exo 13:21 And the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night: 22 He took not away the pillar of the cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, *from* before the people.

- But here it has another meaning. It has to do with the city of God, the holy (*place is not in the original text*) of the tabernacles that belong to Him. His dwelling places represent those of the hearts of His sanctified few both then and now.

1Co 3:17 If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, **which temple ye are.** (*Emp. Added*)

2Co 3:3 *Forasmuch as ye are* manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart.

2Co 13:5 Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, **how that Jesus Christ is in you**, except ye be reprobates? (*Emp. Added*)

- The psalmist, under Divine inspiration, understood the idea of God's protection, equaled to His existing among them.

Rev 21:3 And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, *and be* their God.

Psa 46:5 God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her, right early.

- As the pillar of smoke and fire led Israel through her wanderings in the wilderness, all the nations around saw that His presence was among them.

Num 14:14 And they will tell *it* to the inhabitants of this land: *for* they have heard that Thou LORD *art* among this people, that Thou LORD art seen face to face, and *that* Thy cloud standeth over them, and *that* Thou goest before them, by day time in a pillar of a cloud, and in a pillar of fire by night.

- Today we don't have the visible presence of God via the pillars. But, the "nations" today, i.e. the unbelievers, surrounding the church, which is the true tabernacle (*Heb 8:2*), need to see the presence of God through His Son in our midst. (*As the "Angel of the Lord" was in the pillars of smoke and fire that led O. T. Israel, so Jesus leads N. T. Israel, the church.*) How? Through the real pillar of fire, love!

Joh 13:34 A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. 35 **By this shall all men know** that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another. (*Emp. Added*)

- Having God in our midst (*her referring to the city and holy of verse 4*), what could possibly shake us? Stating that God shall help her also gives the understanding to the faithful under the O. T. that they were to be His bride and as her Husband, God would take care of her, just as the church is the bride of Christ in the N. T..

Jer 3:20 Surely as a wife treacherously departeth from her husband, so have ye dealt treacherously with Me, O house of Israel, saith the LORD.

2Co 11:2 For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one Husband, that I may present *you as* a chaste virgin to Christ.

- The Father's bride, faithful Israel under the Old Covenant, brought forth His Son Who in turn prepared **His** bride, the faithful members of His church, for our return to the Father. The woman of Rev 12 represents the Messianic communities of both Old and New Covenants. The Old waited for His coming while the New awaits His return.

Rev 12:1 And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars: 2 And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered.

- Through much distress, Christ came "in the fullness of the times" (*Gal 4:4*).

Rev 12:5 And she brought forth a man Child, Who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her Child was caught up unto God, and *to* His throne.

- She, the woman, began under the Old Covenant which gave birth to the New, which has instructions that cannot be bent.

Gal 4:22 For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman. 23 But he *who was* of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman *was* by promise. 24 Which things are an allegory (*symbol*): for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which genders to bondage, which is Agar. 25 For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia (*from whence Moses received the law*), and answereth to (*physical*) Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. 26 But (*New*) Jerusalem (*Rev 3:12; 21:2*) which is above is free, which is the **mother of us all**. (*Emp. Added*)

- Right early gives the impression that His judgement on those who oppressed His bride would come early, as it did to the Assyrians.

Isa 37:35 For I will defend this city to save it for Mine own sake, and for My servant David's sake. 36 Then the angel of the LORD went forth, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians a hundred and fourscore and five thousand: and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they *were* all dead corpses.

2Th 1:6 Seeing *it is* a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; (*Since God is righteous, He will repay. [Rom 12:19]*)

Psa 46:6 The heathen raged, the kingdoms were moved: He uttered his voice, the earth melted.

- Heathen and the roaring, troubled waters of verse 3 represent the unbelievers of the dominions in existence then and could also be a warning to those in existence today.

Heb 12:27 And this *word*, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. 28 Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: 29 For our God is a consuming fire.

- The “kingdom which cannot be moved” is the very one that Daniel said was made “without hands”.

Dan 2:45 Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure.

Psa 145:13 Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and Thy dominion *endureth* throughout all generations. *Concerning His voice...*

1Ki 19:11 And He (*the Angel of the Lord*) said (*to Elijah*), Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the LORD. And, behold, **the LORD passed by**, and a great and strong wind **rent the mountains**, and **brake in pieces the rocks before the LORD**; *but* the LORD *was* not in the wind: and after the wind an **earthquake**; *but* the LORD *was* not in the earthquake: 12 And after the earthquake a **fire**; *but* the LORD *was* not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice. (*Emp. Added*)

- When the word of the Lord is spoken today, sadly, not everyone listens. But the day will come when all will (*Rom 14:11*). His voice brought everything into existence from absolutely nothing (*Gen 1*) and will, in the end, speak everything physical into oblivion (*2 Pet 3:7*).

2Pe 3:10 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.

Psa 46:7 The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah.

- Understanding the power that God exudes from what the previous passages state, along with knowing that the self-existent Commander of the armies of Heaven is with us, is on our side and is our defense against all enemies, where else **could** anyone go for shelter. Pause to think on that also.

Psa 46:8 Come, behold the works of the LORD, what desolations He hath made in the earth.

- As if it wasn't enough to just **say** what God has done and will do for His people, look at what history has **shown**. As the Israelites needed constant proof of God's help in order to keep them faithful to His covenant with them, the psalmist reminds them to consider deeply what destruction He has wreaked on their enemies, and on them when they disobeyed His voice.

Psa 46:9 He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; He breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; He burneth the chariot in the fire.

- The proof of the destruction of the enemies of God's people, was in the aftermath of their ultimate defeat. Even those that Israel had no chance of overthrowing without His help. Their implements of war were no match for the Creator Who gave them the materials to make such weapons in the first place.

Jdg 6:15 And he (*Gideon*) said unto Him (*the Angel of the Lord*), Oh my Lord, wherewith shall I save Israel? behold, my family is poor in Manasseh, and I *am* the least in my father's house.

Jdg 7:7 And the LORD said unto Gideon, By the three hundred men that lapped will I save you, and deliver the Midianites into thine hand: and let all the *other* people go every man unto his place.

Jdg 7:12 And the Midianites and the Amalekites and all the children of the east lay along in the valley like grasshoppers for multitude; and their camels *were* without number, as the sand by the sea side for multitude.

Jdg 7:22 And the three hundred blew the trumpets, and the LORD set every man's sword against his fellow, even throughout all the host: and the host fled to Beth-shittah (*bayth-hash-shit-taw'*) in Zererath (*tser-ay-raw'*), and to the border of Abel-Meholah, unto Tab-bath'.

- God, through Gideon's obedient faith, defeated such a large army with only 300 whose only weapons were horns and pitchers.

Psa 46:10 Be still, and know that I *am* God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth.

- Cease! Stop what you're doing. Calm down because it's time to reflect on something. Think about, ponder on the message of this psalm and recognize that I am the Supreme Being Who created the very presence of the elements that make up everything that exists. You are My people but one way or another, I **will** be glorified among the nations and around the world.

Rom 11:22 Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in *His* goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.

- With us or without us, God will receive the glory. The weapon He has given us to carry out the great commission (*Mat 28:19-20*) to conquer the "uttermost part of the earth" (*Acts 1:8*) is "the sword of the Spirit" (*Eph 6:17*). It is of great necessity then to hone our swords for the battle ahead. But we are never to be intimidated because...

Psa 46:11 The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah.

- Pause to think about it. If God is for us our enemies will not stand! Amen? Are you an enemy of God? Don't you want to be on the winning side when He sends His Son to claim His own? You too can be a tabernacle of God by...

#1. Have you heard?

Eph 1:13 In Whom ye also *trusted*, **after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation:** in Whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, (*Emp. Added*)

#2. Do you believe?

1Th 2:13 For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, **when ye received** the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received *it* not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that **believe**. (*Emp. Added*)

#3. Have you repented?

Mar 2:17 ...They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

Rom 3:10 As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:

Rom 3:23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

#4. Have you acknowledged Christ as the Son of God, Who alone can save you?

Act 8:37 And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

#5. Have your sins been washed away?

Mar 16:16 He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.

#6. If you've done all these things, have you remained faithful?

Romans 6:4 "...we also should walk in newness of life."

#7. Are you growing?

2Pe 3:18 But grow in grace, and *in* the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To Him *be* glory both now and forever. Amen.

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