

Be Still And Know...

Psalm 46 – A message of assurance and comfort in adversity

Psalm 46:1 To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of the sons of Korah. A Song for Alamoth.

*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. ⁴ *Selah* 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. ⁸ *Selah* 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**

1. God: present and protecting

The word "God" in verse 1 is not translating YAHWEH (that is, "Jehovah"), the proper name of the God, which means "the existing One." Instead, the word here translates 'ELOHIYM {el-o-heem}', which indicates God's rule, judgments, and works, which implicate His power.

The phrase "very present" translates the idiom, MATSA' ME'OD {maw-tsaw' meh-ode'}, which means, "to be found abundantly." Two times in this psalm it says, "The LORD of hosts is with us:" verse 7 and 11.

2. God is in control

The general message of the psalm is this: whether we are encompassed by natural disaster or by political calamity, in spite of all adversities, God is in control and at work. He dwells within His holy city, and He makes glad and unmovable His inhabitants abiding there in due time.

3. Be still

In verse 10, the phrase "be still" translates RAPHAH {raw-faw'}. Depending on the case and context, it has the possible meaning of being feeble, disheartened, or lazy. However, it is not so here; in the case of this context (verb stem Hiphil), it means to relax, to let go, or to be quiet.

4. God speaks

A remarkable thing happens at verse 10. The entire psalm speaks of God in the third person, but in verse 10, it switches to first person. It is almost as if God interrupts the psalmist here and says, "Wait, I want to personally say something here." This seems even more striking when we think of inspiration – that the scriptures are "God-breathed" (2 Timothy 3:16). Of course, the entire psalm is by the inspiration of God, directing the words of the psalmist, but this is brought out even more vividly in this first-person statement.

Sometimes our world might seem to be falling apart around us, and we feel desperate, holding on tightly with white knuckles, pulling this way and that, trying to control the chaos to no apparent avail. It is then that we should hear God speaking to us through His word, yet as if we can feel His breath on our ear, and He says:

- Listen to Me – I'm right here; I've always been and will always be.
- Relax – I've got this; I'm in control and have been all along.
- Just let go – I'll take it from here, and I am not yet done working in you.

5. The city of God

As revealed in verses 4 and 5, the refuge is in the city of God. It is only here that the river of gladness flows and where God establishes His citizens. The tabernacle has clear reference to the holy tent structure – God's special dwelling place – that was moved about during the Exodus. This was later replaced with the temple constructed by Solomon, which was a physical foreshadow of God's spiritual house: the church, which Jesus established with His blood (Ephesians 2:13-22).

It might be that the trouble in your life today is your struggle with sin. In similarity to the refuge then for the children of Jacob, the Lord provides salvation only within His holy city, which is the church: "the fullness of [Christ] that fills all in all" (Ephesians 1:22, 23). Outside of Christ there is no promise, no hope, no peace, no eternal inheritance but only death and the wrath and judgment of God (Ephesians 2:11, 12; 5:1-8).

The way into Christ – into His church – is by repenting of sins, renouncing works of the flesh, and following the commandments of righteousness (Revelation 22:14, 15). Confess your belief in Him (Romans 10:9, 10), and by immersion in water, be baptized into Christ, and you will receive forgiveness and life anew (Romans 6:3, 4).