

A Translation of the Hebrew Text

¹For the choir director; of the sons of Korah; to Alamoah; a song.

²God is our refuge and strength,
An abundantly available help in distress.

³On thus, we will not fear
When the earth causes change and
When the mountains shake into the heart of the
seas.

⁴Its waters will roar,
They will foam,
Mountains will quake with its roaring.

Selah.

⁵A river.
Its channels will gladden the city of God,
The holiest of the dwellings of the Most High.¹

⁶God is in her midst,
She will not be shaken.
God will help her,
Resulting in morning dawning.

⁷Nations roar,
Kingdoms shake.
When He raises His voice,
The earth will waver.

⁸Yahweh of hosts is with us,
Our refuge² is the God of Jacob.

Selah.

⁹Come *and* behold the deeds of Yahweh,
Who appoints desolations³ in the earth,

¹⁰Who makes wars cease to the end of the earth.
He will smash the bow into fragments and cut
up the spear,
He will burn the chariots with fire.

¹¹Be still and know that I am God!
I will be exalted among the nations!
I will be exalted in the earth!

¹²Yahweh of hosts is with us,
Our refuge is the God of Jacob.

Selah.

¹ The translation of this third line of verse 5 (verse 4 in the English text) is taken from the Lexham English Bible.

² In verses 7 and 12 (Eng. 6 and 11), “refuge” (מִשְׁעָבֵד) differs from the previous word used in verse 2 (מִתְחַסֶּה) and “implies inaccessible height: hence NEB ‘our high stronghold.’” See Derek Kidner, *Psalms 1-72: An Introduction and Commentary* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1973), 193.

³ I.e., “events causing astonishment”

Exegetical Outline

Introduction

With three movements, this song compels us to make God our refuge.

Movement 1: An anticipation of cataclysm (v. 1-3)

- A. The declaration (v. 1-2)
 - 1. God is our refuge
 - 2. God is our strength
 - 3. God is a helper
 - 4. God is abundantly available
- B. The deduction (v.3)
- C. The destruction
 - 1. The earth causes change
 - 2. The mountains
 - a. Shake into the heart of the sea
 - b. Quake
 - 3. The waters
 - a. Roar
 - b. Foam

Movement 2: An exultation from stability (v. 4-7)

- A. The scene
 - 1. A river
 - 2. The city of God
 - 3. God himself
 - 4. An unshakable city
 - 5. God as helper
 - 6. A new day
- B. The contrast
 - 1. Nations roar
 - 2. Kingdoms shake
 - 3. The earth will waver
- C. The cause: God's voice

D. The chorus

1. Yahweh of hosts is with us
2. The God of Jacob is a refuge for us

Movement 3: An invitation to shalom (v. 8-11)

A. The invitation

1. Come!
2. Behold!

B. The accomplishment

1. Yahweh appointed desolations
2. Yahweh made wars cease worldwide
 - a. He will smash the bow
 - b. He will cut up the spear
 - c. He will burn the chariots with fire

C. The application

1. Be still!
2. Know that Yahweh is God!
3. Be certain of His exaltation
 - a. Among the nations
 - b. On the earth

D. The chorus

1. Yahweh of hosts is with us
2. The God of Jacob is a refuge for us

Introduction

- “A mighty fortress is our God / a bulwark never failing (i.e., a high defensive wall) / our helper he, amid the flood / of mortal ills prevailing... And though this world, with devils filled / should threaten to undo us / we will not fear, for God has willed / His truth to triumph through us... His kingdom is forever!”
- These words come from Martin Luther’s hymn, “A Mighty Fortress is Our God”.
- Luther wrote this song from his meditation on Psalm 46, and his song as well as his love for Psalm 46 became so well known that, since 1529, Psalm 46 has been affectionately called “Luther’s Psalm”.

Movement 1: An anticipation of cataclysm (v. 1-3)

IMPLICATION

1. Study God’s attributes (v. 1a)

- Without any one of these attributes, it would not make sense for you to make God your refuge.
 - a. Power
 - A powerless refuge is no refuge at all.
 - We retreat for safety to one who is more capable than we are on our own.
 - b. Trustworthiness / faithfulness
 - c. Immutability
 - d. Sovereignty
 - e. Mercy / Compassion
 - Illustration: Imagine a woman who escaped the clutches of a group of brutal kidnappers, only to run back into the arms of an abusive husband.
 - f. Righteousness / Justice
 - g. Hears + Sees (knowledge)
 - A God who could only hear our prayers when we prayed on a designated rug would be useless to us.
 - h. Wisdom / Understanding
 - Would we not need a God who could understand our needs and our potential fears, and who knows what to do about it?
 - i. Omnipresence

- A God who could only hear our prayers when we cried out to him in a certain place would be useless to us.
- What if God heard your troubles when you were at this address, but when you were at home, he may not be available to help you then?
- Spurgeon: "He is more present than friend or relative can be, yea, more nearly present than even the trouble itself."⁴

⁴ C. H. Spurgeon, Treasury of David, 339-340.

QUOTES

1. A River

- William S. Plumer: “Edwards thinks the stream is the holy place. Calvin, Diodati, Green, and others think the imagery is drawn from the small streams, which watered Jerusalem. By *stream* Watts understands Scripture; Henry, God’s word and ordinances; Scott, the graces and consolations of the Holy Spirit; Morison, the overflowing stream of divine mercy, which gladdens the saints. Hengstenberg interprets it of the stream of ‘the blessings of the kingdom of God,’ and cites, after Ainsworth, Gen. ii.10; Ps xxxvi.8; John iv.14; Ezek. xlvi.; Zech xiv.8; Rev. xxii.1, in proof of his position....The streams of spiritual blessings flowing from God through Jesus Christ, by the Holy Ghost, make glad the city of God continually. Jerusalem was the type of the true church of all ages.”⁵

⁵ William S. Plumer, *Studies in the Book of Psalms* (Carlisle, PA: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1975), 524.