



SUMMER IN THE PSALMS



**“A Mighty Fortress
Is Our God”
Psalm 46**

¹God is our refuge and strength,
A very present help in trouble.²Therefore we will
not fear, though the earth should change
And though the mountains shake into the heart
of the sea;³Though its waters roar and foam,
Though the mountains quake at its lofty pride.
Selah.⁴¶ There is a river whose streams make
glad the city of God,
The holy dwelling places of the Most High.⁵God
is in the midst of her, she will not be shaken;
God will help her when morning dawns.⁶The
nations roar, the kingdoms shake;
Psalms 46:1-11

He gives His voice, the earth melts.⁷Yahweh of
hosts is with us;
The God of Jacob is our stronghold.
Selah.⁸¶ Come, behold the works of Yahweh,
Who has appointed desolations in the earth.⁹He
makes wars to cease to the end of the earth;
He breaks the bow and cuts up the spear;
He burns the chariots with fire.¹⁰“ Cease striving
and know that I am God;
I will be exalted among the nations, I will be
exalted in the earth.”¹¹Yahweh of hosts is with us;
The God of Jacob is our stronghold. Selah.
Psalms 46:1-11

Introduction

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B. Have you ever felt like the ground beneath you was shaking and your whole world was being turned upside down?

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D. Psalm 46 was written in a time of crisis, and it is preserved for us today in our crises. We also face natural evil and moral evil.

Introduction

E. Whatever trouble comes, Psalm 46 tells us, with its first word, where to turn. Not to a change in circumstances. Not to our best efforts to fix the problem. Not to our anxious strategies to avoid pain and loss. We are to turn to God.

Introduction

F. This psalm rings with the name of God. Verse 4: “the city of God.” Verse 5: “God is in her midst” and “God will help.” Verses 7 and 11: “the God of Jacob.” His covenant name, “Yahweh,” appears in verses 7, 8, and 11. Verse 10: “Cease striving, and know that I am God.”

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H. Big Idea: God can handle your crisis.

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Psalms 46:1-3, 6, 9

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B. This is why Martin Luther loved Psalm 46. He expanded the truths of this psalm into his famous hymn, “A Mighty Fortress Is Our God.”

C. God’s people have Strength Himself on our side, no matter how quickly we tend to forget that truth.

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E. The background of this psalm is unknown, but it is believed to have been written after a military victory over a foreign power attempted a siege against Jerusalem (2 Chronicles 20:1-30; 2 Kings 18-19).

I. Our God Is Infinitely Strong (46:1-3, 6, 9)

F. How does this psalm teach us our God is infinitely strong? “God is our refuge and strength.” He is (present tense) our refuge and strength. God both protects and empowers His people. A “refuge” is a place of protection and safety. “Strength” is God providing His people with the inner power to keep on keeping on. We need not fear (46:2-3).

I. Our God Is Infinitely Strong (46:1-3, 6, 9)

G. “He gives His voice, the earth melts” (46:6b). God doesn’t need fire to melt the earth. He doesn’t need hands or lasers to melt the earth. He only needs to speak and the earth will melt. The power of our God is seen in the power of His word.

I. Our God Is Infinitely Strong (46:1-3, 6, 9)

H. “He makes wars to cease to the end of the earth; He breaks the bow and cuts up the spear; He burns the chariots with fire” (46:9). In other words, God will defeat all of His people’s enemies.

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In other words, God will defeat all of His people’s enemies.**

I. Our God is infinitely strong. God’s infinite strength is amazing if you’re on His side, but it’s horrifying if you’re against Him.

II. Our God Is Attentively Present (46:1b, 4-5)

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**⁴¶There is a river whose streams make glad
the city of God, The holy dwelling places of
the Most High.⁵God is in the midst of her, she
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Psalms 46:1, 4-5

II. Our God Is Attentively Present (46:1b, 4-5)

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B. And not just present, but "very present," attentively present. In other words, God is ready and eager to help. He is able, present, and eager to help. He is abundantly available to help you.

II. Our God Is Attentively Present (46:1b, 4-5)

C. 46:4-5. This river, the stream of Siloam, was the only natural supply of fresh water in Jerusalem, "the city of God." The "holy dwelling places" refer to the Temple Mount.

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C. 46:4-5. This river, the stream of Siloam, was the only natural supply of fresh water in Jerusalem, “the city of God.” The “holy dwelling places” refer to the Temple Mount.

D. With great poetic beauty, right beside the chaos depicted in verses 2-3, comes the picture of the perfect peace and safety of Jerusalem in verse 4.

II. Our God Is Attentively Present (46:1b, 4-5)

E. No one can read this psalm without sensing that this earthly reference fails to exhaust its meaning. “The city of God” is a major theme in the whole of Scripture and concerns not only the security of earthly Jerusalem but also the safety of the people of God throughout history.

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F. This life-giving river, who is ultimately God Himself, is present with His people to sustain them in their crisis.

II. Our God Is Attentively Present (46:1b, 4-5)

G. This city is not just any city. It is Zion, the place God chose to be “in the midst of her,” so that she will not be shaken.”

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G. This city is not just any city. It is Zion, the place God chose to be “in the midst of her,” so that she will not be shaken.”

H. As Christians it is important for us to understand that no longer is there a physical place where God has pledged His special favor and presence. Now, there is a particular person, God’s own Son.

II. Our God Is Attentively Present (46:1b, 4-5)

I. Christians do not rally to a particular city; we rally to a particular person for refuge, strength, and very present help in trouble. And we do so together, to form a people.

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I. Christians do not rally to a particular city; we rally to a particular person for refuge, strength, and very present help in trouble. And we do so together, to form a people.

J. This means the church is critical for you if you're going to find joy in crisis.

II. Our God Is Attentively Present (46:1b, 4-5)

K. And where God chooses to be present in all His strength, once in ancient Jerusalem, and now in Jesus Christ, and His body the church, "will not be shaken." Nature is shaken (46:2) and nations are shaken (46:6), but God's people will not be shaken (46:5).

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K. And where God chooses to be present in all His strength, once in ancient Jerusalem, and now in Jesus Christ, and His body the church, “will not be shaken.” Nature is shaken (46:2) and nations are shaken (46:6), but God’s people will not be shaken (46:5).

L. This doesn’t mean that God’s people will never experience trouble. In this age we will encounter trouble but we need not fear because God is with us.

II. Our God Is Attentively Present (46:1b, 4-5)

M. “God will help her when morning dawns” (46:5b). For every crisis we face in Christ, and all its darkness, God has a dawn designed. God will help you when morning dawns. Your dawn will come. God’s help does not mean that His people are kept from crisis, but that He keeps us through crisis.

II. Our God Is Attentively Present (46:1b, 4-5)

N. In His perfect timing, when the appointed morning dawns, God rescues His people from their trouble, having preserved them through the long night.

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O. Our God is attentively present.

III. Our God Will Be Exalted (46:8-11)

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**¹⁰“Cease striving and know that I am God;
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exalted in the earth.”¹¹Yahweh of hosts is with
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Psalms 46:8-11**

III. Our God Will Be Exalted (46:8-11)

A. What does God's being exalted have to do with the help we need in crisis? How does God's own declaration that He Himself will be exalted feed our confidence?

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B. Let's get verse 10 in context. Verse 8 is an invitation to the raging nations, those setting themselves up as enemies against God and His people. Verse 9 declares that God will bring an end to all war. It is a lost cause to set yourself against the living God.

III. Our God Will Be Exalted (46:8-11)

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D. Verse 10 issues another invitation, both to the raging nations and to His fearful people. Raging nations, fearful people: “Cease striving and know that I am God.”

III. Our God Will Be Exalted (46:8-11)

E. Did you catch the change in voice? In verse 8 the psalmist wrote, but in verse 10 God Himself spoke. God issues the invitation.

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E. Did you catch the change in voice? In verse 8 the psalmist wrote, but in verse 10 God Himself spoke. God issues the invitation.

F. God spoke into the chaos, into the raging and shaking, “Cease striving,” be still, lay down your weapons, cease making war.

III. Our God Will Be Exalted (46:8-11)

G. Verse 10 is also a word to God's people. Cease striving, church. Be still, church. Do not fear. Do not be anxious. Do not work yourself into a frenzy trying to save your family and take your country back to the 1950s.

III. Our God Will Be Exalted (46:8-11)

G. Verse 10 is also a word to God's people. Cease striving, church. Be still, church. Do not fear. Do not be anxious. Do not work yourself into a frenzy trying to save your family and take your country back to the 1950s.

H. Cease striving, and look to Me. Rest from all of your horizontal diversions and distractions and discouragement, and look up.

III. Our God Will Be Exalted (46:8-11)

I. Be still, and in that stillness, own that you are not God, and be happy about it. You are not infinitely strong nor attentively present. Do not dare be self-exalting. Know that God is God.

III. Our God Will Be Exalted (46:8-11)

I. Be still, and in that stillness, own that you are not God, and be happy about it. You are not infinitely strong nor attentively present. Do not dare be self-exalting. Know that God is God.

J. "I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth."

III. Our God Will Be Exalted (46:8-11)

K. For God's covenant people in Israel back then, and for His covenant people today in Christ, our God's exaltation is our salvation. His exaltation is our refuge and strength, our very present help in trouble.

III. Our God Will Be Exalted (46:8-11)

K. For God's covenant people in Israel back then, and for His covenant people today in Christ, our God's exaltation is our salvation. His exaltation is our refuge and strength, our very present help in trouble.

L. The certainty of His exaltation is precious beyond words and gives us a place to stand when all around us seems unsure. The certainty that He will be exalted is granite under our feet. It is the guarantee of our help.

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M. “Yahweh of hosts is with us; The God of Jacob is our stronghold.”

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N. Psalm 46 ends with a powerful word. The word “stronghold” in verse 7 and in the refrain in verse 11, the final word on which the psalm ends, is an even stronger image of security than “refuge” in verse 1. This stronghold is a picture of inaccessible height, an impenetrable fortress.

III. Our God Will Be Exalted (46:8-11)

**O. Christian, Christ is our stronghold, our
mighty fortress.**

III. Our God Will Be Exalted (46:8-11)

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**P. Our God will be exalted, and His exaltation
is our salvation.**

Conclusion

A. What trouble are you facing today? What crisis is consuming you today?

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B. Big Idea: God can handle your crisis.

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C. “Cease striving and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth.”

The gospel is the good news that the just and gracious God of the universe looked upon hopelessly sinful people and sent His only Son, Jesus Christ, God in human flesh, to bear His wrath against sin on the cross and to show His power over sin in the resurrection so that everyone who turns from their sin (repentance) and believes in Him (faith) will be reconciled to God forever.