

SSP Wednesday

“Safety and Peace of Zion”

Here’s a fun fact: I can’t sing well to save my life, but I appreciate great music. It’s one thing to listen to a song that’s well written, but it’s a completely different experience to hear someone sing, that’s been through some pain or has witnessed something monumental. There are many talented people in this world that can sing exceptionally well, but they lack the anointing. Perhaps, you’ve seen that in your church where it seems like it’s more of an audition for American Idol than worshipping our Lord and Savior.

Psalm 46 is beautifully written, and when I read that chapter, I could tell that the sons of Korah witnessed God’s goodness and heard stories of His amazing grace. Psalm 46:1-7 gives us a really poetic picture of peace in the midst of the storm. So, let’s look at verses 1-7 of Psalm 46. **God is our refuge and strength, A very present help in trouble. ²Therefore we will not fear, Even though the earth be removed, And though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; ³Though its waters roar and be troubled, Though the mountains shake with its swelling. Selah ⁴There 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.

⁶The nations raged, the kingdoms were moved; He uttered His voice, the earth melted.

⁷The LORD of hosts *is* with us; The God of Jacob *is* our refuge. *Selah*

Okay, let's look at the lesson for the breakdown of what we just read. "The psalm gives a vivid description of the world in turmoil, and it is portrayed with the images of natural disasters of unprecedented intensity. The image of disturbed waters often depicts the rebellious nations and various problems that the wicked cause in the world." Let's look at Psalm 93:3-4: **The floods have lifted up,**

O LORD, The floods have lifted up their voice; The floods lift up their waves.

⁴The LORD on high *is* mightier Than the noise of many waters, *Than* the mighty waves of the sea. Now let's look at Psalm 124:2-5: "If it had not been

the LORD who was on our side, When men rose up against us, ³ Then they would have swallowed us alive, When their wrath was kindled against us;

⁴Then the waters would have overwhelmed us, The stream would have gone over our soul; ⁵Then the swollen waters Would have gone over our soul."

Have you had that experience before? I'm speaking of that, "If it had not been the Lord who was on our side, when..." experience. If it had not been the Lord who was on your side when you were running late to work and there was a 10-car pile-up on your route, but you avoided it. If it had not been the Lord who was on your side when doctors said you were one of the sickest people in the hospital, yet the Lord restored you to health. If it had not been the Lord on your side when you were staring down the barrel at a potential maximum prison sentence of 15 years, but God spared you because He had plans to use you for His honor and glory.

We shouldn't only trust God in the good times, we need to trust Him in the worst of times. We need to trust Him in times of trouble. We need to trust Him in moments of despair. We need to trust Him at ALL times! Let's look at Psalm 62:7-8: ***⁷ In God is my salvation and my glory; The rock of my strength, And my refuge, is in God. ⁸ Trust in Him at all times, you people; Pour out your heart before Him; God is a refuge for us. Selah***

Psalm 46:2-3: ***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***

Now, Psalm 46:4: ***There is a river whose streams shall make glad the city of God, The holy place of the tabernacle of the Most High.***

Even though there's chaos, even though there's danger, even though we face the storms of life, we have no need to be fearful because God is faithful. Right there in verse 4 we see the antidote for the strife. In John 14:27, Jesus said: ***27 Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.*** Peace is not the absence of tribulation, but it's manifested in the midst of it.

There are many stories in the Bible of people who overcame trials, but one of my favorites is when Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego faced a fiery trial. God was their refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. In fact, let's look at that. Daniel 3:14-18: ***14 Nebuchadnezzar spoke, saying to them, "Is it true, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, that you do not serve my gods or worship the gold image which I have set up? 15 Now if you are ready at the time you hear the sound of the horn, flute, harp, lyre, and psaltery, in symphony with all kinds of music, and you fall down and worship the image which I have made, good! But if you do not worship, you shall be cast immediately into the midst of a burning fiery furnace. And who is the god who will deliver you from my hands?"***

I want us to pause right here, because there is a point we need to grab. The music that we listen to either leads us to God's altar or the enemy's altar. There's strength in God, but there's weakness in the enemy. When we look at the songs contained in the book of Psalms, we know that we are being led to God's altar.

¹⁶ Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego answered and said to the king, “O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer you in this matter. ¹⁷ If that *is the case*, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver *us* from your hand, O king. ¹⁸ But if not, let it be known to you, O king, that we do not serve your gods, nor will we worship the gold image which you have set up.”

Of course, we know how that story went, King Nebuchadnezzar was furious and commanded his men to heat the fiery furnace seven times hotter than usual. The three Hebrew boys were thrown into the furnace, but Jesus came down and stood with them in the midst of their fiery trial and delivered them.

What did Psalm 46:1 say again? **God is our refuge and strength, A very present help in trouble.**

How do we learn to have peace and to trust God in the midst of the storm?

Let's look at a couple of verses.

- Stay focused. Isaiah 26:3 - **You will keep *him* in perfect peace, *Whose mind is stayed on You, Because he trusts in You.***
- Stay prayerful. Philippians 4:6-7 - **⁶ Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; ⁷ and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.**
- Stay faithful. 1 Samuel 12:24 - **²⁴ Only fear the Lord, and serve Him in truth with all your heart; for consider what great things He has done for you.**
- Stay Still. Psalm 46:10 - **¹⁰ Be still, and know that I *am* God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth!**

To sum it all up, there is peace in the presence of God.