

God is our Refuge

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[0:00] Psalm 46 God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea, though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof, see love.

There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the most holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High. God is in the midst of her and she shall not be moved.

God shall help her and that right early. The heathen raged, the kingdoms were moved. He uttered his voice, the earth melted. The Lord of hosts is with us, the God of Jacob is our refuge.

Selah. Come behold the works of the Lord, what desolations he hath made in the earth. He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth. He breaketh the bow, he cutteth the spear in sunder, he burneth the chariot in the fire.

[1:17] Be still and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the heathen. I will be exalted in the earth. The Lord of hosts is with us. The God of Jacob is our refuge.

Selah. Let's pray, Lord. We thank you again for this word. Take it and make it work in our hearts, we pray. In Jesus' name, amen. Please be seated.

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. One day a little boy was praying and he said this, God, please take care of yourself because if anything happens to you, we're in a world of trouble.

Amen. You know, we don't have to worry about God taking care of himself. But without God as our refuge, we're in trouble. And the good news is that even if we are in trouble, God is a refuge for us. Who can say amen to that? Amen. Let's say it together. God is a refuge for us. God is a refuge for us. He is a very present help.

[2:29] It's in difficult times that we can realise the sweetness of our Saviour. In those difficult times, we know his care for us. And it's when we're in danger that we can come to appreciate the place of refuge, of protection, that he is for us.

He is that place of safety, that place of refuge. What a comfort it is to know that. That if you are in trouble, God is with you.

If you're in trouble, he is with you. He doesn't abandon us. When trouble strikes, he's right there in the trouble with us. And we can face it with his help.

The roaring lion can roar as much as he likes. But he does not shake us while we're in that place of sanctuary. While we are in that place of God's help.

God is with you. God is with you. There's great comfort in that, isn't there? God is with us. With us.

[3:33] And he will surely see you through, whatever faces you. You know, you ain't seen nothing yet. Maybe it's going to get worse. But whatever the case, he's already in your future.

He's already there. And he's already in trouble with you. And we need not fear. We need not fear. Though this, though that, though the other. We need not fear. Whatever the stresses, whatever the storms, whatever lies ahead.

Fact is, today is the tomorrow we worried about yesterday. That's not that bad, is it? We're still coping. God is bigger than whatever is going on for us.

He's bigger than that. And when we see that God is with us, it makes the storm look smaller, doesn't it? It makes the storm look smaller when we realise God is with us.

And God is ever present. He's everywhere present. He is with you. With you in the storm. He is with you. And he says, he will never leave you.

[4:40] Hebrews 13, 5. We can take comfort in this. It says, Let your conversation be without covetousness and be content with such things as you have.

For he has said, I will never leave you nor forsake you. Never leave you. Never forsake you. He repeated it.

He emphasised it there. So we have reason not to fear. Not to fear. Verse 2 of Psalm 46 again. It says, Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea, though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof.

Selah. Selah means pause and think. And fear can overwhelm us. It can overwhelm us. At times, it's only human. It's only natural. We get fearful from time to time.

There was a story of a man called Dr. Hobbs, and years ago he was out hunting in the wilderness with a friend. And suddenly the sky turned dark in this wild area of country, and the lightning was beginning to flash, and it was looking pretty ominous as the storm grew closer.

[5:56] And Dr. Hobbs had hunted in this region before. He knew the terrain. He knew where he was. And he said to the other man, Come, follow me. And they hurried along this pathway, this winding path, and the thunder was louder, the lightning became more intense, the wind was getting more boisterous, and the friend was getting more and more nervous.

And then Dr. Hobbs said to him, In here. And quickly they darted into this cave, barely making it just as the storm unleashed all of its fury.

And Dr. Hobbs said to his friend, I wasn't worried because I knew where to find refuge. I wasn't worried because I knew where to find refuge.

And so too, we will not fear because why? We know where to find refuge. We know where there is a sure refuge for us. We know where we can run to when everything is falling to bits around us, when everything is being shaken around about us, we know where we can run to.

When we face the full brunt of the storm, we know where the refuge is. When we see times of great shaking and turmoil, it helps us to know that we stand firmly on solid ground.

[7:20] There was an earthquake in a village, a small village, years ago. This earthquake was shaking everything. And there was one old woman there that everyone knew, and they were surprised, the villagers were surprised as they looked on her, how calm she was, how joyful, how at peace she was.

And at length one of them asked her, Mother, are you not afraid? And no, she replied, she said, I rejoice to know that I have a God who can shape the world.

I know I have a God who can shape the world. She knew that God's power was evident, and God was with her.

And friends today, whatever your storm, whatever your situation, you can know His power, His love, He is for you, not against you. His power is limitless, His resources are boundless, and God is for you, God is with you.

Whatever is going on around about you, you can have this assurance today, that He is your source of peace. He is your source. He is your refuge.

[8:33] He is your fortress. I love to think of the picture that our Lord painted in that familiar parable of the building of a house. In Matthew 7, where there were two builders, two builders, Matthew 7 from verse 24, The Lord Jesus speaks, He says, Therefore, whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock, and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell not, for it was founded upon a rock.

And everyone that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, shall be likened, doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand, and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and great was the fall of it, And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished, at

his doctrine, for he taught them as one, having authority, and not as the scribes.

The Lord Jesus says, The one who hears, and does what he says, will be wise. But the one who hears, and does not, do what he says, is foolish.

When the rain, and the floods, and the winds come against us, we need solid ground. Solid ground. To be planted on solid ground.

And friends, today, there's great assurance we can have. God's word, if we will act upon it, if we will act upon it, will be that security, that security, that we need.

[10:34] You know, these pages are, packed with promises. Packed with promises. 2 Peter 1. Packed with promises. Precious promises.

Great and precious promises. Exceeding great and precious promises. You know, whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

You know, there's an escape to the refuge. There's great, exceeding great, and precious promises. Here, we can take heart in. We can run to him.

Run to his word. Run to his truth. Run to his refuge today. When we face times of turmoil, there is a source of peace. A source of peace. Isaiah 26.3 tells us of this.

Source of peace. Peace. Peace. Shalom. The Hebrews would say, and perfect peace. It's double peace.

[11:41] Shalom. Shalom. They will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusteth in thee. It tells us here, brothers and sisters, God is speaking to you here.

God is saying to you, the one whose mind is stayed on God, his peace is perfect. It may not feel like it, but that's what the word says, so that's the truth, isn't it?

If your mind is stayed on him, you have perfect peace, and he will keep you in such perfect peace. When at times we're feeling like we're going under, when we feel like we're going through deep waters, we're struggling to breathe, we can say, as Catherine Booth did, the waters are rising, but so am I.

I'm not going under, but over. We're not going under, we're going over, brothers and sisters. And since the days of King David, Psalm 46 has been a song of comfort for God's people.

Down through the ages, people would sing Psalm 46, and we just read it, and we could, I know some churches do put melodies and actually sing the Psalms, but Psalm 46 is a song of comfort for God's people.

[13:03] When we're going through that time of tribulation, the Christian martyrs of old, of Europe, and of many persecuted believers' history have sung this Psalm 46.

And so it's important that we consider where we place our trust. Where do you place your trust today? And we've heard about treasures in heaven. Is Jesus your treasure?

Is He the one, the treasure of your soul? What about your trust today? In what do you place your trust? In what? In who? Where is your trust?

What is your refuge today? To what do you turn when trouble comes? We need to make sure the refuge is sure. True, not false.

The Bible speaks of people who rely on a refuge of lies. A refuge of lies. Isaiah 28, 17. Some rely on a faulty refuge.

[14:03] It says here, judgment will allay to the lion and righteousness to the plummet. It's talking about justice and truth and righteousness. The lion, the plummet, the, what do they call it?

The plummet, as to what is right and true. It goes on, and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies. The hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies and the waters shall overflow the hiding place. Friends, you don't want a hiding place like that. You don't want a refuge like that. Where a refuge of lies, it says, the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies. The waters shall overflow the hiding place. There's a false sense of security. Some people place their trust in a faulty refuge, in a refuge that's flimsy, a falsehood. For some these days, wealth is their refuge.

They place all their trust in wealth, in accumulation, in their covetousness, in gain. For some, it is their help. While they're healthy, yes, it's a refuge.

[15:07] Maybe they can feel some comfort as they go to the gym every morning and pump the iron and see those muscles swell, but ultimately, health is no refuge for you.

It will fail. Some turn to the lie of evolution as if they can excuse their unbelief. We've heard about excuses this morning. The refuge of lies, the excuses people make, the excuses people make, why not to believe?

Evolution. It's a falsehood. It's a refuge of lies. It doesn't stack up even to intelligent scrutiny. It doesn't make sense.

It's a refuge of lies. It's a lie. And the devil delights in giving people lies to put their trust in. And if you turn to the lie of evolution to excuse your unbelief, you will find it's a flimsy falsehood, a refuge of lies.

It will fail you. Our trust is not in such things. Our trust is not in our circumstances. While they might be good for a season, don't place your trust in that.

[16:17] We live in a fair nation at this time. But friends, don't place your trust in that. Don't place your trust in that. Our trust is not in any of these things.

Our refuge is not the refuge of lies, but it is in Him. In Him. Christ is, for us, a shelter from God's judgment and wrath.

God's judgment will be poured out. God's wrath will be vented. And for us that are in Christ, the wrath was poured out 2,000 years ago on that bleeding cross, on that bleeding, mangled form of a man, shredded for you.

There, the wrath was poured out. And Christ could be the refuge for you, if you will but trust Him. That the wrath, the anger, the just judgment and punishment, the penalty that should have been ours, was paid for in full by Him, by Him, by Him, for you, for you, for you.

The refuge is the cross. It is the Christ of the cross today. He is, if you like, the ark. As Noah was saved, only those in the ark were saved.

[17:43] And so too, when the floods come, when judgment falls on planet earth again, we must be sure we are in the ark. And the ark is Christ.

The ark is Christ. The place of refuge, the place of safety. He is all sufficient. But make sure you are in the ark, in Christ.

Trust Him. He is all sufficient. If God is for you, who can be against you? Nothing can stop you. If God is for you, you need not fear.

If God is for you, you can be strong. The Lord is our deliverer, our protector and our defender. And when we suffer, we may suffer loss in this life.

We suffer loss. We can suffer in health. We can suffer financial loss, marriage troubles, work worries, grief, the loss of loved ones.

[18:46] Yet still, yet still, God's children, God's children have a place of refuge. We read Proverbs 14, verse 26. It assures you, if you are a son, a daughter of the living God today, it says, in the fear of the Lord is strong confidence and his children, his children shall have a place of refuge.

A place of refuge. Have you found that place of refuge today? We know for many in this troubled world, they flee to Australia for a place of refuge.

They are refugees. They come to a place of refuge, a place of comparative safety, of comparative peace. But much more. Let us be refugees and come to the refuge who is Christ today.

Come to him. Come to him. For without him, outside of Christ, there is no peace, saith my God to the wicked. There is no peace outside of Christ. No true peace.

Yet if you are one of God's children this morning, you are in the place of refuge. And it's a far safer refuge than this nation, the place of safety is Christ.

[20:04] It's eternal. And perfect peace is promised as it's said again Isaiah 26, There will keep him in perfect peace. Shalom, shalom, perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee because he trusteth in thee.

Trust ye in the Lord forever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength. in Christ. There's eternal peace.

He says, My peace I give you. My peace I leave with you. Let not your heart be troubled. David said in Psalm 61, Even when you feel like your heart is overwhelmed, overwhelmed, with despair, with discouragement, with disappointment, deep waters, deep waters, even then, especially then, especially then, when your heart is overwhelmed, who do you turn to?

Psalm 61, it says, Hear my cry, O God, attend unto my prayer. From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed, lead me to the rock which is higher than I, for thou hast been a shelter unto me and a strong tower from the enemy.

I will abide in thy tabernacle forever. I will trust in the covert of thy wings. Selah. There's a covering. There's a place of covering under his wings.

[21:41] And when your heart, when your heart is overwhelmed, when it seems like you just can't cope, it seems like there's no answers, there's no way out on this predicament, yet, our God is a strong tower from the enemy.

God is rock solid. He is for you, for you, even when your heart is overwhelmed. He will not fail you, nor forsake you. In the day of trouble, there is a safe place.

You know, it makes it almost a good day when it's a day of trouble. You know, you could say that in a kind of strange kind of way. In Nahum 1 verse 7, the Lord is good, the Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble, and he knoweth them that trust in him.

The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble, and he knoweth them that trust in him. Take heart, brother, take heart, sister, in the day of trouble, the Lord is good, and he is a stronghold for you.

That's comforting, isn't it? When you're going through the toughest of times, yet God is good and he is a stronghold. Our security is in God, in God, not in things, not in people, not in the vain philosophies of men, not in treasures and toys we can accumulate, not in empty humanism or religion, dead religion, but rather in the living God, the living God.

[23:19] Rock of Ages was written by a man called Augustus Toplady, an unusual name, but this preacher was afflicted with sickness for most of his life, the author of Rock of Ages, and he died at the age of 38, 38 years old, and his final words were this, my heart beats every day stronger and stronger for glory.

Sickness is no affliction, pain, no cause, death itself, no dissolution, my prayers are now all converted into praise.

My prayers are now converted all into praise. Rock of Ages, cleft for me, let me hide myself in thee.

Psalm 91, it says, he that dwells in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress.

Let's say that together. He is my refuge and my fortress. He is my refuge and my fortress. Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler so the bird catcher as it were, Satan, he can try every snare in the book but he shall, God shall deliver thee from the snare and from the noise of pestilence so in other words dread kind of affliction this world is filled with pestilence isn't it?

[25:00] Pests, pestilence it's got the sense of the dread, the dread of this world, the dreadfulness that goes on around. We see the vileness, the sinfulness of sin.

We see that the direction of this world is hellward. He shall deliver thee from all of that and he shall cover thee with his feathers and under his wings shalt thou trust.

He shall cover thee with his feathers and under his wings shalt thou trust. His truth shall be thy shield and buckler. This is a shield for you. The word of God. His truth shall be thy shield.

Friends, you are safe in him. He is holding you safe. He is keeping you safe. You're safely abiding. He is like a shield for you. His truth shall be a shield for you. Surely he shall deliver you.

He is your habitation. He is your fortress. He is your dwelling place. He shall cover you. He shall shield you. And as the feathers of a mother bird shelter the cheeks, he will shelter you.

[26:06] He is always with you. Even in time of discouragement. You know, sometimes we come to that time, that place of despair and we wonder what is going on.

Yet he is with you. He is with you. Even in the trouble, in the day of trouble, in trouble, he is a very present help. And so he is with you in heartache, in heartbreak, in trouble, in tragedy, in sickness,

whatever the case, he is with you.

He does not leave you nor forsake you. Sometimes it's in such times, such times, that he can be more strong for you, that your faith can grow stronger and be more resilient.

And when you're brought to the end of your own strength, you can rest and yield to his strength. You can rely, you can receive his strength. And you can come to the end of yourself and come to your knees and come to rely on his strength.

And so we come to rest on God. His help is with us. Deuteronomy 33, it says, The eternal God is thy refuge and underneath are the everlasting arms.

[27:18] Notice that. Eternal, Eternal, Eternal, the eternal God and underneath are the everlasting, everlasting, everlasting arms.

This God is forever and his arms, his refuge is forever. You can be immovable and trust him at all times.

Here's what someone said, God has not promised, skies always blue, flowers stream, pathways, all our life through. God has not promised, sun, without rain, joy, without sorrow, peace, without pain. But God, but God has promised strength for the day, rest for the labour, light for the way, grace for the trials, help from above, unfailing sympathy, undying love.

He's promised much for us. And tell your soul to trust him. Tell your soul, speak to your soul and tell it to trust in him, to wait upon him, to hope in him.

[28:22] Psalm 62, the psalmist cried out, My soul, wait thou upon God, wait thou only upon God, for my expectation is from him.

He only is my rock and my salvation. He is my defence. I shall not be moved. In God is my salvation and my glory.

The rock of my strength and my refuge is in God. Let's say that together. My refuge is in God.

Louder. My refuge is in God.

Trust in him at all times, you people. Pour out your heart before him. God is a refuge for us. God is a refuge for us. Sometimes we neglect to think of that.

If we could just memorise that simple three word statement. Well, how many words are there? Five. God is a refuge for us.

[29:23] Can you make that your memory verse today? God is a refuge for us. Trust in him at all times. Pour out your heart before him. God is a refuge for us.

He only is my rock and my salvation. He is my defence. I shall not be moved. Friends, take heart this morning. Take heart. May this be a message for you that you'll think of in those days of trouble yet to come.

In those days of trouble next week. Maybe even today. But in the day of trouble, God is with you. Do not lose hope but find hope.

Know that God is in trouble. In trouble with you. And flee to him for refuge today. Take your refuge in God.

Have you done that? I'm preaching largely to Christians here as an encouragement to you to take heart, to take faith. Perhaps you're not even a Christian this morning. You think, wow, I'm not in the refuge yet.

[30:27] I'm not in the refuge yet. I'm still a refugee looking for a place to take safety, to take shelter, to be safe from the wrath of God. Are you safe from the wrath of God?

Do you know Jesus as your Lord, as your Saviour? I pray, flee to the refuge today. Flee to him. Come into that refuge today. Don't delay.

Take refuge in Christ today. Seek prayer with someone you trust who's a Christian this morning and say, I don't know that I'm a Christian. Be honest.

Say, I don't know that I'm a Christian but I want to be one. I want to be saved. If you can say that to someone today, go and speak to Brad, myself, another Christian here today that you know and trust and say, I want to know how do I become a Christian today?

I want to know for sure that I'm in the refuge. When the wrath comes, when the flood comes, I want to be in the ark. Have you taken your refuge in God?

[31:32] I pray you will. He's the shelter for you. If you know him, he's the shelter for you. If you don't know him, make it today that you come

to know him, that you come to trust him.

He is the shelter. God is our refuge and strength and our very present help in trouble. Therefore, will not we fear though the earth be removed and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea, though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof, no matter what.

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Let us pray. Dear God, we thank you that as the psalmist cried out, you're our refuge, you're our strength, you're our fortress, you are that place of safety.

Lord, we thank you that in Christ at the cross you took the full weight, the full burden, the full penalty, the judgment due for our sin, the wrath, that anger, that righteous, just anger against our sin was poured out at that hill in that man, Christ Jesus.

God become flesh to dwell amongst us, to bear our pain, our guilt. In Christ, you took it all in the person of your son.

[32:57] Lord, we thank you for that mercy that you extend as you extend to Noah and his family to come into the ark. Help us, Lord, too, each one, to know that refuge today, to know that in Christ we have eternal salvation and to know as believers we have assurance when the day of trouble hits us, we know you've not left us, Lord, but you're right there, right there.

We thank you for that, that promise amongst many exceeding great and precious promises that you are our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

Lord, we pray if there's any here this morning that have yet to find that place, that have yet to find that assurance that they're saved beyond a doubt, that they'll make that step today to seek prayer and to settle it with you once and for all for all time and for eternity.

In Jesus' name. Amen. CONGRATIST Thank you.