

Text: Psalm 46

Meaning: The Psalmist declares God is our help in trouble

Big Idea: God is a very present help in trouble

Objective: I want the hearers to trust Christ in their trouble

Theme: Descriptions of God

HELP ME LORD

Selah used 74 times in the Old Testament

Hallelujah 24 times

Amen 30 times

READ PSALM 46

According to Matthew Henry, this psalm may have been composed after David defeated the enemies of ancient Israel from surrounding lands. Charles Spurgeon stated that the description in verse 1 calling for the psalm to be played “according to alamoeth” could speak of either a high-pitched musical instrument or the soprano voices of young girls who went out to dance in celebration of David’s victory over the Philistines. While the historical background to the passage may be a mystery, the message of the Psalm is not – GOD IS OUR REFUGE! He is our safety, our security, our protector and provider!

SONS OF KORAH

Korah, along with two men named Dathan and Abiram, rebelled against Moses leadership and brought a formal charge against He and Aaron declaring they were unfit for leadership and must be removed. 250 men joined in their petition against Moses. Scripture says the ground literally swallowed up Korah, Dathan, and Abiram and their families and fire came down from Heaven and killed all the men burning incense in rebellion against God’s anointed leader. But in Numbers 26:11 it says the sons of Korah were not killed. God preserved them for a special purpose. 7 generations later the great prophet Samuel came from the line of the sons of Korah. And later in David’s time, David formed an elaborate organization for praise and

worship, song, instrumental music, and prophesying. It was the sons of Korah who were his worship leaders.

So, this is a Psalm penned out by David’s worship team, and the summary of this psalm is:

When it seems like the world is in a tailspin and the storm is raging – DON’T PANIC.....PAUSE. Pause and declare that God is our refuge and our strength, a very present help in trouble.

WHEN YOU’RE IN A JAM, CALL THE GREAT I AM!

Matthew 7:24-25

“Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. ²⁵ And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock.”

We have the PROMISE OF GOD’S PRESENCE and the PROMISE OF GOD’S PROTECTION. He is our REFUGE AND OUR STRENGTH. The Lord of Hosts is WITH US and the God of Jacob is our FORTRESS. Let’s build our HOUSE ON THE ROCK!

Greco – Roman way of learning is more didactic. We like points and outlines and information to apply to my life.

Hebrew way of learning is through pictures and stories.

IN THIS GREAT PSALM WE HAVE SOME PICTURES OF WHO GOD IS. SOME DESCRIPTIVE IMAGERY.

DESCRIPTION 1...

1. GOD IS A REFUGE WE CAN HIDE IN

Some psalms start with a description of a crisis the writer is facing. This Psalm, however, begins with God's provision in the crisis. The Psalmist writes,

God is our Refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

REFUGE – shelter from danger, a place of trust and safety. Israel had specified cities of refuge within her borders. In these cities someone who had killed someone else unintentionally could flee to one of these cities for safety and protection from revenge. Jesus is our city of refuge! Our sin nailed him to that cross, but we can run into His arms of love and we are safe.

THE name of the Lord is a strong tower, the righteous run into it and are safe!

STRENGTH – Jesus is not only our safety, He is our strength! He doesn't shame us in His presence or lay guilt upon us, He encourages and inspires His children to worship and serve Him! He strengthens our faith in His Presence!

GOD'S CONVICTION IS CONSTRUCTIVE!

God doesn't tear down His children. He builds us up.

VERY PRESENT HELP IN TROUBLE – God is present in our trouble, in fact he is VERY PRESENT. God is present in the good times, but He is very present in the difficult seasons of life. He is near to the brokenhearted and saves those crushed in spirit.

Beloved, today we can pray with full assurance that our loving heavenly Father hears us, wants the best for us, and will protect and provide for us no matter what we face!

GOD IS NOT ABSENT IN YOUR TROUBLE – HE IS VERY PRESENT!

Adrian Rogers

Prayer is not calling on God's reluctance, it is laying hold of His willingness.

We do not serve a RELUCTANT, RETICENT, OR RECALCITRANT God! We serve an on time, on location, right there in our situation God who loves to bless His Children!

Martin Luther

In April 1521, the great progenitor of Protestant Reformation, Martin Luther, was summoned to appear before the Emperor and Catholic leaders to give an account of this new "heresy" he was teaching called "justification by faith alone in Christ alone." The learned Johann Eck laid out all of Luther's writings and then asked Luther if he was prepared to recant.

Luther retired to his room that night to think over his answer. His Bible fell open to Psalm 46. Luther returned the next morning to stand before his detractors. In response to their call to recant, Luther responded:

"Unless I am convinced by Scripture and plain reason—I do not accept the authority of the popes and councils, for they have contradicted each other—my conscience is captive to the Word of God. I cannot and I will not recant anything for to go against conscience is neither right nor safe. God help me. Amen." The Reformation was off and running.

Psalm 46 was Martin Luther's favorite Psalm. During the dark and dangerous periods of the Reformation, Luther would turn to his trusted friend Philip Melancthon and exclaim: "Let's sing the 46th Psalm, and let the devil do his worst!" It inspired his great hymn "A Mighty Fortress is Our God."

A Mighty Fortress is our God

Verse 1

A mighty Fortress is our God,
A Bulwark never failing;

Verse 2

Did we in our own strength confide,
Our striving would be losing;
Were not the right Man on our side,
The Man of God's own choosing:
Dost ask who that may be?
Christ Jesus, it is He;
Lord Sabaoth His Name,
From age to age the same,
And He must win the battle.

AS THE PSALMIST GOES ON TO SAY HERE – THEREFORE WE WILL NOT FEAR – THOUGH THE WORLD LITERALLY FALL APART – WE DO NOT HAVE TO BE AFRAID BECAUSE THE SAME GOD WHO MADE THE WORLD IS OUR REFUGE AND STRENGTH!

DESCRIPTION 2....

2. GOD IS A RIVER WE CAN DRAW FROM

In Scripture we have multiple passages where God is referred to as a source of living water for us. These passages encompass the entire triune nature of the Godhead.

Jeremiah 2 – the Father refers to Himself as the fountain of living waters

Zechariah 13 – In Christ's Kingdom there will be a fountain opened to cleanse Israel from sin and impurity.

John 4 – Jesus said to the woman at the well, "If you knew who I am and the gift I give you would ask me for living water."

AS THE OLD HYMN SAYS – THERE IS A FOUNTAIN FILLED WITH BLOOD DRAWN FROM IMMANUEL'S VEINS, AND SINNERS PLUNGER BENEATH THAT FLOOD LOSE ALL THEIR GUILTY STAINS!

John 7:38-39 – As the Scripture has said, from your heart will flow rivers of living water. This He spoke of the Holy Spirit.

OUR FATHER – is the fountain of Living Water!

JESUS – is the conduit through which the water comes

HOLY SPIRIT – is the distributor of that water into our soul!

Those who trust in Christ have a constant flowing resource to draw from. We have a continuous river of grace. A never-ending sea of peace. A lake of provision that will never go dry. An ocean of strength that is full of life. A spring of God's love that will never cease. An everlasting reservoir of wisdom we can draw from anytime, any place, and in any situation. Whatever we need today there is a river to draw from in the Holy Spirit!

Everywhere that Abraham went Scripture says that He built an altar and dug a well. These altars and wells were located mostly in dry dessert like places where water was scarce and unheard of; yet, every time Abraham stuck his rod in the ground to dig a well water sprang up.

Beloved, in life it's going to get dry. There are going to be desert times and desert seasons, but in the midst of that difficulty know today that there is a unending supply of living water for you there! All you have to do is dig in and pray! All you have to do is dig deep in faith and worship!

It is easy to become spiritually and emotionally dehydrated in life. What is it that keeps us from burning out? What is it that keeps us from spiritual dehydration?

THE LIVING WATER OF GOD!

When others are left to die in the desert of difficulty, the children of God have an oasis – JESUS! The Holy Spirit of God refreshes our soul with living water. We have a water source.

HOW DEEP IS YOUR WELL?

In order to tap into the living water of God we must:

- Dig deep in prayer
- Dig intentionally with praise
- Dig carefully into God's word
- Press into the Lord in our pain
- Lean into Jesus in our struggle
- Ask humbly and desperately for the filling of God's Holy Spirit

DESCRIPTION 3...

3. GOD IS A RESTING PLACE WE CAN RUN TO

Psalm 46:10 is one of the most famous verses on prayer and meditation in the Bible. THE LORD HIMSELF speaks directly to us here and says "BE STILL AND KNOW that I AM GOD."

Most often we refer to this verse in the context of needing to get away from all the busyness and the distractions of life in order to connect with the Lord. This certainly is necessary for us. But the language is more forceful than that here. The Psalmist talks about God making wars cease and breaking down weapons and burning vehicles used in warfare. In fact, some translations translate this verse,

CEASE STRIVING and know that I am God
STOP FIGHTING and know that I am God

So – in life – when I am fighting the daily battles – could I actually be fighting against God?

*So today, **JUST CONSIDER THIS QUESTION FOR A MOMENT AND ASK THE HOLY SPIRIT TO REVEAL TO YOU HIS ANSWER: ARE YOU FIGHTING GOD?***

Whatever the circumstance, whatever the difficulty, whatever the struggle – in all your striving could you actually be working AGAINST GOD AND NOT IN SUBMISSION TO HIM?

CAYSON ILLUSTRATION

Our 5 year old Cayson is the joy of our home. For those of you who don't know Cayson is our special needs child. He was born with down syndrome, but he doesn't have a disability – He has incredible ability – He has the ability to make us smile and laugh and enjoy life in ways we never would have without him.

He also is very active. He wants to see everything, touch everything, investigate everything. He moves non-stop. After lunch time my wife and I know that if we don't get him down for a nap that nighttime is probably going to be a little rough. He's going to get cranky and a little hard to handle if he doesn't get some rest. So, we will pick him up and lay down with him a minute to try and get him to close his eyes and rest. Often times we have to wrestle with him to get him to sit still, but once we get him still for a few minutes out he goes. It is just the getting him still part that takes some work.

There are so many people in our culture that are working and running and trying and fighting when what they really need is to rest in Jesus.

Today – stop fighting. Stop striving. Stop trying to fix all the issues. Stop trying to solve all the problems. Stop trying to control all the outcomes. You may actually be fighting what God really wants to do in your life.

JUST BE STILL AND KNOW THAT HE IS GOD.