

Psalm 46 - Week of August 14

Memory Verse Psalm 46:1

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

The threat of natural disasters are common in all areas of the world. Just in the United States there are many natural disasters we face. Along the west coast there is the threat of an earthquake. Along the east and gulf coasts hurricanes regularly damage property and take lives. And in the interior of our nation tornadoes, floods, and droughts occur with alarming frequency. Do you worry about these things? When there is a hurricane or tornado watch how do you respond? Are you fearful?

What about when there are wars or threats of war? Even now the news media bombards us with the latest threats exchanged in our country's simmering war of words with North Korea. Throw in tensions with China, Russia, Venezuela, and others countries and you may wonder how many wars we might be facing in coming days. How do you respond to the threats of war coming to our nation? How do you respond to the media's presentation of such news?

Psalm 46 helps us to deal with these kinds of fear - fears of natural disasters, fears of war. This Psalm has three stanzas, each marked by the musical term *selah*. Each stanza shares a reason why we do not have to fear such things.

The first stanza (verses 1-3) declares that we need not fear because God is our refuge and our strength. He protects us from the outside (refuge) and he gives us inner "strength" and resolve to fight fear. God will protect us either from the storms or give us strength through the storms. He is always with us ready to help us in our time of trouble.

The second stanza (verses 4-6) reminds us that we need not fear because our real home is secure. Compared to the turmoil seen in verses 2-3, these verses present quite a contrast. The city of God described in these verses will not fall. It will not fall to natural disasters, it will not fall to war. This is the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of God, heaven. No matter what happens in the world around us God remains on his throne.

If you are not a Christian, then the disasters we are talking about should cause you to fear. Natural disasters should cause the lost to fear. They are just one lightning bolt, one flash flood, one tornado away from eternity apart from God in hell. This fear the lost have is real and is intended by God to bring them to God. And when the lost turn to God, then they find there is no reason to fear, because the Lord is our refuge and strength and our real home is secure.

Lastly, the third stanza (verses 8-10) declares that we will not fear because we can be still and know God. This means we can turn over our worries to God and trust him. We also see in these verses that God will be victorious over His foes. There will always be wars on the earth. But one day, God will put an end to all wars. One day God will proclaim the final victory over all His foes.

The Bible says in the last days there will be natural disasters and wars. But God will be victorious. This is the reason we need not fear. We are living in the last days. Natural disasters occur regularly, and we hear about many of them. Wars are commonplace across the globe. And perhaps one day war will return onto our lands. Even so, we need not fear. The chorus of verses 7 and 11 succinctly sum up why - "The Lord almighty is with us, the God of Jacob is our fortress." God is with us, he will protect us, he will ensure the security of our eternal home, and we can trust Him and know Him. Therefore, whatever happens in the world around us, let Psalm 46 remind us that we need not fear!

-Written by Nathan Renfro