

PSALM 46

For the director of music. Of the Sons of Korah. According to alamothe. A song.

1 God is our refuge and strength,
an ever-present help in trouble.

2 Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way
and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea,

3 though its waters roar and foam
and the mountains quake with their surging.

4 There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God,
the holy place where the Most High dwells.

5 God is within her, she will not fall;
God will help her at break of day.

6 Nations are in uproar, kingdoms fall;
he lifts his voice, the earth melts.

7 The Lord Almighty is with us;
the God of Jacob is our fortress.

8 Come and see what the Lord has done,
the desolations he has brought on the earth.

9 He makes wars cease
to the ends of the earth.
He breaks the bow and shatters the spear;
he burns the shields with fire.

10 He says, 'Be still, and know that I am God;
I will be exalted among the nations,
I will be exalted in the earth.'

11 The Lord Almighty is with us;
the God of Jacob is our fortress.

Reflections on Psalm 46 The Unshakable Foundation of God

Introduction:

As we consider the state of the world we live in, where war and conflict seem to dominate every news channel, natural disasters impact people globally and where broken relationships are common within communities, we take a look at Psalm 46, which gives us the confidence that God is the unshakeable foundation in any and every circumstance.

Psalm 46 reminds us who God is and where our hope is found. We can remember God's goodness and faithfulness to us. No matter our circumstances, we still have a reason to praise.

We change, our situations change, but our God does not.

Day 1: The Unshakable God is My Refuge

Scripture:

Psalm 46:1-11

Malachi 3:6

'God is our refuge and our strength, our ever-present help in trouble'. – Psalm 46:1

'The Lord Almighty is with us; The God of Jacob is our fortress'. – Psalm 46:11

Thought:

Psalm 46. A declaration of worship from the nation of Israel, a Psalm of praise for God's strength and availability to his people at all times. Psalm 46 reflects on God's miraculous deliverance of his people and his unchanging nature in the most desperate of circumstances.

The words of this Psalm are a beautiful reminder that God does not abandon us when circumstances get difficult. He is right there with us, and he does not change. Our ever-present God is not vulnerable to the challenges of this world; his power and presence will not be compromised by shifting values, differing opinions or an unstable earth.

When the circumstances of life threaten to overwhelm us, we can find refuge and rest in our ever-present, unchanging God. We can hold on to the knowledge that God is with us and to the security of knowing that God's strength is not threatened either in natural disaster (Psalm 46:2-3) or in war (Psalm 46:8-9).

God has proven his ability to see and care for us. When we are open to him, he is not hard to see or perceive; he is near and accessible. We can trust that he is God with us and he will remain the same. Amidst chaos and destruction, he provides a place of safety, peace, and security.

We can find refuge in the Lord Almighty, our refuge and strength, our ever-present help in times of trouble.

Reflection:

Read the verses of Psalm 46 several times. These verses may be very familiar to you. Read them slowly and deliberately.

As you think about your life and the world in which you live, what does it mean to you to affirm that God is your refuge, your strength, is with you and will help you when you face trouble?

How does this make you feel?

What do you need to remember from your reflections on Psalm 46 today? Take some time to write or make a visual recording of your thoughts.

Prayer:

Heavenly Father,

In the midst of uncertainty, we find assurance in your unchanging presence. You are our refuge and strength, our fortress in times of trouble. May we find comfort in the certainty of your presence and the knowledge of your unfailing love.

Amen.

Day 2: The Unshakeable God Gives Me Courage

Scripture:

Psalm 46:1-11

‘Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea’.
- Psalm 46:2

Thought:

‘Therefore, we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea’.

We will not fear.

This is a bold claim. A claim that is not always easy to make a reality in our lives, especially when we see chaos, uncertainty, danger and suffering in our world, in our families or in our neighbourhood.

Fear is a natural human reaction, and it is a response that can propel us into thoughtless action or stop us from moving at all. Fear for our safety, fear of consequences, fear of the unknown. Fear can be paralysing.

There are times when the things happening around us, situations in our own lives or the stories we see in the news can feel too much to handle. We can find ourselves asking:

Where is God in all of this?

Why does God not stop this from happening?

What will happen to me and the people I love?

There are times when we won't understand what is going on around us. We can ask these questions but may never have the answers. There are times when being unafraid, brave and courageous just doesn't feel easy. But the goodness of God does not depend upon our feelings.

These are the times when we must lean on others who support us, those who stand in solidarity with us. When we hear trusted voices, voices of those we know and love, declaring God's goodness and faithfulness, we can find hope and strength in their confidence and love. When we surround ourselves with reminders of who God is and his promises to us, we can find the courage to keep trusting.

We don't have to fear. Why? Because God is our refuge, our strength, our help in times of trouble. And he is with us.

Reflection:

Listen to these songs. Listen not only to the words and music but to God's voice speaking into your life:

- His Provision: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vJVHy6SnL8Y>
- Bow the knee: <https://youtu.be/5NPkey1ZaqQ>
- Firm Foundation – Maverick City / Cody Carnes
- Whole world in his hands – Tim Hughes

These songs remind us that when we are at our most vulnerable, God is alongside us. Even when we have no answers to our questions and life makes no sense, God can still be trusted.

Are there things in your life right now, in the lives of people you love, or in the world that make it hard for you to say, 'I will not fear'?

Who are those trusted voices declaring the goodness and promises of God in your life?

Can you be a trusted voice for someone else? / Who needs you to be a trusted voice for them right now?

Prayer:

Dear Lord,

When everything around me feels confusing and scary, thank you that you are the unshakeable God who knows me and understands how I feel. You are the one who gives me the courage to face my fears and who helps to keep me going, even when life seems hard. I rest in the knowledge that you are with me.

Amen.

Day 3: I Can Trust My Unshakeable God

Scripture:

Psalm 46:1-11

Psalm 107

Psalm 116

Deuteronomy 26:5-11

Matthew 28:20

Thought:

'Come and see what the Lord has done.' – Psalm 46:8

The writer of Psalm 46 encourages us to remember what God has done and, as we remember, to learn to trust God for and with our future.

The people of Israel made space in their lives to remember, to call to mind the ways in which God had intervened in history for their good (Deuteronomy 26:5-11). It was a central point of their worship and it shaped their identity. Belief in a God who provides for the needs of the people, who reaches out and offers salvation, pervades the Old Testament and is brought to fruition in the New Testament through the saving work of Jesus.

We can remember that Jesus, God in human form, knows how it feels to face and navigate our difficulties. His presence with us (Matthew 28:20) and his knowledge of the human condition bring assurance. Jesus knows what it is to feel joy and to feel heartache, to weep with laughter and with sadness. He knows what it is to be tired, hungry and to celebrate.

When we come before God, we don't need to come with a sanitised, word-perfect version of what is on our heart. Jesus knows what it is to be human. We come as honestly as we can, knowing that he hears and understands us.

Reflection:

Spend some time reflecting on your life. You may choose to divide it into decades or significant periods. Call to mind the times when you were aware of God's presence.

Remember what God has done in and for you.

What can you learn from this that can bring assurance for the present and the future?

Prayer:

Dear Lord, as I recall your faithfulness to me in the past, I find assurance in your provision and salvation. Thank you that my current circumstances are not unknown to you. You are the unshakeable God, and I put my trust in you.

Amen.

Day 4: My Confidence is in the Unshakeable God

Scripture:

Psalm 46:1-11

Luke 24:13-35

'God says, "Be still and know that I am God"'. – Psalm 46:10

'The Lord Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress'. – Psalm 46:7,11

Thought:

Psalm 46 ends with a reminder that when we focus on God, we will see his power in every situation and at every stage of our lives. It reminds us that God is God, and God is with us. We are assured of God's presence even in those times when personal circumstances or world events take up so much of our life and energy that we find it hard to recognise that God is alongside us.

Like the disciples on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-35) there may be times when we do not recognise that God is with us or that God's presence, power and strength are sufficient for our needs. But God *is* there and even if none of our physical circumstances change, his presence, power and strength remain sufficient.

Our life and experience of the world is very different from that of the psalmist. Nevertheless, we can choose to claim the confidence that comes from knowing that God is, and will be, God.

Despite our fears, as we call to mind the work of God in history and in our own lives, we can be certain that God is the unshakeable foundation for every circumstance.

Reflection:

Arch R. Wiggins penned these words: '... when alone on the road, oppressed by my load, Jesus himself drew near and walked with me'.

What does that 'walking with' look like for you?

Prayer:

Dear Lord,

My confidence is in you and your absolute sovereignty over all things. Amidst life's challenges and uncertainties, help me to keep my eyes fixed on you, the unshakeable God. In your presence, I find rest and I claim this for me today.

Thank you, Jesus.

Amen.