

Hope in our times of trial – using Psalm 46 as a guide

Psalm 46 was written as a song of hope. It is about God's power and his presence in the lives of those who believe in him. It is saying that whatever we are facing, whatever perils are out there, we can find our peace with it through God. We can "be still" and know that he is God. God is there for us and waiting for us to place all our troubles upon him.

Our Lent studies this year followed a theme of hope. God's hope, which brings us unending love and guidance, freedom from our enemies, the companionship of God's Holy Spirit and the hope of an eternal life in the Kingdom of Heaven. God promises to help us through all we face and he will continue to do so, whatever enemy we are facing, until he returns or calls us home.

At this present time we are facing a new enemy, Covid-19. There is a battle being fought against this disease. We are putting our trust in the medical professionals and scientists to find ways forward to fight this enemy. But, at this time we can also put our trust in God to help us through. We can turn to God and pray that he will help guide those looking for answers. That he will give us the strength and courage to keep us positive.

God has promised help throughout the ages to all who believe. He promised to help all his followers to stand up to their fears, giving courage in times of trial. Through God's love for us, we can find peace in all things. Many have turned to scripture and the Psalm's to remind them of this. This particular Psalm was a favourite of the great reformer, Martin Luther. When his life was under threat he would sing this Psalm with a friend, because he truly believed in the words and that God would defend him and his followers against all the persecution they were facing.

Read through Psalm 46

Questions to reflect upon:

- How do you feel you have experienced God's help in the past?
- Why should we *not* fear in uncertain times?
- How would you describe the place where you normally "dwell" spiritually. Is it near God or a distance away?
- What do you feel is involved in being still before God?
- How does this make you feel?
- What truths about God will you claim from this Psalm in this present crisis?

Listen to or read the lyrics to Hillsong's "Still - When the Oceans Rise". This song mirrors some of the words from Psalm 46.

“Still – When the Oceans Rise”

Hide me now, Under Your wings
Cover me within Your mighty hand

When the oceans rise and thunders roar
I will soar with you above the storm
Father, You are King over the flood
I will be still and know You are God

Find rest my soul, In Christ alone
Know His power in quietness and trust

When the oceans rise and thunders roar
I will soar with you above the storm
Father, You are King over the flood
I will be still and know You are God

I will be still and know you are God

Psalm 46

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 shield 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.”

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