

## Whom shall we Fear?

Psalm 46: 1-7

This psalm has always been a favorite of mine. As I have dealt with adversity over the years it has brought great comfort and peace. Most agree the psalm was written during the time of the Assyrian siege on Jerusalem, while King Hezekiah reigned over Judah.

If that be the case, and we have no reason to doubt, the passage reveals a picture we need to see. Imagine being within the fortified walls of the great city of Jerusalem, and the enemy advancing by the thousands from the north. The Assyrians were especially ruthless in their tactics and brutal to their captives. I can imagine the inhabitants witnessing the fields of grain being ravaged by the advancing enemy, as they set fire to portions that were not consumed. Smoke would have been rising in the distance, as the Assyrians burned and pillaged the surrounding countryside and villages. Those within the city knew the Assyrians were notorious to encamp around cities, literally starving out their captives.

Clearly this would have been a discouraging and dismal scene, but in the midst of despair a song of hope shines through. Although they were surrounded, their hope was in God alone. As we discuss the [assurances](#) within the text, I want to consider the question: [Whom shall we Fear?](#)

**I. God is our Refuge (1-3)** – The passage opens with an emphatic and encouraging acknowledgement of God. The enemy may have surrounded them, but God was their refuge. The inhabitants were aware of:

**A. His abiding Presence (1)** – [God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.](#) Although surrounded by the enemy, Jerusalem was comforted with the abiding presence of God. He was their refuge, their place of security and protection. He was a very present help in their moment of affliction and trouble. The enemy was strong and well prepared, but Jerusalem enjoyed the protection and presence of God.

▪ While we may not be surrounded by an advancing army, seeking to destroy us, we do face adversity and conflict in life. We serve the same God Judah served. He remains a refuge and present help for those who belong to Him. We can depend on the Lord to show Himself mighty in our times of need.

**B. His comforting Peace (2-3)** – [Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea;](#) <sup>[3]</sup> [Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled,](#)

*though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Selah.* The Assyrians were a formidable and ruthless foe, feared by the nations. Most cowered in fear and submitted to their demands. Jerusalem was not prepared militarily to engage such an enemy, and yet they rested in the peace of God. God was present with them, and they were secure in Him. Such knowledge and faith brought an assuring peace to them. As long as God was near, they had nothing to fear.

- That is an easy principle to preach in the comfort of the sanctuary, but it is often difficult to practice when facing an intense storm or trial. We must be like those in Jerusalem, resting in the peace of God, knowing He will provide for His children. What have we to fear? We face nothing He doesn't allow, and certainly nothing He is unable to handle.

**II. God is our Rest (4-7)** – Knowing God was their refuge, the people were able to abide in rest, even though the enemy was near the gate. They rested in:

**A. God's Serenity (4)** – *There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most High.* This paints a beautiful picture of the peaceful rest the inhabitants of Jerusalem enjoyed. A torrent of hatred and violence raged without the city, but within they enjoyed a peaceful river that flowed from God. Now, naturally this did not speak of a literal river flowing within the city, but it does describe the serenity they felt, knowing they were secure in the hand of God. Even in the midst of great adversity, God allowed them to enjoy peace and rest in Him!

- Have we not enjoyed such provision during adversity as well? There have been seasons when it seemed the enemy raged around us, and yet the Lord provided calm serenity in His presence. The fear and anxiety we faced was replaced with peace available through His abundant grace. He is more than able to provide a refreshing stream in the midst of a dry, barren, hostile environment. *Psalm 23:1-3 – The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. [2] He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. [3] He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.*

**B. God's Stability (5a)** – *God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved.* Bear in mind, the enemy is close at hand. They are well aware of the brutality and abilities of the Assyrians. Most nations immediately submitted to their demands rather than facing them in battle. Those within Jerusalem knew a source of strength and provision that brought great stability to them. God stood mightily in their midst and they knew as long as He was there, the enemy would not prevail.

- There is much we face in life, but we are more than conquerors in Christ Jesus our Lord. There is absolutely nothing that can separate us from His love and provision. He faced every enemy we would ever encounter and He overcame them all triumphantly. We shall not be moved, though the enemy may roar and come against us!

**C. God's Sufficiency** (5b) – *God shall help her, and that right early.* They were not concerned or worried that God would wait too long to come to their aid. They rested knowing the Lord would provide immediate help for their need. He was well aware of the difficulty they faced, and He was more than able to provide for them.

- I know there are times when it appears that we have prayed and prayed, and yet there has been no answer. We are all tempted to think that God has abandoned us at times, but the Bible affirms that is never the case. Like those in days of old, the Lord will always provide for us, and He will always be on time. We have nothing to fear; God is keeping watch over us and ready to meet whatever need we have according to His divine will.

**D. God's Supremacy** (6) – *The heathen raged, the kingdoms were moved: he uttered his voice, the earth melted.* The Assyrians were greatly feared by the nations of the earth. Their advance was often viewed as a death sentence. Most submitted without confrontation, hoping for a bit of leniency and mercy. Jerusalem had a decided advantage – they served the Sovereign of the universe. None compared to His power. While enemies might destroy nations and enslave their captives, God had the power and ability to destroy all creation. None were able to stand against the hand of God. Judah knew as long as God was on their side, they would be victorious.

- There can be no doubt that we face a determined enemy. He will do all he can to silence the church and prevent the advancement of the kingdom. We are a decided minority in the world today. However, we serve the King of kings and Lord of lords. He created the earth and all it contains. There are none who rival His power. He already conquered death, hell, and the grave. He will come again in power and great glory to judge sin and Satan. We are safe within the hand of our Lord.

**E. God's Security** (7) – *The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah.* Up until this point, their song referred to Elohim. Now they sang of the LORD, Jehovah God, Yahweh. That is God's redemptive name and speaks of His deliverance. They also referred to the God of Jacob being their refuge. This served as a reminder of God's promise to Israel. They were His people and they rested knowing He would not forsake them or allow them to utterly perish. They rested in confidence, knowing they were secure in His mighty hand.

- That ought to bring comfort and assurance to us as well. We serve the Lord Jesus Christ. We are His purchased possession, secured as He bled and died to redeem us from sin. He has gone away to prepare a place for the saved, and He is coming again to take us with Him to dwell where He is. We may face physical death or suffering in this life, but nothing can separate us from the loving grip of our Lord. **John 10:28-29 – And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any *man* pluck them out of my hand. <sup>[29]</sup> My Father, which gave *them* me, is greater than all; and no *man* is able to pluck *them* out of my Father's hand.** We are safe and secure within the grace of our Lord.

**Conclusion:** I trust you have been encouraged and comforted through this passage today. While it was written at a different time, by Old Testament saints, the attributes of our Lord never change. He is the same yesterday, today, and forever. We rest in the same provision and care these did when facing the advance of Assyria. The saved by grace have nothing to fear. We are secure in Christ our Lord.

If you are burdened and facing difficulty, why not bring that to the Lord and receive the help only He can give. You too can enjoy a place of refuge and rest, even in the midst of great adversity. If you have yet to respond to the gracious offer of salvation, I urge you to heed the call and respond in repentance and faith. Jesus paid the debt you owed; salvation is available in Him.