


Heart to Heart with the Living God

Psalm 46

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

Bible scholars believe that this psalm was written following one of God's miraculous interventions on behalf of Jerusalem. ( 2 Chr. 20:1-30; 2 Ki.18-19) Known to be Martin Luther's favorite psalm, it formed the basis for one of the church's greatest hymns, "A Mighty Fortress is Our God."

Day 1: Read Psalm 46.

1. Write out Psalm 46:1 on an index card and make a point to meditate on it through out the week. As the week progresses use the chart below to record thoughts as well as ways that you see these truths playing out in your life.

God is my...

Refuge	
Strength	
Ever-present help	
Fortress	

2. a. Describe the "extreme adversity" the Psalmist is in the midst of.

b. What truths about God enable him to say "we will not fear" (v. 2) with such great confidence?
3. This psalm was not intended for personal use only, but also for use by the community. How have times of corporate worship helped you in times of trouble?

Day 2: Read Psalm 46.

4. What contrasts do you see between verses 2-3 and verses 4-5?
5. Why is the "city of God" secure? (v. 5)

*The  symbol indicates verses for further study.

6. What is the image of a river associated with in the Old Testament? (Gen. 2:10a; Ps. 1:3; Ps. 65:9-13)
 - a. What new meaning does Jesus bring to this image? (Jn. 4:4-14; Jn. 7:37-39)
 - b. How is the future river described in Revelation 22:1-5?

Day 3: Read Psalm 46.

7. What does God do in verse 6? What happens as a result? What does this reveal about him? (📖* Ps. 29:3-11)
8. What two things does the refrain in verses 7 and 11 affirm?
 - a. Why would this fill the Israelites with confidence?
 - b. Why can we be confident that God is with us? (Mt. 1:23; Mt. 28:20b; Jn. 14:16-17a; 2 Cor. 6:16)

Day 4: Read Psalm 46.

9. Because we live in an extremely unstable world, many people feel like their foundations are being shaken, and as a result seek refuge somewhere.
 - a. What areas of confidence and security have been shaken in your life?
 - b. Where do you tend to find refuge in times of trouble? (Ask yourself: Where do I feel safe, comforted, secure, beyond the reach of hardship, etc.?)
 - c. How do these places of refuge compare to what the Psalmist is talking about?
10. Verse 10 is God's rebuke to a restless, troubled world.
 - a. What does God command us to do in this verse?
 - b. What benefits do you think the Lord intends for us in doing this? (Ps. 131; Isa. 30:15)
11. While there were times of peace for Israel, verses 8-10 point forward to a lasting peace and the final eradication of war. Look at Isaiah 9:2-7 for a picture of that peace and who ushers in this unending reign of peace. Write down your findings.

Day 5: Read Psalm 46.

12. Look how Martin Luther unpacked this psalm in his hymn, "A Mighty Fortress is Our God."

1. A mighty fortress is our God,
a bulwark never failing;
our helper he amid the flood
of mortal ills prevailing.
For still our ancient foe
doth seek to work us woe;
his craft and power are great,
and armed with cruel hate,
on earth is not his equal.
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 Sabbath, his name,
from age to age the same,
and he must win the battle.
3. And though this world, with devils filled,
should threaten to undo us,
we will not fear, for God hath willed
his truth to triumph through us.
The Prince of Darkness grim,
we tremble not for him;
his rage we can endure,
for lo, his doom is sure;
one little word shall fell him.
4. That word above all earthly powers,
no thanks to them, abideth;
the Spirit and the gifts are ours,
thru him who with us sideth.
Let goods and kindred go,
this mortal life also;
the body they may kill;
God's truth abideth still;
his kingdom is forever.