

## A Song for the All Shook Up! (Psalm 46)

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My wife and I once observed a psychotic bird returning to our feeder every day for about a month. I did not say it was an “exotic” bird but a “psychotic” bird. The bird would sit on a perch and see a reflection of itself in the glass. Then, it would fly off its perch, hit the glass, and return to its perch once again. It would do this repeatedly, sometimes five

minutes at a time, until we would scare it away from the glass. Perhaps the bird was seeing his own reflection in the glass. Or maybe the bird needs to be examined by a bird clinic. I’m not sure what kind of bird it is, but I think it’s actually a dodo bird!

When I think of this bird flying against the glass, a bird that seems to be all shook up, I’m reminded how many Christians live this way. They can begin to bang their heads against the glass from a spiritual perspective. Christians can become overwhelmed with life, the trying circumstances they are facing today and what they might face in the future. We are living during uncertain times and uncertainty can result in fear. If we are not careful, we can allow fear to overtake and rule our hearts, which means we can become very shaky from a spiritual standpoint, since our heart is overcome with fear and anxiety.

- ✓ Are you all shaken up?
- ✓ Is your life bent out of shape?
- ✓ How do you keep your life from falling apart?

- ✓ How do you keep spiritual sanity when everything around you seems to be changing and when your life is filled with suffering and despair?
- ✓ How do you maintain spiritual stability when everything is changing around you?
- ✓ How do you keep yourself from being overcome with life-debilitating fear, sorrow, discouragement, and misery?
- ✓ How do you get up when we are down?
- ✓ What keeps you from falling over the edge and throwing in the towel?

The answer to all these questions is to experience God's spiritual refuge and peaceful stillness within your daily life. Psalm 46 reveals this to us in a very practical and personal way. This truly is a life-changing Psalm which can bring rest to our hearts, redirect our lives, and reaffirm our belief in God's sovereignty. It is a Psalm we need to claim during stressful and changing times and at all times!

The message of this Psalm is unmistakably clear: God takes care of His children in the time of trouble. It is generally agreed by most expositors that the historical background of the Psalm is the miraculous deliverance of Jerusalem when it was besieged by the Assyrian wolf - King Sennacherib. It seemed that all hope was lost for Jerusalem when the Assyrians came down to destroy the city and the people. However, God sent down an angel (one angel) to deal with the Assyrian army.

2 Kings 19:32-35 gives us the historical deliverance:

"Therefore thus saith the Lord concerning the king of Assyria, He shall not come into this city, nor shoot an arrow there, nor come before it with shield, nor cast a bank against it. By the way that he came, by the same shall he return, and shall not come into this city, saith the Lord. For I will defend this city, to save it, for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake. And it came to pass that night, that the angel of the Lord went out, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred fourscore and five thousand (185,000): and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses."

Only one angel and one night! That is all it took. And the army was no more! 185,000 Assyrians lay dead on the ground! In response to God's protection and safety, this Psalm was written and then sung. We must remember that the Psalms were the hymnbook of Israel. Psalm 46 reminds us that whenever disaster strikes in our lives, and when it seems that all hope is lost, that God is on our side. What

seems like a total disaster to us is actually an opportunity for God to work in our lives and express His own loving care and protection to us during times of trouble.

At this particular time when the Assyrians threatened the city, the people of Judah were very conscious of God's presence with them. They knew they needed His help and presence to calm their fears. Are we aware of God's presence in our lives? Have we been practicing the presence of God in our lives? Is God real to us today? Have we been allowing God's presence and life to enable us to deal with trouble in the daily routine of our lives and overcome fear?

Who will meet my needs and take care of me when everything is caving in and when life brings unexpected challenges and changes? It won't be the positive thinkers of our day or the teachings of the Wealth and Health Movement that will get us through life's difficulties. It won't be secular therapies, soothing stories, and the sweet talk of politicians who say, "Everything will be okay."

It can only be God, His sufficiency ("God is our refuge and strength" – vs.1) and sovereignty ("Be still and know that I am God" – vs. 10) that ultimately calms my fears and meets my spiritual needs in life. In this study, we will discover that it's only God's protection and peace that enables us to victoriously pass through the changes, storms of life, and hard times. It's only God that can rescue us from defeat and a downcast spirit. Time and time again the Bible teaches us that God is all we need!

2 Corinthians 3:5

"Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God."

The inscription of this Psalm says that it's "A Song for Alamo," which is a word that may refer to soprano voices. Psalm 46 is likely a wonderful soprano solo. It is not the country blues type of song, where a man whines and talks about losing women and drinking wine, but the hallelujah chorus in which we see the sufficiency of God, the security of God, the sovereignty of God, and the supremacy of God! It was a song or hymn of praise commemorating the victory that the city of Jerusalem had over the invading Assyrian armies.

It is said of Martin Luther that there were times during the dark and dangerous periods of the Reformation when he was terribly discouraged and depressed. But at such times he would turn to his friend and coworker, Philipp Melanchthon, and say, “Come, Philipp, let’s sing the forty-sixth Psalm.” What a song this is for each one of us today, who love God, and who are dependent upon Him to meet our deepest longings and needs. It’s a song for the “all shook up” or those who are shaken in life, feeling the weight of trials and hardship. Let’s not only study it together; let’s sing it together and let God’s hymnbook touch our hearts!

The message of Psalm 46 is clear: God takes care of His children in the time of trouble. We need to remember this in the midst of pandemics, problems, and personal perils that we might face today and in the future.

God’s takes care of His children in two ways.



### **I. God protects His saints (vv. 1-3)**

Psalm 46:1-3

“God *is* our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; *Though* the waters thereof roar *and* be troubled, *though* the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Selah.”

## **A. The explanation of God's protection (vs. 1)**

God's protection is described in several ways.

### **1. It's personal ("our")**

This is a very personal note for each Christian when the writer says that God is "our" refuge and strength. It's God and me! We walk together in life and we should find in Him complete sufficiency for daily living. You see, Christianity is a personal relationship with God. It's a one-on-one fellowship with the Lord. We have a personal relationship with Him and rely upon His power and strength in our own daily lives.

In times of trouble, we can count on God as we experience our personal and daily walk with Him! Many Christians fail to trust God in their times of trouble because they know little about His sufficiency. They have not learned that He is sufficient to meet their every need in life and fulfill their deepest longings. God is "our" refuge and strength. Have you personally claimed His abiding help and strength for your life? Are you walking close to God and depending upon Him for daily help and assistance? I think some Christians can live like atheists! Do you know why? It's because they have not developed a close and personal walk with God and discovered the secret of totally depending upon the Lord to meet their spiritual needs in life.

Philippians 4:19

"But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus."

### **2. It's provisional ("refuge")**

God's protection is compared to a refuge for His children in the storms of life. In other words, it is provisional in nature, supplying all the protection we need to face life's challenges and changes. God's sheltering presence provides for us, protects us, and preserves us through the storms of life. God is a stronghold or place of refuge where we can flee. He is a source of inner strength and refuge, which allows us to face the calamities of life and the temptations that the Devil brings our way. We have a "refuge" (shelter) in God, and He protects us from the

Devil's allurements and life's pressures by granting us His power and peace. Yes, He is our refuge.

We must remember that sometimes God physically shields us from danger, illness, and sickness and provides a refuge for us in this way.

Psalm 91:7

"A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; *but* it shall not come nigh thee.:

However, we also know that many times we are afflicted and do suffer in life. This is because God has not always promise to shield us from all physical suffering (2 Cor. 12:7; Phil. 2:25-30; 3:10). However, the Lord has promised to always provide us with a spiritual shield from the trials and tribulations of life that can harm and distress us.

Psalm 91:1

"He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty."

Psalm 91:4

"He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth *shall be thy* shield and buckler."

This is what the Psalmist seems to be suggesting in Psalm 46 since there will be calamities occurring all around us which might affect us physically but not harm or move us spiritually since He is our refuge (Ps. 46:2). In all situations of life, we still discover that God is our "refuge" – a shelter in the time of storm. He always protects and preserves us from spiritual defeat and keeps our hearts from failing. This is why Martin Luther wrote the well-known and beloved words which came from this text:

"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.”

No part of Luther’s hymn is as close to Psalm 46 as the first stanza, which calls God “a mighty fortress” and “a bulwark” in trouble. God is the One who enables us to pass through life without being spiritually scathed. Many people today base their security or “refuge” on money, family, friends, training, business connections, personal talents, specialized skills, and their education to see them through life. This is foolishness. Let us never forget that God is the only One who is unshakable and trustworthy.

### **3. It’s powerful (“strength”)**

God’s protection stems from His power for God is also said to be our “strength.” What we need for daily living is unlimited spiritual strength and power to get us through life. I need divine power (God’s power) to give me ability, stability, and tranquility during life’s trials and tests. As I mentioned, Psalm 46 was Martin Luther’s basis for the Reformation hymn “A Mighty Fortress Is Our God.” As Luther reflected on the strength of God, he wrote: “We sing this psalm to the praise of God, because God is with us and powerfully and miraculously preserves and defends his church and his word against all fanatical spirits, against the gates of hell, against the implacable hatred of the devil, and against all the assaults of the world, the flesh and sin.”

The answer to gaining victory and keeping our spiritual sanity in life is God’s power! As we move to New Testament teaching and terminology, we know that we possess God’s power which resided within us.

2 Peter 1:3

“According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue.”

### **4. It’s present (“A very present help in trouble”)**

God’s protection is always present and available to help us through life. What kind of trouble have you been going through? Of course, we all have virus trouble in

2020 but we also have the trouble of communism being pushed upon America. In addition, we also have other afflictions and hardships that we might be passing through individually and personally which are related to business, illness, and age.

James Montgomery Boice said:

“God is our help even if the worst imaginable calamities should come upon us.”

Beloved, this Psalm reminds us that we should live in the present tense and realize that God provides for us in the present tense. God is never late when it comes to assisting us and empowering us. He is a “very present help in the time of trouble.” I’m reminded by this statement that Christianity is a daily matter – a moment by moment dependence upon God.

“Never a trial that He is not there,  
Never a burden that He doth not bear,  
Never a sorrow that He doth not share,  
Moment by moment, I’m under His care.”

We can possess the complete confidence that the Lord is with us and ready to assist us at every moment we face calamity and trouble. What kind of trouble have you been passing through? The promise of Scripture is that God is a very present help in the time of trouble. As we face our trials, God will be with us to enable us to pass through them peacefully and victoriously.

## **B. The result of God’s protection (vv. 2-3)**

### **1. The result is given: “Therefore will not we fear” (2a).**

The conjunction “therefore” is looking back to what was just said. The banishment of fear in our lives is the blessed result of God’s protection. When we allow God’s refuge, strength, and help to sooth our soul we will have our fears silenced. In doing this, we will be practicing the presence of God.

David knew about this when he wrote in the beloved Psalm 23:4: “Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.” God is the answer and antidote to fear. Our relationship *with* Him and reliance *upon* Him is all we need!



The great Scottish preacher, John McNeill, said that during his childhood he had to walk a long-distance home every evening, and his route led through a forest with a large ravine. Reports said that wild animals and gangs of robbers were often seen in that area. Great fear would seize his heart as he made his way past the spooky- looking trees. He recalled, "One night it was especially dark, but I was aware that something or someone was moving slowly and quietly toward me. I was sure it was a robber. When a voice called out, its eerie tone struck my heart with fear. I thought I was finished. Then came a second call. This time I could hear the voice saying, 'John, is that you?' It was my father. He had known of my fear and had come out to meet me."

We have a wonderful God that comes to meet us in the dark times of our lives. When everything seems scary – God is there! "Therefore will not we fear." In other words, we will not be overcome by debilitating fear. Fear can overtake our hearts and paralyze us from a spiritual perspective, but God's refuge can deliver us from this type of plaguing and paralyzing fear. If we apply the provision of God to our lives who is said to be "our refuge and strength") we will not allow fear to overcome and destroy us.

Fear overtakes my heart when I refuse to place confidence in God's provision for my life. When I fear, I am overcome with doubt, dread, discouragement, and despair because of the circumstances that I am facing.

Psalm 56:3

"What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee."

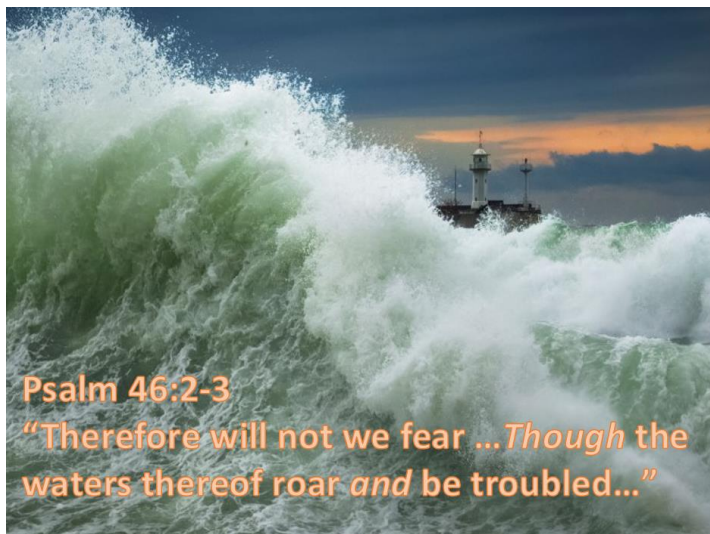
I once saw a book that was titled: "Jesus, I'm scared." The title strikes at the core of our heart since fear is part of our natural human response to difficulties and hard times. However, what we do with this human response will mean the difference between defeat and victory. Will we turn our fears over to the One who is our refuge and strength? Will we trust in God's provision to give us grace and peace to pass through our difficult time? When we experience God's provision for our lives, we will not be overtaken by plaguing fear.

Psalm 27:1

"The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?"

## 2. The illustration is given (2b-3).

Our Psalm likens the troublesome times that we experience to the convulsions or upheavals of nature. God's presence with His ancient Jewish people and the city of Jerusalem became their security and defense. Although great calamities were occurring all around them with the invasion of the Assyrian armies, which are being compared to natural disasters occurring on earth, the city would remain secure.



Psalm 46:2-3 goes on to say:

“...though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Selah.”

The language of this verse is obviously intended to be hyperbole or a figure of speech.

Life's difficulties are compared to the convulsions of nature. Using the figure of a catastrophic earthquake, the Psalmist describes how great the perils are that come into our lives. It was one way the writer could describe the experience of the Jews as they witnessed the Assyrian armies surrounding Jerusalem.

The illustration is given of tremendous earthquakes that cause the “earth to be removed” and “the mountains to be carried into the midst of the seas” and the “waters thereof” to “roar and be troubled” (flood waters) and the “mountains to shake.” This is referring to earthquakes so powerful they alter the face of the earth and cause the ground to completely collapse beneath people. Hurricanes so strong and long-lasting that even the mountains are immersed in water. Massive tidal waves or tsunamis repeatedly crashing against the land. Fiery volcanic eruptions from mountains surging or swelling with lava.

Prophetically, these violent disasters may point to the Day of the Lord (Tribulation Period) when God's judgment will fall upon the earth, leading up to the return and

reign of Christ. Scripture repeatedly warns that God will exercise His power over the forces of nature when He pours out His wrath on a world that has rejected Him and His Son (Is. 24:18–23; Nah. 1:2–8; Re. 6:12–17; 11:13, 18–19).

Nevertheless, these natural phenomena are designed to illustrate how difficult life's trials can often be. The figure of the earth shaking, the mountains sliding into the seas, and the storm-tossed seas picture a terrible disaster. These convulsions of nature represent the difficult times that we face in our lives. Life can shake us up at times! Life can become shaky all around us! We can become overwhelmed and sense that the bottom drops out of our life. This is why Psalm 46 is a song for those who are shook up!

Friends, it is not a matter of “if” some shaking experience will come into our lives, it's a matter of “when” it comes into our lives. One of us is next. Are you ready to rest in God's provision and sovereignty? The “shaking” experiences will come; however, it's wonderful to contemplate that when everything seems to be moving, shaking, and changing around us, God does not change! And we can be sure that His provision is constant and sure since He is our refuge and strength! The Lord's presence, comfort and power are all that I need to face the raging storms of life.

Matthew 14:30

“But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me.”

The Lord saves us from winds and the waves of trial and tribulation. These poetic allusions of earthquakes destroying the earth and mountains teach some important lessons. Since the earth and mountains are regarded by men as symbols of stability, when they are destroyed, this normally results in great terror. However, the application to us is clear. When the most stable things in our lives become unstable, there should be no fear (“therefore will we not fear”) because of the strength and stability that God brings into our lives.

This word “Selah” in Psalm 46:3 is actually a technical musical term showing pause or interruption in a musical piece. In our Christian life, it means that we are stop, pause, and ponder what is being said! It's as if the writer is saying, “There, what do you think of that!” God really is our refuge during the storms of life! We need a

few more “Selah” moments in our lives during these troubling days and times and when we face difficult times. We need to pause and ponder what God is saying to us from His Word. Folks, God isn’t in a hurry! However, we often are in a hurry and don’t meditate on God’s truth, and allow it to become manna to our soul. We need to pause and ponder about the wonderful provision we have been given to live free from paralyzing fears that defeat our spiritual lives.

Psalm 34:4

“I sought the Lord, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears.”

A large, old Bible, frequently used by Abraham Lincoln during the critical years of the Civil War, falls open easily to the 34th Psalm. If you examine that page, you will note that it is smudged at one spot. It seems obvious that the long, tapering fingers of the great emancipator often rested heavily on the fourth verse (Psalm 34:4), which reads: "I sought the Lord, and He heard me, and delivered me from all my fears." Lincoln had obviously come to realize that God is a mighty refuge. The awareness of His presence had undoubtedly garrisoned the President's heart during his most severe difficulties and trials.

When the famous author Robert Louis Stevenson was a little child, he accidentally locked himself in his room and could not get out. As darkness came on, he became terror-stricken. Fear overtook his heart. When his father was unable to open the door, he sent for a locksmith; but while he waited, he talked to his son through the keyhole. Hearing his dad's soothing conversation and knowing he was there was all young Robert needed. In a similar way, God is all we need. His provision of strength and help is available to us on a constant and daily basis to calm our fears and provide us with comfort and peace.

“Of-times I’ve tried to live my life according to thy will  
When darkness comes, it’s difficult to rest and just be still.  
But Lord you are my shepherd who guides me in the way  
And I have learned this glorious truth, If I Your Word obey.  
You’re all I need, You’re the Lord of everything  
All I need, This is why humbly sing,  
Your strength is sustaining and Your grace has made me free,  
You’re my hearts lone desire, You’re all I need.”

## II. God provides for His saints (vv. 4-11)

Psalm 46:4-11

*“There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most High. God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her, and that right early. The heathen raged, the kingdoms were moved: he uttered his voice, the earth melted. The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah. Come, behold the works of the LORD, what desolations he hath made in the earth. He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; he burneth the chariot in the fire. Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth. The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah.”*



In the second major point of our study, we once again recognize that God takes care of His children in the time of trouble. This is seen in His daily provision for their lives. Notice the three-fold description of God's provision in these verses.

### a. Supply (“There is a river” - 4)

The “river whose streams shall make glad the city of God” (Ps. 46:4) may allude to the tunnel (underground water system) that King Hezekiah built to guarantee a continuous water supply for Jerusalem in times of war.

2 Chronicles 32:30 records:

“This same Hezekiah also stopped the upper watercourse of Gihon, and brought it straight down to the west side of the city of David. And Hezekiah prospered in all his works.”

The reference to the “river” could also mean that the very presence of God in Jerusalem was similar to that of a refreshing life-giving river. We can't be sure on the exact meaning. I'm inclined to think this is a literal reference to the water

supply for Jerusalem. No matter which way we understand this river, we know that it does in some sense represent God's supply for His children. God provides for us by giving us the strength that we need to make it through our difficult and trying circumstances. Through the presence of God, the power of God, and the promises of God we have His unending aid and assistance which is compared to a river. There is a river! Thank the Lord for His abundant supply which enables us to overcome fear and live victoriously.

“Like a river, glorious is God's perfect peace,  
Over all victorious in its bright increase;  
Perfect yet it floweth fuller every day,  
Perfect yet it growth deeper all the way.  
Stayed upon Jehovah hearts are fully blest;  
Finding as He promised perfect peace and rest.”

Of course, many Psalms also have prophetic overtones attached to them. They often depict an historical fulfillment but also look ahead to a future fulfillment. Psalm 46 does this as it looks ahead to the Millennial Kingdom, and the peace that Jesus Christ will bring on earth, when He returns as the King. Therefore, the “river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God” is also looking ahead to the river that will flow forth from Jerusalem during the Millennial Kingdom and bring refreshing water to the people of God. The prophets Ezekiel and Zechariah spoke of waters flowing out of the sanctuary of God (Eze. 47:1–12; Zech. 14:8–9).

Zechariah 14:8-9 declares:

“And it shall be in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea: in summer and in winter shall it be. And the Lord shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one Lord, and his name one.”

In the coming day, the Jewish people of God will experience God's supply of water in the earthly Jerusalem, as Hezekiah did, and they will also enjoy the presence of God with them in the person of the King Himself – Jesus Christ. So, there is a historical and prophetic fulfillment to this Psalm. However, there is a practical application of this Psalm to our lives today. The river of God's supply is always available to us to refresh us, revive us, and reinvigorate us in life.

Jesus promised in John 4:14:

“But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.”

“There is a river, and it flows from deep within  
There is a fountain, that frees the soul from sin.  
Come to this water; there is a vast supply  
There is a river, that never shall run dry.”

Yes, there is the river or water of God’s constant provision and supply.

There are two important details about God’s supply.

➤ **The result of God’s supply = gladness (“glad” – 4a)**

Historically speaking, we can be sure that the river, which carried water from the Gihon spring outside the city to a cistern inside the walls, brought great joy to the people of God (“shall make glad the city of God”). So, when the invading Assyrian armies besieged Jerusalem, the unstoppable stream of water made the whole city glad. As the water continued to flow into Jerusalem, even during the invasion of the Assyrians, it made “the city of God” (Jerusalem) glad and the people were filled with overflowing joy.

In a similar way, God makes His own people (saints) glad and joyful through His continuous provision during the times of trouble. There is always the river of God’s provision in our lives. His protection, care, and strength that He gives to us flows like a river into our lives and it’s a river that will never run dry. It’s also a river that produces great joy and gladness in our souls during the difficult seasons of our lives. 1 Peter 1:8 likens this gladness to “joy unspeakable and full of glory.”

Are you sad today? Yes, there are times when sadness naturally comes into our lives – a loss of a loved one, a difficult relationship, a heavy economical loss. But this is talking about a sadness that overtakes a joyful spirit, a depression that sets into our lives, a sorrow that overcomes our spiritual gladness we can experience in our relationship with God.

Psalm 42:11 asks this very question:

“Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? (to be filled with inner noise, murmuring, and trouble) hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God.”

In other words, be glad! Discover God’s joy in the midst of your difficult times. Possess God’s inner joy even during the times of affliction and when the trials you are facing are not favorable (“having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost” - 1 Thess. 1:6).

“Oh, say, but I’m glad, I’m glad,  
Oh, say, but I’m glad,  
Jesus has come and my cup’s overrun;  
Oh, say, but I’m glad.”

This is a real gladness and joy that stems from our personal walk and relationship with God, relying upon Him during trials and enjoying His daily presence in our lives.

Psalm 31:7 declares:

“I will be glad and rejoice in thy mercy: for thou hast considered my trouble; thou hast known my soul in adversities.”

Psalm 64:10 adds:

“The righteous shall be glad in the Lord, and shall trust in him; and all the upright in heart shall glory.”

God supplies our every need and this is comparable to a continual flow of water (Ps. 46:4). Like a running river, God’s grace has no limit (“my grace is sufficient for thee” - 2 Cor. 12:9). The Lord continually supplies us, sustains us and satisfies us during the down times and the difficult situations we face in life. This, in return, produces gladness in life and overflowing joy. The supply of God’s provisional grace brings gladness into our lives! When you see a Christian, who is experiencing inner joy and gladness, you can be sure that grace is at work in his life. The river is flowing!



➤ **The place of God's supply ("tabernacles of the most High" – 4b)**

The "holy place" within Jerusalem is where God made His presence known. Since God abode, or tabernacled in Jerusalem, the city enjoyed great security and the continuous supply of God. His children could find God's provision knowing the tabernacle of God's presence was dwelling among them. There is a very important lesson to learn as we move from the Old Covenant to the New Covenant. In the past, God made His tabernacle of dwelling place in Jerusalem, but today He tabernacles or abides within our hearts. God in us is the place of provision!

Philippians 2:13

"For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."

God is working in us today and He is still identified as "the most High." This is a reference to God who sits on the throne of the universe as Creator, Sustainer, Supreme Authority, and Giver of Life to all. It takes the Highest to intercede for the lowest! I need to go straight to the top to receive help for my daily living and as I face trouble.

Hebrews 4:16

"Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."

Cannot the "most High" God meet all of our needs and solve all of our problems in life? I cannot go any higher than God. There is no one else, or anything else that is greater than Him, higher than Him, and stronger than Him.

Psalms 121:1

"I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help."

"Higher hands are leading me  
I am not alone I know  
As I walk this world below  
For Higher hands are leading me."

**b. Stability ("shall not be moved" – vs. 5)**

The fact that the city of Jerusalem “shall not be moved” speaks of stability. When something cannot be touched and moved it’s because it’s stable and strong. As God protected Jerusalem against the invading Assyrian hordes, so He protects us against the fears, which seek to invade our lives. As a result, we can have stability in life. This means we can remain stable instead of being vulnerable to Satan’s attacks and life’s pressures. We can live life without going under and drowning in defeat and sorrow. Many Christians live a roller coaster life. They possess the up and down syndrome. In other words, they don’t have very much stability simply because they are not relying on God’s strength and supply to meet their spiritual needs. Is this a picture of your life today? If so, you can stop the roller coaster ride by practicing the presence of God and relying on Him to meet all your spiritual needs and calm your fears.

“In my Christ abiding, I shall not be moved;  
In His love I'm hiding, I shall not be moved,  
Just like a tree that's planted by the waters,  
Lord, I shall not be moved.”

How can we remain stable in life?

➤ **By experiencing God’s presence (“God is in the midst of her”) – 5a**

God was in the midst of Jerusalem when the invading Assyrian armies came upon the city to overtake it. King Sennacherib attempted to besiege and capture Jerusalem but failed to do so. The reason for the victory was God dwelt within the city. His presence was there, and this means His children were not defeated. 185,000 Assyrians were struck dead by the angel of the Lord.

This incident reminds me that deism is not a Biblical philosophy. Deism is the concept that God is not really involved with the affairs of this life. I don’t find this teaching anywhere in my Bible. I find that “God is in the midst of her.” The same is true for us today in a new and wonderful way. God lives within us since we are “an habitation of God through the Spirit” (Eph. 2:22). Since God is with us, we can overcome the repeated invasions of the Devil and his fiery darts (Eph. 6:16) and all the other fiery trials (1 Pet. 4:12) that we face in life. God is with us! God within us and with us makes all the difference.

Let me reiterate once again. God is with us! For this reason, the Bible says “she shall not be moved” which means that Jerusalem will be protected and not become a city for spoil and defeat. God made sure that Jerusalem was not overtaken by the enemy because of His abiding presence within the city. Again, the same is true for His Church today. We do not have to be moved from our spiritual position when we are trusting in God’s provision. Not being moved in life means that all of our enemies, including the Evil One (the devil) cannot harm us. The Devil’s power is great, but it is not greater than God who keeps His children spiritually stable and steadfast during the time of temptation and trials.

“And though this world, with devils filled,  
Should threaten to undo us,  
We will not fear, for God has 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.”

➤ **By experiencing God’s help (“God shall help her”) – vs. 5b**

We are a needy people. We need God’s spiritual assistance and refreshing. He is with us, so He can help us. He is with us, so He can sustain us. When we come to the end of our resources, it’s then that we begin to know His resources, and God’s resources are without measure. When it comes to God’s help, He gives, and He gives, and gives again. This is especially seen in God’s working with His saints today.

John 1:16

“And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace.”

“His love has no limit, His grace has no measure,  
His power no boundary known unto men,  
For out of His infinite riches in Jesus,  
He giveth and giveth and giveth again.”

God helped Jerusalem and when the morning dawned (“right early”). The angel of the Lord decimated 185,000 Assyrian soldiers and sent Sennacherib home (Isaiah 37:36). The break of day represents the moment when God delivers us from trouble. Morning (“right early”) is sometimes depicted in Scripture as a time of hope and renewal. Times of severe trouble are likened to dark nights, and the dawning of a new day marks the end of a long period of suffering (Ex. 14:27; Ps. 30:5; Lam. 3:22–23). Joy comes in the morning! Our dark night of trial will not last forever. The sun will rise in God’s timing, our season of suffering will end, and we will bask in the joy of God’s eternal day.

All of this reminds us that God is with us and helps us so we can be spiritually victorious in life, so we can remain stable and not suffer defeat. We have seen that God provides for us in that He supplies our spiritual needs, gives us stability in life, and ultimately success over the enemy as we will observe in the final portion of our study of Psalm 46. Beloved, we don’t have to drift and lose our way. We do not have to plummet into the depths of sorrow, discouragement, and defeat when we experience God’s provision.

2 Corinthians 4:8-9 reminds us that God is always with His people:

*“We are troubled (afflicted) on every side (everywhere we look there is trouble), yet not distressed (not overcome with debilitating and life-altering distress); we are perplexed (to be at loss mentally – to have no way out), but not in despair (to be utterly at loss, despondent). Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down (weighed down, heavy, or burdened), but not destroyed.”*

Yes, we might be knocked down, but we should never be knocked out! This is because God is our constant companion in life that puts a shield around us for spiritual protection and He is our God of spiritual provision. As a result, we can experience His constant supply in our life, spiritual stability, and success which means we can live on the victory side of life. This brings us to our third description of God’s provision and supply for our lives.

### **c. Success - victory (vv. 6-11)**

Psalm 46:6-11

“The heathen raged, the kingdoms were moved: he uttered his voice, the earth melted. The LORD of hosts *is* with us; the God of Jacob *is* our refuge. Selah. Come,

behold the works of the LORD, what desolations he hath made in the earth. He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; he burneth the chariot in the fire. Be still, and know that I *am* God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth. The LORD of hosts *is* with us; the God of Jacob *is* our refuge. Selah.”

Psalm 46:6-11 reveals the victory that we have because God is on our side. We are victors - not victims! We can live victoriously as we experience God’s spiritual refuge in our life and His stillness or peace that comes from expressing faith in His providential and sovereign ways connected with our life.

Our victory is illustrated in three ways.

### **1. God rescues His saints (vs. 6)**

Psalm 46:6

“The heathen raged, the kingdoms were moved: he uttered his voice, the earth melted.”

The “heathen raged” is a reminder that the nations raised their fury against Jerusalem, but God interceded and brought victory for His saints (“the kingdoms were moved, he uttered his voice, the earth melted”). When the Assyrians, along with other various nations, kingdoms, and peoples that the Assyrians had conquered, lifted themselves up in opposition to God and Israel, the Lord overthrew them. The Bible says that His mighty word caused the “kingdoms” to be “moved” and the earth to melt (“the earth melted”). The kingdoms being moved and the melting of the earth are figurative descriptions depicting the awesome power of God in defeating His enemies.

Historically, God totally destroyed the Assyrian armies and other heathen nations and kingdoms coming to destroy the city of Jerusalem. We would say today, “God cleaned their clock!” He gave them a decisive beating and defeat and rescued His beloved saints in Jerusalem. God totally destroyed the Assyrian armies and other heathen nations and kingdoms coming to destroy the city of Jerusalem. We would say today, “God cleaned their clock!” He gave them a decisive beating and defeat and rescued His beloved saints in Jerusalem. Prophetically, this will occur at the Second Coming of Christ to earth when He destroys the untold millions of troops in Palestine (Rev. 19:11-21).

As mentioned previously, this Psalm also moves from history to prophecy. What happened historically to the Assyrians will one day happen again when Jesus Christ returns to earth as the King to rescue His beloved people - the nation of Israel.

Psalm 2:1-5 prophetically anticipates this:

“Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, *saying*, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision. Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure.”

Revelation 19:15-16 also envisions this prophetic scene:

“And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.”

Psalm 46:6 reminds us that God knows how to rescue His saints! Of course, there are times He rescues us from a physical perspective, but many times He allows us to pass through the physical hardships, while rescuing us from a spiritual perspective by granting us victory over the evil ways and wrongdoings of our enemy.

2 Peter 2:9 is the New Testament counterpart:

“The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished.”

Yes, we are assured of the victory!

2 Corinthians 2:14 says:

“Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place.”

If you are living in defeat today, you are living beneath your privileges. God has made a way for His children to escape temptation and pass through the trials and tests of life.

1 Corinthians 10:13 reminds us:

“There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man (common trials): but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able (controlled pressures); but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it” (conquering grace).

God’s way of escape is not necessarily a physical escape from trouble but a spiritual escape. We escape temptation and trials through God’s enabling grace. God’s strengthening and sustaining grace enables us “to bear” our temptation and pass through it victoriously. This seems to be the real intent and meaning of this passage. God knows how to deliver His people from their enemies. As Psalm 46:6 says, God knows how to move the kingdoms and melt the earth so His saints can be rescued and delivered from their enemies.

Psalm 18:3

“I will call upon the LORD, *who is worthy* to be praised: so shall I be saved from mine enemies.”

## **2. God reassures His saints (vv. 7-11)**

In these remaining verses, God reassures His saints of their victory. God’s presence and power provides us with success or victory over our enemies and this is the reassurance we need today with the perilous rise of communism in America, with the pressures of life in general, and the perplexing problems we face.

My wife and I were recently at a country farmer’s market called “Roots.” The vendors place their products in front of you so that you will buy them. We were passing by a sticky bun vendor who had delicious sticky buns that were designed to tempt you and get you to buy them. I said to her, “You know, you sure know how to tempt a person. It’s hard to pass by these sticky buns and not buy one.” Her response was rather comical, “Why would you want to?” In other words, who in their right mind would not stop and buy one of these scrumptious buns. But you know, the Devil often temps us in this way by asking us the same question: “Why would you? Why would you want to pass by this wonderful thing that I am

offering you? It will be fun and make your day.” It’s during these times that we need to remember our victory which the Lord has given to us.

God reassures His saints of the victory.

#### **a. There is victory through God’s presence (vs. 7)**

Psalm 46:7

“The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah.”

He repeats the same message in Psalm 46:11: “The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge.” The word “refuge” in these verses is different than in verse one. It refers to a defense, stronghold, or fortress. This provides us with great assurance. The God of all the angelic hosts of Heaven is with us. The Creator and Leader of the angelic beings of Heaven, the great God of all creation and the universe is our companion in life. He is by our side, waiting to help us through our perils and problems that we face in life. Selah! Now what do you think of that! Pause and ponder how the great God of Heaven and eternity is with us! With God on our side, we are winners - we are victors!

William McDonald wrote:

“The One who is infinitely high is also intimately nigh.”

Instead of fearing and fretting, we should remember that we do not face the situation alone, but with God’s presence and help. On the day he died John Wesley had already nearly lost his voice and could be understood only with difficulty. But at the last with all the strength he could summon, Wesley suddenly called out, “The best of all is, God is with us.” Then, raising his hand slightly and waving it in triumph, he exclaimed again with thrilling effect, “The best of all is, God is with us.”

#### **b. There is victory through God’s power (vv. 8-9)**

Psalm 46:8-9

“Come, behold the works of the Lord (works of destruction among the heathen nations), what desolations he hath made in the earth (astonishing things God has done throughout the earth). He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth;



he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; he burneth the chariot in the fire.”

Of course, this event happened on a local level and throughout the locally inhabited earth, when God destroyed the Assyrian soldiers, who were invading Israel. However, the teaching of this verse leaps the centuries and also envisions the End Times, when Jesus Christ will return as the King of Kings to planet earth to destroy the armies of Armageddon (Rev. 19:17-20) who are hell-bent on destroying the Jewish people. The King will then bring peace to a war-stricken world, a peace that will last for 1,000 years (Rev. 20:1-3). What a glorious day and time it will be!

Micah 4:3 declares:

“And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks (farming implements): nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.”

The message is clear. God is a God of victory! But the good news is this. We too can share in God’s victory, just as He gave victory to the Jews over the Assyrians and will provide victory over their enemies in the future. We too can possess victory, over the world, the flesh, and the Devil. We can have spiritual victory even through the advancements of socialism, Marxism, and Communism. We can have victory through our problems, heartaches, and difficulties. The victory is ours as we pass through trials and tribulations of all kinds. This is because God’s power is real and when we apply it to our hearts and lives, we experience victory instead of defeat. We don’t have to live like spiritual paupers and misfits!

“Come, behold the works of the LORD” (Psalm 46:8). His desolations, making wars to cease, the breaking of the enemies bows and shields and the burning of their chariots speak of God’s total power over the enemy and the victory He provides for His saints. When Jesus returns in His Second Coming, He will destroy communism, evil, the Devil’s hold on the earth, and bring peace. Of course, today we don’t always see the evil taken out of the way. Nevertheless, God is still our victory causing us to triumph over our enemies and as we pass through very difficult times in life. When we see God, as the great Victor, we also know that the

victory is ours, since the Lord is the One who gives us the victory through His power.

Ephesians 6:10

“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.”

The Lord works His victory through our lives!

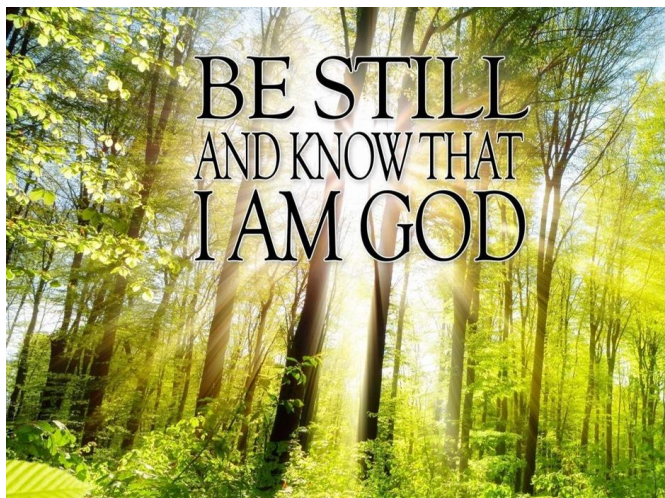
1 Corinthians 15:57

“But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

It’s only through God’s power and strength that we can live victoriously and triumphantly. In other words, it’s the Lord working in us and through us that brings us victory as we pass through enemy territory and face the many spiritual struggles related to trials. We have no victory outside of God’s power. We are losers without Him and winners with Him! Let us never forget we are on the victory side!

“On the victory side, On the victory side;  
No foe can daunt me, No fear can haunt me,  
On the victory side,  
On the victory side, On the victory side;  
With Christ within, the fight we’ll win,  
On the victory side.”

### c. There is victory through God’s peace (vv. 10-11)



Psalm 46:10-11

“Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth. The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah.”

This is a proclamation that God exists and that God can be known. It is one of the most beloved verses in

the Bible. I have several wall plaques that have beautiful scenery and contain the words of Psalm 46:10 – “Be still, and know that I am God.” In essence, this statement means to rest in God’s sovereign purpose and plan. To be still speaks of resting in God, or experiencing inner peace, as the Lord works out His ways and will in connection with our lives.

In this verse there is a *past* historical statement. God called on His ancient Jewish people to “be still” while He utterly annihilated the Assyrian hordes surrounding Jerusalem. The psalmist exhorts the saints to observe the saving mighty deeds of God. But there is also a *prophetic* statement that anticipates Messiah’s call to Israel in the future when He returns in His Second Coming to destroy the troops in Palestine. They are to be still while He engages in battle, brings peace to planet earth, and rules over the heathen or Gentile nations during the Millennial Kingdom. Of course, there is also a *practical* statement which has application to our lives today. We must be still in the sovereign works of God in the world and with our own personal lives.

The practical side of this Psalm is how we can experience peace in our hearts and lives.

How do we experience peace?

➤ **We relax in God’s sovereignty – “Be still and know that I am God” - 10**

In the hustle and bustle of today’s living, many Christians do not find the time to be still, experience His peace, and know God in a more real and intimate way. Our accelerated tempos and schedules can keep us from being still and knowing God. How can we “Be still and know God” during times of sorrow and pain? How can we come to know God in a deeper and more personal way than we have before? How can our acquaintance with God become more real? How well do we really know God? How real is He to us? The answer to these questions lies in the truth of getting to know God’s character and ways and believing that God always does what is right and in accordance with His character (Isa. 55:8-9).

At this point, I want to give the basic definition and understanding for being still and knowing God. To “be still and know God” means to experience rest and peace in God’s character and providential ways. It is to know God *intimately* as we experience His life in ours, but it also means to know God *providentially* as He

performs His works in relation to the world and our own personal lives. We can only find rest when we know or realize that God never makes mistakes and that He always does what is right in the world and with our own personal lives.

Within this context, to “Be still and know that I am God” follows the statements of God destroying the evildoers and bringing peace on earth (Ps. 46:8-9). It also precedes the next statement: “I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth” (Psalm 46:10b). As we have seen, this happened historically on a small scale with God’s defeat over the heathen nations in Israel’s past which attacked Jerusalem, but it also looks ahead to the Millennial Kingdom (Ps. 2:1-12; Rev. 20:1-7) and the worldwide exaltation of God’s Son (the Messiah) among the Gentile nations.

So, being still and knowing God is centered upon God’s powerful movements among the heathen and His ultimate exaltation among the nations during the Millennial Kingdom, which results in bringing about His purposes in the world. Therefore, being still and knowing God means to find peaceful rest in God’s character and ways as He acts in accordance with world events, which would include the daily events associated with our lives.

“I am God” (Ps. 46:10) is a repeated truth in Scripture (Isaiah 45:5,18). In essence, God is saying, “I am all-powerful and in charge! Any questions?” Let me say it less eloquently – “I am God so get over it!” This means that we must “Be still” or experience rest and find peace in the fact that God can do whatever He wants to do, whenever He wants to do it, with whomsoever He wants to do it, and in the way He wants to do it.



Being still in God is the secret to living the Christian life. It’s a call to experience peace or inner tranquility and live in such a way that we are totally relaxed and restful because we KNOW (recognize and acknowledge) God’s true character, that He is a just, righteous, merciful, gracious

and sometimes a vengeful God. We get to know God relationally and intimately as we learn of His character and attributes and therefore experience His life in ours

(John 17:3; 1 John 5:20; 2 Pet. 3:18). Paul exclaimed: “That I may know him ...” (Phil. 3:10).

But we also KNOW and accept God’s providential ways occurring in the world and around us which include the difficult and delightful, the good and bad, and the right and wrong. In other words, we can see what is happening around us and even with our own lives and conclude, “Lord, I know that you are a faithful God, a good God, and that You oversee all the events in the world and in my life. Therefore, I will accept them as coming from the hand of a loving, merciful, and righteous God who knows what is best for my life.”

Being still and knowing God are linked together. You cannot separate them. You cannot be still or find rest for your soul unless you know God, that His ways are always right, and that He is bringing His purposes to pass in relation to the world and your own personal life. God said, “... Yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it” (Isa. 46:11).

The Hebrew construction “be still” literally means “to sink down and relax.” It carries a connotation of releasing, dropping, or sinking. The whole idea is that we must stop fighting or cease striving. Think about sitting down in your favorite Lazy Boy chair or some other soft piece of furniture which causes you to become totally relaxed and restful. The word translated “be still” gives the picture of someone who is resting and quiet. This is someone experiencing inner calmness and tranquility of soul, as they rest in God’s character and ways, and His sovereign purpose for their own life. Being still is living a life of inner peace and tranquility as one reflects upon their relationship with God (who He is and what He means to them) and realize that He is providentially overseeing and orchestrating all the events in the world (what He does or allows), even the incidents associated with a person’s individual life.



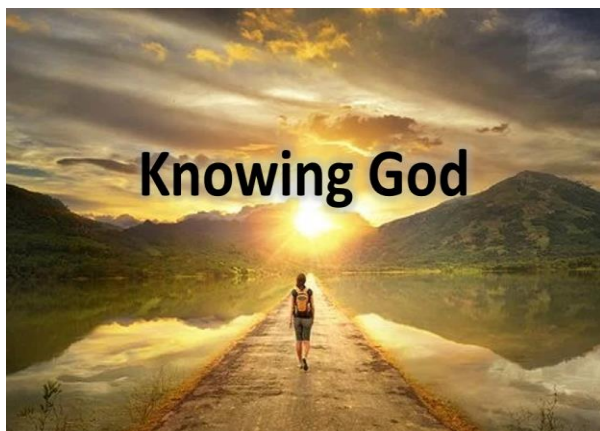
I’m thinking of the analogy of the proverbial, family road trip. You know the one, with the kids in the back seat saying, “Are we there yet? Are we there yet? Are we there yet?” The answer, of course, is be still or hush! This is what God is asking us to do. We must be quiet and still and let Him take us on the journey He intends for

our lives. It's easy to be fearful when things aren't going well or when we are faced with challenges and conflicts in our life. However, in the midst of our struggles, God tells His people to "be still" by recognizing that He is on their side and His perfectly ordained plan is coming to pass in their lives.

Many years ago, as a little boy, I remember being taken to the doctor for a sore throat. In those days, you would come into the waiting room unannounced and sit there. And you would wait and then wait some more. Finally, it was your turn to go into the doctor's office. As a boy, I knew what was coming. The doctor was going to give me a shot in the old-fashioned way and in the old-fashioned place! I remember often looking at a sign that was hanging in the doctor's office while I was waiting for the dreaded shot. The sign had only one word – the word RELAX. This is what the word "still" means. It means to relax. It means to be restful in spite of the events that are occurring around you and peaceful in spite of the hardships that you are facing in life.

In 2 Kings 19:19, King Hezekiah prayed for deliverance from the Assyrians:  
"Now therefore, O Lord our God, I beseech thee, save thou us out of his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that thou art the Lord God, even thou only."

The word "know" (Ps. 46:10) means to properly understand and perceive *who* God is (His character) and *what* He is doing (His course of events). Stillness or rest comes from knowing God's character and knowing that His sovereign ways and purposes are always right. We must remember that both the character and movements of God are inseparably bound together in the contextual meaning and understanding of these beloved words: "Be still and know that I am God."



As a Christian, I must KNOW God *experientially*, that He is a faithful, loving, merciful, and righteous God, the Creator and Sustainer of the universe. I discover this in my own personal relationship and walk with God as He reveals His presence to me. There is an inner quietness of heart and spirit which comes from being aware of God's presence, who He is, and what He means to us personally. I can

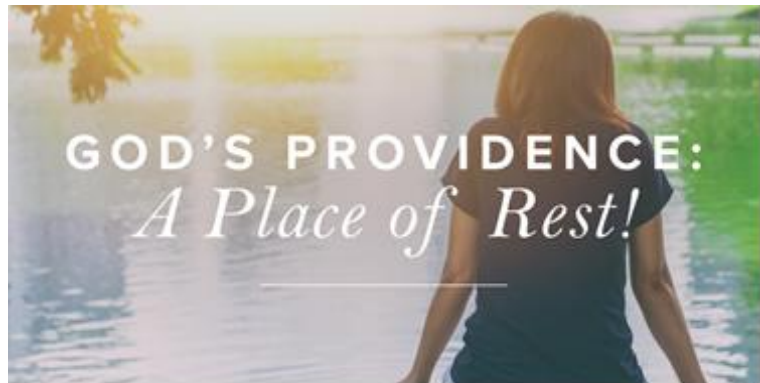
know God in this way. In 1 Kings 19:11-12 we read that it was not in the wind, nor the earthquake, nor the fire that God spoke to Elijah, but in a still small voice (a gentle whisper). The whisper of God! We have a sign hanging in our kitchen which was given to me by a friend. It reads, "Let us be silent that we may hear the whisper of God."

"In a still small voice He speaks to me,  
Through His Holy Scripture changes me.  
For the Lord is great and mighty  
Yet He speaks in a still small voice."

Although God does not verbally communicate to us today in a whisper, it is in the stillness or quietness of the soul that God reveals Himself to us, so we might experience His peace and stillness in the inner man of our lives (Eph. 3:16). This means I must know God experientially and worshipfully in my daily routine of life. Knowing God is drawing closer to God (Ps. 42:1), experiencing His life in ours, as we read the Scriptures (Ps. 119:11, 16-18, 25, 28, 38, 41, 50, 58, 65-66, 76, 105, 133, 148-149; Jer. 15:16; Luke 24:27) and contemplate who God is and what He means to us.

Knowing God is staying close to God and experiencing His personal presence in our lives when our world is turned upside down. God reveals Himself to us as the great Creator, Lover of our soul, and the One who deeply cares for us (1 Pet. 5:7; Heb. 4:15), and Who wants to draw close to us (Rev. 3:20). Open the door of your heart to Him!

But I must also KNOW God *providentially* by accepting His ways and movements in the world and with my own life ("Come, behold the works of the LORD" - Ps. 46:8). I must know that God is in charge and never makes any mistakes. Knowing God also means to accept His providential ways in the world and with our own personal lives. This is also what Psalm 46 is declaring to us when it speaks about knowing God. We must know that He is in absolute charge of everything, including all the events of our lives.



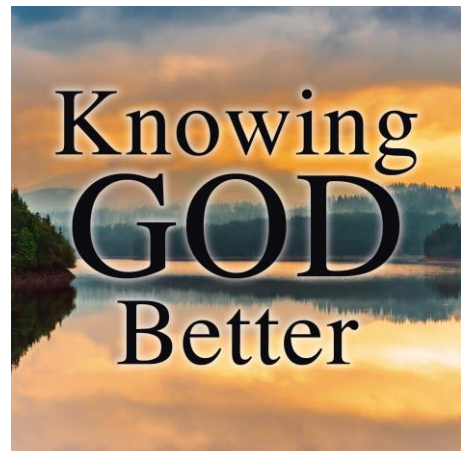
“God never moves without purpose or plan.  
When trying His servant and molding a man.  
Give thanks to the LORD, though your testing seems long.  
In darkness, He giveth a song.  
O rejoice in the LORD,  
He makes no mistake.  
He knoweth the end of each path that I take!  
For when I am tried and purified,  
I shall come forth as gold.”

Again, within this context, to “know” who God is and what He is doing is best explained in the following words: “I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth.” This speaks of KNOWING God’s character (He is a righteous and vengeful God) and therefore KNOWING that God’s providential ways and movements in the world are always right and come to pass in accordance with His character, vindicating who God is in His eternal being.

We can know that God is a righteous and even vengeful God at times and that His purposes are always true and right (Rev. 15:3). This was true historically, when He wiped out the heathen Assyrian soldiers coming against Jerusalem, but it will also be true on a greater and far vaster scale, when He returns and destroys the millions of soldiers in the land of Palestine and becomes the exalted King over planet earth. God was exalted over the Assyrians, and in the days to come He will once again be exalted over all mankind, when He rules and reigns with a rod of iron (Rev. 19:15; Isaiah 11:4-5).

Now let’s apply this stillness (peacefulness) and knowing God (His character and ways) to our personal life. Many times “stillness” (peace and rest) and “knowing” God (His character and ways) is the result of meditation, reflection, worship, and personal quiet time with the Lord.

First, we KNOW God by reflecting on His unchanging character in our time of worship and how this relates to our personal lives. We reflect on how He is a faithful, loving, merciful, and caring God. We also remember that He can be a holy, just, righteous, and even a vengeful God





(Rom. 12:19). Second, we KNOW God by reflecting on His sovereignty and how this relates to our individual lives. I realize that whatever He does or allows to occur in my life is under His controlling hand and comes from the heart of a loving, caring, and all-wise God - "the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God" (1 Timothy 1:17).

Sitting quietly before the Lord and meditating upon His greatness, glory, promises, and sovereignty over our lives is both a resting and rewarding experience. To become better acquainted with God necessitates spending time with Him. We call it devotions, but the Bible calls it "Be still and know that I am God." We need a quiet time, a "Be still" time each day, alone with the Lord, meditating on Scripture and God, so we can become better acquainted with Him.

Mille Stamm wrote:

"We need to enter our spiritual closet, close the door, and become quiet in His presence, meditating on who He is and what He has done for us."

Sometimes being still and knowing God means to literally be still from the rapid pace of life. Being still or experiencing inner quietness and peace in life often involves slowing down and reflecting on God, His Word, and His ways.

Psalm 4:4

"Stand in awe, and sin not: commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still. Selah."

"Blessed quietness, holy quietness,  
Blest assurance in my soul!  
On the stormy sea, He speaks peace to me,  
And the billows cease to roll."



"Be still, and  
know that I  
am God..."

Psalm 46:10

One day a little girl slipped into her father's study. Without saying a word, she quietly sat on the floor close beside him, watching him at work. After a while he said, "Honey, is there something that you want?" "No," she replied, "I am just sitting here loving you." Soon she left as quietly as she had come in. Little did she know the lesson she had taught

her father. She had not come to ask him for anything. She had just wanted to be near him and love him. The thought came to the father, “How often do I spend time in God’s presence, just loving Him and becoming acquainted with Him?”

This reminds us that we need to be still and get to know God better through the revelation of His Word (2 Tim. 3:16; Eccl. 12:13) and His presence in our lives. God not only wants us to bring our requests (Phil. 4:6) before Him but also to spend time with Him (Psalm 5:3). We need to be still or quiet enough to allow Him to speak to our hearts.

“Give ear to my words, Oh Lord, Consider my meditation.  
Hearken unto the voice of my cry, My King and my God.  
For unto thee will I pray, My voice shall thou hear in the morning.  
Oh Lord in the morning will I direct my prayer,  
Unto thee and will look up!”

Dr. Gilbert Little, a Christian psychiatrist, was asked for a simple rule for mental health. He answered, “Be still, and know that I am God.” The noise of the world can become louder and louder and this means we must take time to be still and know God better. As we meditate on God, we get to “know” Him experientially (His goodness, grace, righteousness, justice) but we also find ourselves yielding to His sovereign works in the world and in connection with our own personal lives. Our time of meditation and worship before the Lord brings a fresh revelation of His character to our hearts (Ps. 104:34) and allows us to accept His sovereign purposes for our lives (Ps. 115:3; Rev. 15:3). In our times of “stillness” we experience peace as we get to know God experientially, but we also learn to yield to Him and His providential way for our lives.

Yes, we must learn the secret of being “still” (experiencing peace and inner tranquility of soul) as we meditate upon God’s character (who God is) and His course of action (what God does). Let’s put this in perspective. If God wants to defeat the communists that are seeking to overtake America and our personal lives that will be okay with me, since I know that He is a God of righteousness and justice. But if He chooses to not defeat the spread of communism in America, then I must also rest in God’s providential plan and purpose for this nation and how it also affects my own personal life.

In short, we find rest for our souls when we come to know that God always does what is right as He brings to pass His purposes in a fallen world. God can change the course of the nations and our own lives for He declares, "I am God." It's important to remember that God always does right even when things go wrong with our lives. The secret is to relax in God's character and ways for it's only then that we will find rest for our souls. Being still (experiencing God's rest and peace) should be a constant state and reality in our Christian life. But this stillness can only be enjoyed when we come to know God experientially and providentially, as we accept His sovereign works and ways in the world, even with our own personal lives.

Exodus 14:13 declares:

"And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which he will shew to you to day: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to day, ye shall see them again no more for ever."

As God's saints, we can find rest or stillness in the presence of God and the work that He chooses to do with our own lives and the lives of others. We can experience peace when we know that God is always merciful, gracious, loving, and wise, and that He is in charge of whatever is occurring around us and overseeing the events that touch our own lives.

Psalm 115:3

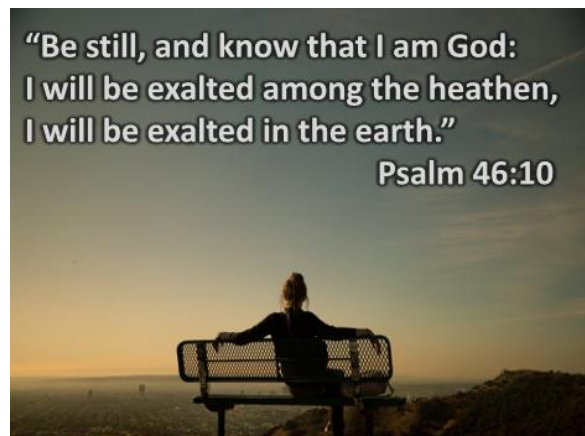
"But our God is in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased."

We must learn the secret of resting in our relationship with God and His sovereign will and purpose for our lives, whatever He chooses to bring to pass. We must rest and be quiet, experiencing God's inner peace, knowing that God is superintending the events of this world and our own personal lives. God is still on the throne!

Remember there are no accidents in life, only divine appointments! Simply put, God is telling His people to relax and rest in Him as He accomplishes His providentially, ordained plan for their lives. To "be still and know that I am God" means to experience inner rest or peace by letting go of our plans and ideas while realizing that God is working in every situation and phase of our lives to bring about His eternal purposes.

“Come behold the works of the LORD” (Ps. 46:8); He maketh wars to cease on the earth” (Ps. 46:8); “I will be exalted among the heathen;” “I will be exalted on the earth” (Ps. 46:10). God is saying, “I will do this!” This is God’s work – the work of a sovereign God! Elsewhere, God says, “Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? have not I the LORD? (Ex. 4:11). “Shall a trumpet be blown in the city, and the people not be afraid? shall there be evil in a city, and the LORD hath not done it?” (Amos 3:6). We need to be still and find rest in the providential works of God.

Of course, God defeating and ruling over the heathen is a good thing (“I will be exalted among the heathen” - Ps. 46:10). It would be wonderful to see God defeat communism since it is raising its ugly head in America! Of course, there is a day coming when this will be ultimately fulfilled when Christ reigns as King. Yes, as a Christian we want God to be exalted among the heathen. But how do you react when God in His sovereignty says, “I will allow you to experience cancer, a heart attack, or an injury in a car accident, I will allow you to lose a job, so you can grow in your sanctification and I might receive the glory” (John 11:4)? Can you find rest in these sovereign acts of God? Can you “be still” (experience peace) in the other “I will” statements and events that God chooses to bring to pass in your life?



Behind the scenes of your life, God says, “I will do this.” Then comes the test of your faith (James 1:3; 1 Pet. 1:7). You must learn to accept God’s will for your life, even when it might be difficult to pass through.

2 Corinthians 4:15 declares:

“For all things *are* for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God.”

Are you willing to accept the reality that “all things” (everything) which God allows to come into your life is “for your sakes” (your spiritual growth and advancement) and ultimately for God’s glory? Stillness and peace cannot be experienced in our hearts unless we learn to KNOW God personally and intimately, but more than

this, to KNOW and accept by faith that all the events of our lives have a providential connection with God and His working, understanding that “all things work together for good” (Rom. 8:28).

What if God says, “I will allow you to experience a time of illness, I will allow you to suffer financially, I will allow you to have a handicapped child, experience the loss of a loved one, I will allow you to experience a broken heart and pass through the deep waters?” What is your reaction to God during the trials of life? God wants to strengthen your personal relationship with Himself and have you bow the knee to His providential ways over your life. Stillness cannot be experienced in your heart without surrender to God’s sovereignty. “Be still and know that I am God.”

The Scripture is saying we must “be still” (rest and relax) in whatever God is doing in the world, with our personal lives, and the lives of others. We must rest in the unchanging and unalterable fact that God is God - “I am God.” This means God is in charge. It’s one thing to be still, but it’s another thing to “be still and know that He is God,” which means to know that He is sovereign, and to know that whatever He allows is right and in keeping with His character and plan for our lives (“to give you an expected end” - Jer. 29:11). When we come to rest in God’s sovereign purpose for our lives, whatever He wants to do with us, it’s then that we have discovered a very important spiritual secret in life.

An explorer went on a trek into the jungle with some nationals as his guides. The first two days the group hurried so fast that they were able to cover many miles. On the third day the explorer planned to start at daybreak. When it was time to leave, he discovered the guides were not ready. He asked them what was wrong. They replied, “We must wait.” “Wait” he said, “Wait for what?” The guides replied, “We have been going too fast. Now we must wait for our souls to catch up with our bodies.” Beloved, we must take time to be holy and we must also take time to be still and let God speak to our hearts, reveal Himself to us, and yield ourselves to His working and way for our lives. We must sit back, relax, experience inner calmness, and let God be God!

- ✓ Have you been hurrying along in life and forgotten to be still?
- ✓ How close are you to God?
- ✓ How well do you know Him personally?

- ✓ Have you found stillness or rest in what God has been doing with your life and where He has placed you?
- ✓ What difficult event has God recently allowed to come into your life?
- ✓ Have you accepted by faith God's sovereign ways and work in connection with your own life?
- ✓ Are you finding stillness and rest in the places, people, and planned events which God has allowed to come into your life?

The "still" person is someone who finds peace and calmness in their relationship with God and His purpose and plan for his life (Ps. 37:1-8), even when that plan might include suffering. "Be still and know that I am God."

"Be still, my soul: the Lord is on thy side;  
 Bear patiently the cross of grief or pain;  
 Leave to thy God to order and provide;  
 In every change he faithful will remain."

Take heart my dear brother and sister. God is good (Ps. 100:5), God is in charge (Ps. 135:6), and God will always faithfully provide for His children (Ps. 34:10). Since this is true, every fear can be stilled, and every anxiety quieted. His people can relax or be still because God's refuge is constant, and His sovereign purpose and way is always right and will bring about His perfect way for us (Job 13:15; 23:10).

Florence Wills wrote:

"Be still, the morning comes,  
 The night will end;  
 Trust thou in Christ thy Light,  
 Thy faithful Friend.  
 And know that He is God,  
 Whose perfect will  
 Works all things for thy good:  
 Look up—Be still."

While driving one day I approached a squirrel that was sitting in the middle of the road. The squirrel did not know what to do. It started to nervously move to the right and then to the left. It went in circles and stood up before it finally got out of

## Fretting and Fidgeting in Life ...



Or “Be Still and know that I am God?”

fidgeting; stop panicking and parading about like a squirrel in the middle of the road with traffic approaching!

“Be still and know that I am God” (Ps. 46:10). I experience inner peace and tranquility when I experience God’s person (who He is) and submit to His purpose for my life (what He does). For instance, I KNOW that God is the Creator when I see the beauty of a sunrise and sunset. I sense that He wants to be near or close to me.

“This is my Father's world:  
He shines in all that's fare;  
In the rustling grass I hear him pass,  
He speaks to me everywhere.”

I KNOW that He is a loving and merciful God, when I reflect upon what the Bible says about Him, and through my relationship with Him experience His many spiritual blessings (Lam. 3:22-23).

"Great is Thy faithfulness!  
Morning by morning new mercies I see;  
All I have needed Thy hand hath provided—  
Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!"

I also KNOW that God is sovereign when He allows pain, suffering, and heartache to come into my life. I can know that He has allowed all the events of my life to transpire to fulfill His perfect plan for me and mold me into the person He wants me to be (Gen. 50:20). Here is an honest evaluation of learning to know God during the hard and difficult times.

“I’ve been through a fire,  
That has deepened my desire  
To know the living God more and more.  
It hasn’t been much fun,  
But the work that is has done  
In my life has made it worth the hurt.  
You see, sometimes we need the hard times,  
To bring us to our knees,  
Otherwise we do as we please,  
And never heed Him.  
But He always knows what’s best  
And it’s when we are depressed  
That we really come to know God as He is.”

Peace in the never-ending circle of God’s sovereign purpose is what Psalm 46:10 is talking about. Stillness in the sovereignty of God is the secret to peaceful living. In fact, stillness and sovereignty are inseparably bound together. “Be still (serenity) and know that I am God (sovereignty).”

“Higher hands are leading me.  
I am not alone, I know  
As I walk this world below  
For Higher hands are leading me.”

God wants us to “be still” during the tragedies, tests, and tribulations that we face in life, as we accept by faith His providential workings in relation to our personal lives and the lives of others. The sooner we learn to accept, by faith, the working of divine providence, the sooner we will experience peace. We must remember that God loves His children deeply and with an everlasting love (Rom. 8:38-39), so whatever He allows into their lives ultimately points back to His loving hand and “the finger of God” (Luke 11:20).

Charles Spurgeon said:

“God is too good to be unkind and He is too wise to be mistaken. And when we cannot trace His hand, we must trust His heart.”



God loves you! As a Christian, there is no replacement for being still and knowing God. God may say, “Be still and know that I am the Creator of everything as you witness the beauty of creation that surrounds you. Be still and know that I am interested in a personal relationship with you. Be still and know that I am the all-powerful God. Be still and know that I love you. Be still and know that I am interested in every detail of your life and want to meet every need that you have. Be still in My plans for your life. Be still in My faithfulness toward you and trust in Me.”

Beloved, believe in God’s purpose for your life, let God be God, and find rest for your soul. There is a quiet understanding we can have with God and before God. There is an inner stillness or rest that we can experience when we learn to know God through possessing a deeper relationship and walk with Him and learning to know and accept that He is providentially at work within the world, with the lives of others, and most importantly, with our own life. Are you trusting Him today?

Isaiah 26:3

“Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.”

➤ **We remember God’s promise (vs. 11)**

Psalm 46:11 closes with these words:

“The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah.”

The psalmist now repeats the phrase of verse 7 as he closes out the Psalm. The great and mighty God of all the angelic hosts of Heaven is with us. Our mighty God promises to remain with His children, protecting them, consoling them, and giving them peace and victory.

Isaiah 41:10

“Fear thou not; for I *am* with thee: be not dismayed; for I *am* thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.”

The Lord of hosts is with us!

“We’ve got a great, big, wonderful God  
A great, big, wonderful God  
A God who’s always victorious  
Always watching over us  
A great, big, wonderful God!

We’ve got a great, big, wonderful God  
A great, big, wonderful God  
A God who loves every one of us  
Done so much for all of us  
A great, big, wonderful God!

He’ll never, never, never leaves us  
He’s always standing by  
To pick us up if we stumble  
We’re the apple of his eye!

We’ve got a great, big, wonderful God  
A great, big, wonderful God  
What a glory it is to sing  
Praises to our coming King!  
A great, big, wonderful God!”

Knowing God’s character and ways (Ps. 46:10), and finally, believing in God’s promise of His abiding presence (Ps. 46:11) is the mixture we need to experience peace and victory. His presence and refuge are real and for this reason we can pass through the tests of life peacefully, triumphantly, and victoriously. Selah! Now what do you think of that! Pause and reflect on the this wonder of wonders! Let is grab hold of your heart. God’s presence and the spiritual refuge or hiding place He gives to us is reassuring and comforting. If God be for us, who can be against us!

In reading these verses, I am reminded of Elisabeth Elliot. She suffered the loss of two husbands. The first, Jim Elliot, was killed by Auca Indians in Ecuador while trying to reach them with the gospel. The second, Addison Leitch, was slowly consumed by cancer. In relating what these experiences were like, she referred to this psalm, saying that in the first shock of death “everything that has seemed most dependable has given way. Mountains are falling, earth is reeling. In such a time it is a profound comfort to know that although all things seem to be shaken,

one thing is not: God is not shaken.” She added that the thing that is most needful is to do what the psalmist does later, to “be still and know that God is God. God is God whether we recognize it or not. But it comforts us and infuses strength into our faltering spirits to rest on that truth.”

Yes, God is God, whether we recognize it or not! It should comfort us and provide us with strength and peace to “know” by faith that God always does what is best and right for our lives.

- ✓ Have you been experiencing inner stillness or rest in your relationship with God?
- ✓ Do you know experientially that He is a faithful, loving, merciful, and righteous God?
- ✓ Are you being still before God by accepting His ways, purposes, and plans for your life?
- ✓ Are you resting in God’s right to rule your days and do with your life as He so desires?

Beloved, believe in God’s purpose for your life, let God be God, and find rest for your soul. There is a quiet understanding we can have with God and before God. There is an inner stillness or rest that we can experience when we learn to know God through possessing a deeper relationship and walk with Him and learning to know and accept that He is providentially at work within the world, with the lives of others, and most importantly, with our own life.

“Be still, my soul;  
Thy God doth undertake  
To guide the future  
As He has the past.  
Thy hope, thy confidence,  
Let nothing shake;  
All now mysterious  
Shall be bright at last.  
Be still, my soul;  
The waves and winds still know  
His voice who ruled them  
While He dwelt below.”

