

What Are You Afraid Of?

Psalm 46

We are barraged by fears, real and imagined, today. No one knows what the coming months may bring. Disease? Economic collapse? War? Riots? It's enough to ruin your day! I have good news: *God is our refuge and strength...He will be exalted in the earth.*

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

- God is our refuge *in* – not *from* – times of trouble.
- We need not fear...no matter what may happen.

There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God...

- God is provision and protection for His people.
- When God speaks, the nations melt.

Come and see... Be still, and know that I am God.

- In the past, and in the future...God is in control.
- Stop, relax: God is God, and He will be exalted in the earth.



1. Psalm 46 has a long and fabled place in Christian history. For example, it is said to have been the inspiration for Augustine's magnum opus *The City of God*. What verse gave him his title? Martin Luther nailed his 'ninety-five theses' to the Wittenburg Church door on Halloween night, 1517, sparking the Protestant Reformation. For this he was excommunicated by the Catholic Church, and eventually went into hiding. Sometime during this time, inspired by Psalm 46, he wrote *A Mighty Fortress is Our God*. What verses in Ps. 46 inspired this great hymn? Finally, a story is told of King James' Bible translators surprising William Shakespeare on his 46th birthday in 1610, telling him to count 46 words from the beginning of Psalm 46, and 46 words from the end of the psalm. Try it! (Only works in the old KJV.)
2. This psalm is one of eleven attributed to 'the Sons of Korah,' a priestly group in Israel, descendants of Korah. Korah rebelled against Moses and was judged severely (see Numbers 16), but his descendants wrote beautiful psalms expressing gratitude and deep devotion to an awesome, mighty God (read them all: Pss. 42; 44-49; 84-85; 87-88). What special significance might Ps. 46.2-3, 6, and 8-10 have had for Korah's descendants?
3. The Book of Psalms is the *Hebrew* Psalter, and as such applies directly to Israel. But it also has meaning for all who worship God and believe in Christ Jesus as Savior. What 'faith lessons' for your life do you find in Psalm 46? How does it affect the way you respond to the turbulent times in which we live? What future promise, which all Christians look forward to, do verses 8-10 point to?

