

Strong Faith for Hard Times (1)

God Is Our Refuge

Psalm 46

Introduction: Today we come to psalm 46 which was not written for peaceful days only. It was written for shaking days, stormy days, confusing days, frightening days. It was written for days when the earth gives way, when the waters roar, when kingdoms rage, and when people wonder if the world is coming apart at the seams. Psalm 46 says: even then, *God is our refuge, a safe place in life's storms.*

I. The protection of our refuge: (vv. 1–3)

A. The confession – (v.1) The declaration of His sufficiency.

1. The psalmist does not say, “God gives refuge.” He says, “*God is our refuge.*”
2. That word *refuge* carries the idea of a *shelter, a strong place, a hiding place, a place of safety.* (Prov. 18:10; Ps 91:1–4)

B. The calamity – (vv.2–3) He faces the reality of our trouble (vv. 2–3)

1. Wiersbe: “*When trouble comes, we tend to do one of three things: we fear, we faint, or we fret.*”
2. But Psalm 46 says *there is another, a different way to live.*

C. The courage – This is not denial or defiance...

1. The Decision of Faith (v. 2)
2. The Description of Upheaval (vv. 2–3)

Church, courage is not pretending the storm is small.

Church, courage is believing that God is bigger than the storm.

(Isa 41:10; Heb 13:5–6; Ps 62:5–8)

God does not promise a life without storms, but He promises His presence and protection through every storm.

II. The presence of our refuge: (vv. 4–7)

A. The picture of peace (v. 4)

Piper highlights it well: *the threatening waters of chaos are answered by another kind of water altogether—a river of gladness from God Himself.* (Ps. 36:8; Jn. 7:37-39; Rev. 22:1-2)

B. The place of His presence (v. 5)

1. The city is secure because *God is in the midst of her.*
2. *That is the believer’s secret of stability in an unstable world: the presence of God.*

C. The promise of preservation (v. 5) God is not occasionally available, He is an ever-present help! (Lam. 3:22-23; Ps. 30:5)

D. The power of the refrain (vv. 7) (2 Kgs. 6:16; Isa. 8: 6-8)

When everything around us is unstable, God's presence supplies the peace our hearts need.

III. The power of our refuge: (vv. 8–9)

A. The Summons to Observe (v. 8) *In other words, “Look carefully.*

The psalmist wants us to study the ways of God in history so that we can trust the heart of God in the present.

B. The Sovereignty of His Power (v. 9) *What man cannot stop, God can stop.*

Our confidence rests not in changing circumstances but in the unchanging rule of God.

IV. The peace of our refuge: (v.11)

A. The Stillness He Commands (v. 10a) This is more than a call to relax.

1. It is a call to cease striving, to stop frantic grasping, to let go of the illusion that you can control what only God can govern.
2. **MacArthur similarly ties such stillness to peace that comes when the heart fixes on God rather than the turmoil.** (Ex 14:13–14; Ps 37:7; Isa 30:15; Phil 4:6–7)

B. The confession – “Know that I am God.”

1. You know what that means? *That means know that He is God and you are not!* (Dan. 4:35; Rom. 8:31)
2. *Christian peace begins where self-sovereignty ends.* (Isa 46:9–10)

C. The comfort – (v. 11)

1. *The Lord of hosts is with us.*
2. *And for the Christian, that truth shines even brighter on this side of the cross.*
3. *In Jesus Christ, God has come near to us as Immanuel—God with us.* (Mt 1:23; 11:28–30; Heb 6:18–20; Rom 8:35–39)

Because God is with us, we can face every storm with confidence and every tomorrow with hope.

Run to God, not merely to relief

Rest in God, not in control

Rehearse the presence of God

Receive Christ as the ultimate refuge

Doctrine to Remember

God is our refuge and strength—our ever-present help in trouble.

Because He is sovereign over every circumstance, believers can trust Him with confidence, rest in His presence, and stand firm in every storm.