

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Psalms: God's Nurture Of The Inner Man In The Life Of Faith XLVI: A Lesson In Confidently Relying On God In Times Of Great Distress (Psalm 46:1-11)

I. Introduction

- A. The time to prepare for a threatening crisis of great distress is before such an event arrives, for once it does come, one must know what to do to address it or he can easily collapse under the weight of the trial itself.
- B. Psalm 46:1-11 is a directive for such a time, and we view it for our preventative welfare and edification:

II. A Lesson In Confidently Relying On God In Times Of Great Distress, Psalm 46:1-11.

- A. Verse one in the Hebrew text comprises the introductory remarks in the English Bible (Kittel, Bib. Heb., p. 1015), so we stay with the verse numbering arrangement of the English Bible for clarity with this lesson.
- B. We translate Psalm 46:1-11 as follows (Ibid.):
 - 1. "Elohim is a Refuge-Shelter (*mahseh*, B. D. B., A Heb.-Eng. Lex. of the O. T., p. 340) and Strength unto us; He has been found [to be] an Abundant Help in narrow straits of distress (*sarah*, Ibid., p. 865)," v. 1.
 - 2. "On account of this fact (*'al-ken*, Ibid., Kittel; Ibid., B. D. B., p. 487 [emphatic causal preposition]), we will not be afraid, though the earth be altered and the mountains fall into the depths of the sea," Psa. 46:2.
 - 3. "Though its waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging. Selah." (Psalm 46:3)
 - 4. "There is a river whose streams make glad the City of God, the Holy Place where the Most High dwells," Psalm 46:4.
 - 5. "Elohim is within her, she will not fall; Elohim will help her at break of day," Psalm 46:5.
 - 6. "Nations are in uproar, kingdoms fall; He lifts His voice, the earth melts [in helplessness]," Psalm 46:6.
 - 7. "Jahweh of Hosts is with us [*immanu*, i.e., close by in friendship, Ibid., Kittel; Ibid., B. D. B., p. 767-769]; the Elohim of Jacob is an Inaccessibly, Securely High Refuge (*misgab*, Ibid., p. 960; H. A. W., Theol. Wrdbk. O. T., 1980, v. II, p. 871) unto us," Psalm 46:7.
 - 8. "Come and behold the works of Jahweh, the desolations He has brought on the earth [in judgment]," v. 8.
 - 9. "He makes wars to cease to the ends of the earth; He breaks the bow and shatters the spear; He burns the shields with fire," Psalm 46:9.
 - 10. "'Cause yourself to relax, let go, refrain [from struggling, worrying] (*rapah*, Ibid., B. D. B., p. 951-952; Hiphil = causative) and know that I (emph. pron.) am Elohim; I will be exalted among the nations; I will be exalted in the earth," Psalm 46:10.
 - 11. "Jahweh of Hosts is with us [*immanu* again, close by in friendship, cf. v. 7]; the Elohim of Jacob is an Inaccessibly, Securely High Refuge (*misgab* again, cf. v. 7) unto us. Selah." (Psalm 46:11)
- C. We note significant observations and applications of this psalm toward edifying believers (as follows):
 - 1. Before a threatening trial of great distress comes, a believer should recall that his Creator-God Elohim is a Refuge-Shelter and Strength with a sterling track record of being an Abundant Help in tough trials, v. 1.
 - 2. This fact enables one to face very hard trials, even that of the earth beneath giving way so the mountains fall into the depths of the ocean while its waves roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging -- that is, when everything once considered to be a secure foundation comes unhinged! (Psalm 46:2-3)
 - 3. The Psalmist wrote of the security of Jerusalem under God's care in his era (v. 4-5), but Jerusalem fell years later due to Israel's sin, Bible Know. Com., O. T., p. 828. However, by way of application, there will be an eternal City of Jerusalem descend to the earth from heaven (Rev. 21:9-22:5), and the believer can anticipate the coming security that will be his in that city in the eternal state to come.
 - 4. Verses 6-11 anticipate God's eventual conquest of the world's kingdoms with resulting blessing for the upright, and the theme of God's being the believer's Inaccessibly, Securely High Refuge (v. 7, 11) frames that hope to provide direction for believers -- that they always rely on the Lord in great trials of difficulty.

Lesson: *The believer's Creator God has a perfect, long track record of being an Abundant Help in narrow straits of distress as an Inaccessibly, Securely High Refuge from destruction, so the believer should live without fear amid seemingly catastrophic trials, even if they involve the whole world's being threatened unto destruction!*

Application: *BEFORE facing catastrophic crises, may we be ASSURED that the God of the Bible has a long track record of being an Abundant Help in narrow straits of distress, an Inaccessibly, Securely High Refuge for His people, that we always live above fear in even massive crises in view of God's eternal plan of blessing for us!*