

PSALMS: DIARIES OF GODLY OLD TESTAMENT SAINTS

Psalm Forty-Six: Dealing Well With Troubling National Or International Crises (Psalm 46:1-11)

I. Introduction

- A. A tunnel was recently opened beneath the Muslim Dome of the Rock Shrine on Mount Zion, the alleged former location of the Holiest of Holies in Solomon's temple and where Muslims believe Mohammed ascended to heaven. When it happened, a mele erupted, and Palestinian police were pitted against Israeli soldiers with people dying and the whole international community getting concerned!
- B. When events like this occur, and when it looks like they could erupt into cold or open war between nations, how is the believer supposed to deal with it to remain at peace?
- C. Psalm 46:1-11 answers the question.

II. Dealing Well With Troubling National or International Crises, Psalm 46:1-11.

- A. The psalm was written to deal with unsettling international events that affect Israel's welfare:
 1. The psalmist talks about not being afraid although the land mass might give way and fall into the depths of the sea, Ps. 46:2b. This pictures a very threatening, insecure atmosphere to say the least!
 2. Later in the psalm, the writer speaks of God's making wars to cease, and of destroying the weapons of war so that man can no more wage war upon the earth, Ps. 46:10.
 3. Verse 6 speaks of nations being in an uproar and of the kingdoms falling, Ps. 46:6.
- B. In view of the threat to Israel's survival due to international unrest, the psalmist directs Israel's attention to God's solution as follows:
 1. Israel needed to recall how God had been her Refuge and Strength in **PAST** times of deep trials, 46:1.
 - a. His help has been one of supplying Refuge, or **defensive** protection, Ps. 46:1a..
 - b. His help has been one of supplying Strength to go on the **offense** effectively, Ps. 46:1b.
 - c. God has been proven to be an abundant help in Israel's past times of **great distress**, Ps. 46:1c.
 - d. Thus, whether it has needed defensive help or offensive might, Israel's needs have been adequately provided by God in past times no matter how difficult her task has been!
 - e. Israel could then afford to be confident though the land masses were engulfed by the seas, 2-3.
 2. Israel needed to remember that Israel had a **FUTURE** of peace in spite of current crises, 46:4-8:
 - a. The psalmist shifts his hearers' attentions away from the crisis of the hour to the immutable heavenly city of God where all is peaceful, Ps. 46:4.
 - b. This city will not fall to foreign threats, for God has a destiny of triumph for her, Ps. 46:5-6.
 - c. Thus, Israel's God could be trusted to be a Secure Height against current Gentile threats, Ps. 46:7.
 3. Accordingly, the hearers are encouraged to come, pay attention to these unsettling events so as to see the hand of God work to turn the tide in Israel's favor, Ps. 46:8-12:
 - a. Instead of running or hiding from the current crises, Israel is encouraged to come and see God's acts as one would watch the unfolding of a drama, Ps. 46:8a.
 - b. What Israel is to behold is God's desolations of judgments on the Gentiles who attack her, 46:6, 8.
 - c. In the process, God will cause wars to cease, destroying the enemies' **offensive** weapons of bow and spear and burning their **defensive** shields with fire, Ps. 46:9. Thus, with no offensive or defensive capabilities, there is nothing anybody can do but not to make war with Israel!
 - d. In view of this marvelous solution to Israel's problems, Israel is called upon to relax and know that her Creator is the Creator of all, and that He will be exalted among man's warring factions, Ps. 46:10.
 - e. Verse 11 repeats verse 7, noting that since **Jahweh** is with Israel, keeping covenant with her ever since He revealed Himself to depressed Moses as **Jahweh** for downtrodden Israel at the Burning Bush, He is a Secure Height from all the nations that threaten her destiny!

Lesson: We know that (1) God has always preserved Israel from annihilation due to His desire to fulfill His Abrahamic Covenant. (2) We therefore know that He will keep that covenant unto its fruition, one that has Christ ruling on the throne of David in a literal world empire. (3) In view of these two facts, when international crises loom, we can relax by recalling God's clearly defined, proven purposes and use the opportunity to witness to others who are full of fear due to their ignorance of God's will!