

## GOD AT YOUR SERVICE

***Psalm 46:1-7 NKJV - God the Refuge of His People and Conqueror of the Nations***

***46 God is our refuge and strength, A very present help in trouble.***

<sup>2</sup>Therefore we will not fear, Even though the earth be removed, And though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea;

<sup>3</sup>*Though* its waters roar *and* be troubled, *Though* the mountains shake with its swelling.

<sup>4</sup>*There is* a river whose streams shall make glad the city of God, The holy *place* of the tabernacle of the Most High.

<sup>5</sup>God *is* in the midst of her, she shall not be moved; God shall help her, just at the break of dawn.

<sup>6</sup>The nations raged, the kingdoms were moved; He uttered His voice, the earth melted.

<sup>7</sup>***The LORD of hosts is with us; The God of Jacob is our refuge.***

### **INTRO**

#### **\*\*GOD AT YOUR SERVICE**

What an **incredible testimony of promise** we discover in the words of the psalmist.

- God is our **refuge and strength!**
- He is a **very present help** in time of trouble!
  
- Literally, that means that **God is a very accessible help** – He is one easy to be found.
- In **II Chronicles 15**, Azariah told Asa:
  - **God will stick with you** as long as you stick with Him.
  - If you look for Him, He will let Himself be found...
  - Then he explained **that when Israel got in trouble** and turned to the Lord, **“He was found of them”** (verse 4).
  
- **Somebody needs to latch on to the promise of the Lord** that we find in this particular passage...
  - **Never again** do you need to fear or be afraid.

- It **doesn't matter** if the whole world is in turmoil.
- The **earth** may quake, the **oceans** may swell, and the **mountains** may crumble into the sea.
- **Everything around you** may be in a **total uproar** – **complete chaos...**
  - **But**, with **God** as your **protector and provider**, **you'll have peace** like a river!

#### Listen to Pastor:

- **God's Word** promises us that *He is available to us* at any time, day or night!
- From *The Message*, our text reads:
- **Psalm 46:1-7** –
  - ***God is a safe place*** to hide, ***ready to help*** when ***we need Him***.
  - ***We stand fearless*** at the cliff-edge of doom, ***courageous*** in seastorm and earthquake,
  - ***Before the rush and roar of oceans, the tremors that shift mountains...God fights for us (and) protects us...***
  - [Then in verse 5, it says,] ***God lives here, the streets are safe, God at your service from crack of dawn.***

#### **\*\*COMPREHENDING GOD'S PRESENCE**

**\*I am not certain that we comprehend this truth fully.**

- **Most of us** would very likely admit that **our concept** of God's abiding presence ***is inadequate***.
- It is my belief, however, that **God wants to open our understanding** of this divine concept.
  - **He knows** we all face **deep needs** and **terrible troubles**.
  - **We all encounter turmoil, temptations, and times of confusion ***that cause our souls to quake***.**

**His message** for us here in **Psalm 46** is meant for just such times.

**\*If we give in to fear** – if we become downcast and full of despair – ***we're living absolutely contrary*** to His present reality in our lives.

- But if we learn to **trust Him** even when we can't trace Him, ***He promises to be our refuge and our strength!***
- **He promises** to be easy to find and ready to offer any help we may need.
  - Therefore, **if we live in faith**, He will be **at our service** morning and night.

**\*Peter writes in 2 Peter 1:4** – CEV

God made great and marvelous **promises**, so that ***his nature would become part of us***. Then we could escape **our evil desires** and the **corrupt influences** of this world.

- **Supernatural peace** is a part of God's divine nature.
  - Tell your neighbor: ***"God lives here, the streets are safe!"***
- **Of all his wonderful promises**, Psalm 46 is the one word we need to obtain **His peace like a river**.

Let me share with you **three things** that we can glean from this passage.

### **\*\*1<sup>st</sup> EVER-PRESENT EVIL**

**\*The first thing we learn** is that just as there is an **ever-present help**, there is also an **ever-present evil**.

Paul attests, ***"When I would do good, evil is present with me"*** Romans 7:21.

In Ephesians 6:12, Paul declares, ***"We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."***

- Listen, **there is a very real enemy of our souls**, and **this enemy is at work against us**, day and night.
- Paul wants to make sure we understand this.

**If we don't** — if we're ignorant of **what our battle is** and ***who we're fighting*** — then we'll surely be **defeated**.

- From the Gospels to the Epistles to Revelation, the entire New Testament warns us not to be ignorant of Satan's devices.
  - This doesn't mean that we are to fear or magnify the devil's power
  - **Satan is still** "prince of the power of the air"
  - **He rules** an evil empire of demonic powers.

These principalities do his constant bidding, continually harassing God's people.

- It's extremely dangerous to be blind to Satan's ways.
  - We simply have to accept that our present battle isn't a human one.
- **It doesn't matter** what struggle we face, what sin we wrestle with.
  - We have to realize, **it's not** merely about some flaw in our character.
  - **It's not** some habit to be worked out in our flesh.
  - Our conflict is no less than a supernatural battle that's unfolding in spiritual high places.
  - And our foe is an **ever-present enemy**.

**This is why Peter urges us in I Peter 5:8-9 CEV**

<sup>8</sup>**Be on your guard and stay awake.** Your enemy, the devil, is like a roaring lion, sneaking around to find someone to attack.

<sup>9</sup>But you must resist the devil and stay strong in your faith. You know that all over the world the Lord's followers are suffering just as you are.

**Peter experienced this firsthand.**

**Jesus had warned him**, Luke 22:31 - Jesus said, "Simon, listen to me! **Satan has demanded the right to test each one of you**, as a farmer does when he separates wheat from the husks.

- Jesus' Disciples would Be Tested
- Christ knew the devil wanted this apostle.
- And **Jesus gave Peter ample warning** about what was to come.

You can be sure of this:

- if you no longer settle for a **Christian life** that is merely status-quo
- If you've stepped out to give your all to the Lord
- You can expect to be assaulted by an ever-present evil.

*If this describes you -*

Satan and his helpers *will come after you with accusations, hindrances, lies that flood your thoughts.*

- You'll be tempted, persecuted, interrupted in your prayers.
- You must know that it's all a conspiracy of evil
- Aimed straight at your faith.

Satan won't bother harassing his own children because he has no controversy with them.

Jesus says of such people, *You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do.* (John 8:44).

- Satan has one thing in mind, and that is to undermine your faith.
  - He wants you to doubt God's faithfulness.
- **There are many today** – many who have lived for God for most of their lives...
- That have begun to doubt the Lord in the **midst of their trial**.
  - They simply **don't understand** what they are going through.
  - And what they are going through is a spiritual assault!

Make no mistake: the enemy's attacks are especially fierce in these last days.

- Such attacks simply **aren't** going to let up until Christ returns.
- Reality is, we're in a constant battle; and we must recognize it as such.

**\*\* 2<sup>nd</sup> EVER-PRESENT GOD**

**Second**, just as there is an ever-present evil, there is an ever-present God!

**God has promised us that**, "In your time of trouble – **when you face** a persistent, unrelenting, and ever-present evil – ***I will be your ever-present help!***"

We've already established that the phrase "ever present" means, "always here, always available, with unlimited access."

- In short, **the abiding presence of the Lord is always in us!**
  - And if **He's ever-present in us** -
  - then **He wants continual conversation with us.**
  
- **He wants us to talk with him** no matter where we are:
  - On the job,
  - With family,
  - With friends,
  - While we're hunting or fishing,
  - When we're on vacation,

Just remember, **he is always with us** and **He wants a relationship with us.**

***I refuse to accept the lie Satan*** has thrust upon so many of God's people today:

- That the Lord **has stopped speaking** to his people.
- It **doesn't matter** what the devil brings against us.

**God's power in his people will always be greater than Satan's assaults.**

### **\*\* 3<sup>rd</sup> EVER-PRESENT PROBLEM**

Finally, along with the **ever-present evil** and an **ever-present God**, we have an **ever-present problem of unbelief.**

This is **the only thing that hinders** some from an **intimate walk in the Spirit.**

- **Israel never did learn to trust God's ever-present help.**
  - **The Lord led them through the wilderness with *a cloud by day* and *a pillar of fire by night.***
  - These supernatural works **were visible reminders to God's people of his constant presence** with them.
  - He was **at their right hand** every hour of the day.
  - And **he led them** like a gentle, caring shepherd.

**When they obeyed him, they were safe and at peace, no matter what obstacles they faced.**

Yet, in spite of God's loving guidance, Psalm 78:22-23, 33 CEV

<sup>22</sup> They had refused to trust him, and they had doubted his saving power.

<sup>23</sup> But God gave a command to the clouds, and he opened the doors in the skies.

<sup>33</sup> So he cut their lives short and made them terrified.

- Do you see what the Psalmist is saying here?
- He's connecting the supernatural cloud and fire with God's salvation.
- Trusting in those signs literally would have saved the Israelites' lives.
  - But because they didn't trust in God's work on their behalf
  - They ended up lost
  - Wandering in confusion the rest of their days.

**CLOSE:**

Now I want to return to where we started, with Psalm 46.

I believe this Psalm is a picture of the New Testament "promised land."

Psalm 46 represents the divine rest referred to in Hebrews:

Hebrews 4:9 NKJV - There remains therefore a rest for the people of God.

- Psalm 46 describes this rest to God's people.
- It speaks of His ever-present strength,
- His help in time of trouble, and
- His peace in the midst of chaos.

God's presence is with us at all times and his help always arrives on time.

Yet Israel rejected this rest: Psalm 106:24 NKJV

<sup>24</sup> Then they despised the pleasant land; They did not believe His word

Sadly, the church today is much like Israel.

In spite of God's great promises to us

- His assurances of peace - Help and full supply
- We don't trust him fully
- Instead, we complain... Where is God in my trial?????????????????
- Is he with me or not?
- Where is any evidence of his presence?
- Why does he keep letting these hardships pile up on me?

How does he react to our unbelief?

**ALTAR CALL:**

Today, I hear the Lord *asking his church...*

**Do you believe** I still speak to my people?

**Do you believe** I desire to give you my help and guidance?

**Do you truly believe** I want to speak to you daily, hourly, moment by moment?

**Our response has to be like David's.**

That godly man **shook all of hell** when he made this statement about the Lord:

**Psalm 33:9 NKJV** - For He spoke, and **it was *done***; He commanded, and **it stood fast**.

Here is **God's covenant promise to every generation** who would believe his Word that he desires to speak to us:

**Psalm 33:11 CEV**

<sup>11</sup> But what the LORD has planned will stand forever. His thoughts never change.

- The Creator of the universe ***wants to share his very thoughts with us!***

More to the point, **God wants to speak to you about your problem today.**

**Won't you come?**