

# Sheltered

## Psalm 46:1-7

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### A. Present Help (vs. 1-3):

1. God is our refuge – Because God is supreme over everything, is sovereign, and can therefore decide what He wants to do whenever He wants to do it with total capacity and ability to accomplish His purposes, He is absolutely the safest place a person can find security on earth and in heaven (Matthew 6:10; Colossians 3:1-4).

a) Even if the whole fabric of the created world were in danger of collapsing, the community defiantly affirms its faith in the God who is “our refuge” and “strength,” a “help” always there in any time of trouble (v. 1). Here is witness to a faith which remains unshakable, while the very foundations of the world are being shaken. [\[1\]](#)

2. Strength – Being in a safe place means His power and might protect us to the point where we do not need to rely on our ability entirely. Psalm 34:7-8 says, *“The angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear Him, And rescues them. O taste and see that the Lord is good; How blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him! O fear the Lord, you His saints; For to those who fear Him there is no want.”* (NASU)

3. Strength – We experience God’s strength when we choose to put on and keep on His armor (Ephesians 6:10-17). We wear God’s protection from darts that are coming

towards us. This is why if we turn around by choosing not to walk by faith, it causes us to be destroyed (Hebrews 10:36-39).

a) But He doesn't protect us in order to pamper us. He shelters us so He can strengthen us to go back to life with its duties and dangers (29:11; 68:35; Isa. 40:31). Both concepts are found in 71:7. In times of crisis, the Jewish leaders were too prone to turn to Egypt for help (Isa. 30:1-2) when they should have turned to the Lord and trusted Him. He is an "ever-present help," but He cannot work for us unless we trust Him (Matt. 13:58).<sup>[2]</sup>

4. Strength – The strength of the Lord is to live in total dependence on the work of the Holy Spirit every moment of the day (Ephesians 3:16-19; 1 John 4:4).

5. Our present help – To be 'present' in the scripture means to find what we have been sincerely looking for. The Psalmist states that when we surrender our trust in Him because we fear Him more than our troubles, the protection we have been looking for will be His divine assistance, which means we are totally safe. It is kind of like being at war and needing protection. When the Lord protects, He is the divine intervention we have been desiring and needing the entire time. The hedge Job had become our experience (Psalm 34:7; Hebrews 1:14).

a) It furnishes the background for assuring the people that God will be present whatever the outward circumstances. The refrain found in verses 7 and 11 may originally have appeared also between verses 3 and 4.<sup>[3]</sup>

b) In other words they find safety and courage by trusting in Him, who is always present to help them (see comments on 30:10) in their troubles. So the saints need not fear, even if many perils come against them. The language is hyperbolic, to

describe how great the perils may be that could come. No matter what happens, those trusting in Him are safe.<sup>[4]</sup>

6. In trouble - The Lord is completely committed to assisting us when we are experiencing anguish or unfavorable circumstances. Because this is His disposition, He becomes what we seek and need when we encounter distressful situations.

a) A triumphant confession of fearless trust in God, through the continents break up and sink beneath the resurging waters of the seas – i.e., though the creation itself may seem to become uncreated (104:6-9; Gen. 1:9-10) and all may appear to be going down before the onslaught of the primeval deep. The described upheaval is probably imagery for great threats to Israel's existence (32:6), especially from her enemies (vv. ,8,10; 65:5-8). (NASU Study Bible)

b) The “waters” in verse 3 may also symbolize the unrest of the nations, mentioned in verse 6 (Dan. 7:2–3; Luke 21:25; Rev. 13:1; 17:15). Circumstances may change, but God's covenant with His people will never change (Isa. 54:10). He is our high tower and our refuge in the uncertainties of life.<sup>[5]</sup>

7. Therefore we will not fear – When our intense circumstances cause us to become very emotional, because God is our present help especially in distressful circumstances, we must make a decisive decision to expect evil to harm us.

a) The “times of trouble,” in which God offers protection, are times when chaos attempts to reassert its primacy over order, both in the natural world and in the world of nations and human affairs. The affirmation of God's presence in a protective capacity is the basis for the confidence in the community's words: “we shall not fear ...” (v 3).<sup>[6]</sup>

8. The earth changes, mountain into heart of the sea – Even when everything around us is falling apart we must trust in the promises of God, the ability of the Holy Spirit, and the strength of the armor and walk by faith, not by sight. We must remain sober (1 Peter 1:13), because Satan is a roaring lion, causing circumstances around us to make a lot of noise, so that we become intimidated and walk by sight, not faith (1 Peter 5:6). Peter can teach us from his failure and how that guided him to experience success (Acts 4).

## **B. Unshakable (vs. 4-5):**

1. A river whose streams make glad – For those who are committed to experiencing God’s presence in their lives, the Holy Spirit is a fresh movement whose fruit produces a spontaneous, festive joy. This is simulated in and through the Lord’s church (the city of God, where His people dwell).

a) The scene shifts into the city of Jerusalem where the people are confined because of the Assyrian army camped around them. Water was a precious commodity in Palestine and especially in Jerusalem, one of the few ancient cities not built on a river. Wisely, Hezekiah had built an underground water system that connected the Spring of Gihon in Kidron with the Pool of Siloam within the city, so water was available (2 Kings 20:20; 2 Chron. 32:30). But the psalmist knew that God was their river and provided them with the water of life (36:8; 65:9; 87:7; and see John 7:37–39). In the days of King Ahaz, Isaiah compared an Assyrian invasion to an overflowing river, but he reminded the Jews that their God was like a quiet river (Shiloah) and would bring them peace (Isa. 8:1–10). God’s people have always depended on the hidden spiritual resources that come from God alone. Whenever Israel turned to a pagan nation for help, they ended up in worse trouble.<sup>[7]</sup>

2. The Holy dwelling places – The church must be a place of holiness. This is why there is church discipline (Matthew 18:15-18; 1 Corinthians 5; Galatians 6:1-5 – the focus is to win our brothers and sisters back to Christ). It is so the holiness of God is respected since being in church is to be in the Holies of Holies (Hebrews 10:19-25). However, it takes everyone’s commitment to make this work (Ephesians 4:16; 1 Corinthians 12:4-7; 8-31). When this occurs, 1 Corinthians 12:27 says, “NOW you are Christ’s body, and individually members of it.”

a) Jerusalem was indeed the holy city, set apart by God, and His sanctuary was there, but these things were no guarantee of victory (Jer. 7:1–8). The king and the people needed to turn to the Lord in confession and faith, and He would hear and save them, and this is what they did. God did help Jerusalem when the morning dawned (v. 5 “right early,” *κλυ*), for the angel of the Lord killed 185,000 Assyrian soldiers and sent Sennacherib home (Isa. 37:36).<sup>[8]</sup>

3. The Holy dwelling places—The church in the New Testament is the only place Christ is the head of (Ephesians 1:22-23; Colossians 1:18), the only place that would withstand Satan's actions (Matthew 16:17-19; Ephesians 3:9-11), the only place where believers can grow up to the fullness of God (Ephesians 1:11-13, 16), and the only place that Christ is going to empower to change the world (Ephesians 1:23).

4. Of Most High – This is the ‘proper name of God, “signifying the exaltedness, supremacy, and overwhelming majesty of deity - reflects omnipotence (Ps. 18:13; Lam. 3:38), universality (Ps. 83:18), and constancy (Ps. 21:7).”

a) The title “most height,” “lord of heaven” and “creator of earth” were frequently applied to the chief Canaanite deity in ancient times. Terminology and

location (Jerusalem was in central Canaan) thus indicate that Melchizedek was probably a Canaanite king-priest. But Abraham, by identifying Melchizedek's "God Most High" with "the Lord" (vs. 22), bore testimony to the one true God whom Melchizedek had come to know. (NASU Study Bible)

5. Of Most High – No matter how powerful someone may seem, no one compares to how 'exalted, supreme and overwhelmingly majestic the God is.' Christ has all things below His feet (Philippians 2:9-11). In His city, He is the only person who is lifted up and the only person who keeps the stream flowing for His citizens (Ephesians 2:19-22).

6. God is in the midst of her – Even though God is supreme over everything, is sovereign, and can therefore decide what He wants to do whenever He wants to do it with total capacity and ability to accomplish His purposes, He is completely committed to remain in us forever (John 14:16-17; Colossians 3:1-4) sealing us for the day of redemption (Ephesians 1:13).

a) Whereas in v 2, it was God himself who was portrayed as the source of protection, now it is the city of God which is the immediate location of protection. And the city of God is safe because it is there, in his "holy dwelling place," that his presence might be experienced. [\[9\]](#)

7. Will not be moved – Because God is God, no one can shake Him, cause Him to change His mind, overpower Him so that He is displaced. Because God cannot be displaced, there is no need for us to fear and more reason to trust Him. When we abide in Him, no matter how difficult the circumstance may be, because God cannot be moved, we can walk by faith and not by sight (John 15:1-15). This is why Satan roars like a lion to make a lot of noise to create fear and uncertainty.

a) Though the mountains, traditional symbols of stability, may “slide” (v 3, מוט) into the seas, God’s city will not “slide” or “slip” (v 6, מוט), for God’s presence there would give it stability even on the dawn of the day on which chaotic forces assert themselves (v 6).<sup>[10]</sup>

8. God will help – God’s assistance is like an army powerfully rescuing those who cannot help themselves from the harm they are experiencing (Psalm 34:7-9).

### **C. We can Live Courageously (vs. 6-7):**

1. The nations made an uproar – The might and power of God do not intimidate the unsaved, they are completely committed to making as much noise as possible in their destruction of the world.

2. Raised His voice – None of the actions of the world, no matter how powerful their nuclear forces, can change the Word of God or alter God’s plans.

3. Melted; Faint—God’s Word is powerful (Hebrews 12:4). When executed, those who hear it, see it unfold, or experience its justice will tremble helplessly and even panic-stricken by its authoritative, dominant force. Pharaoh at the Red Sea, the Walls of Jericho, and the resurrection of Lazarus are just a few examples.

a) Indeed, Jehovah is God Most High! (v. 4). All He had to do was speak the word (v. 6), and the enemy was defeated.<sup>[11]</sup>

4. The Lord of Host with us – David intentionally switched from God to Lord and added Host. He did this to emphasize the might, authority, and power of our covenant-keeping Lord, who, because of His covenant, fights for us as the mightiest, most powerful King that anyone can ever encounter. His covenant binds Him to us. This may be why Paul says, *“What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us?”* (Romans 8:31; NASU)

a) The Commander of the armies of the Lord is always with us (Josh. 5:13–15), for He is “Immanuel, God with us” (Matt. 1:23; Isa. 7:14; 8:8). No matter what the circumstances, we may drink at the river of His joy and blessing and find the peace and strength we need.<sup>[12]</sup>

b) This is the ground of assurance. Our God, Jehovah, is “the Lord of hosts”—one who has countless angels at his command (2 Kings 6:16, 17; Ps. 68:17; Matt. 26:53). And he is “with us”—on our side, ready to help. The God of Jacob is our Refuge; *i.e.* our covenant God, the God who entered into covenant with our fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.<sup>[13]</sup>

5. God of Jacob – Because David is writing to Jews, he reminds them of all that the Lord has been for Jacob, who is and was a significant part of Jewish history.

6. God is our stronghold – As our Lord of Host, He is our very high tower, our fortress that is so fortified it is totally inaccessible to anyone or anything that can harm us (Psalm 34:7-10; Hebrews 1:14). This is why He is our refuge, our strength and there is no reason for us to fear. *“We can do all things through Christ”* (Philippians 4:13) and *“in all things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us.”* (Romans 8:37).

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<sup>[1]</sup> Davidson, R. (1998). [\*The vitality of worship: a commentary on the book of Psalms\*](#) (p. 152). W.B. Eerdmans; Handsel Press.

<sup>[2]</sup> Wiersbe, W. W. (2004). [\*Be worshipful\*](#) (1st ed., p. 173). Cook Communications Ministries.

<sup>[3]</sup> Pfeiffer, C. F. (1962). [\*The Wycliffe Bible Commentary: Old Testament\*](#) (Ps 46:1). Moody Press.

<sup>[4]</sup> Ross, A. P. (1985). [\*Psalms\*](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 1, p. 828). Victor Books.

<sup>[5]</sup> Wiersbe, W. W. (2004). [\*Be worshipful\*](#) (1st ed., p. 173). Cook Communications Ministries.

<sup>[6]</sup> Craigie, P. C. (1983). [\*Psalms 1–50\*](#) (Vol. 19, p. 344). Word, Incorporated.

<sup>[7]</sup> Wiersbe, W. W. (2004). [\*Be worshipful\*](#) (1st ed., pp. 173–174). Cook Communications Ministries.

<sup>[8]</sup> Wiersbe, W. W. (2004). [\*Be worshipful\*](#) (1st ed., p. 174). Cook Communications Ministries.

<sup>[9]</sup> Craigie, P. C. (1983). [\*Psalms 1–50\*](#) (Vol. 19, p. 344). Word, Incorporated.

<sup>[10]</sup> Craigie, P. C. (1983). [\*Psalms 1–50\*](#) (Vol. 19, p. 344). Word, Incorporated.

<sup>[11]</sup> Wiersbe, W. W. (2004). [\*Be worshipful\*](#) (1st ed., p. 174). Cook Communications Ministries.

<sup>[12]</sup> Wiersbe, W. W. (2004). [\*Be worshipful\*](#) (1st ed., p. 174). Cook Communications Ministries.

<sup>[13]</sup> Spence-Jones, H. D. M., ed. (1909). [\*Psalms\*](#) (Vol. 1, p. 358). Funk & Wagnalls Company.