

Unmoved

Psalm 46:1-8

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I. Earth Unsteady vs. 1-3

a. God

- i. Refuge - Shelter or protection from danger or distress. The main thought underlying the Hebrew terms translatable as “refuge” is security, protection
- ii. Strength- **refuge, protection** (always God sometimes as their stronghold, for defense
- iii. Stronghold – high point of refuge
 1. A place of refuge or defense such as a mountain fortress, guard tower, or hideout (Judg. 6:2, 26; 1 Chr. 12:8 cf. Isa. 33:16; “fortresses”), a strategic point on the walls of a city (25:12 “fortifications”), or simply a well-fortified city as a whole (Ps. 89:40; Lam. 2:2). “Stronghold” is a frequent metaphor for God as the one who gives judgment on behalf of the oppressed (Ps. 9:9 Heb. *mišgāb*; Jer. 16:19) or the one who guards the lives of those who trust him (Ps. 27:1; Nah. 1:7). At 2 Cor. 10:4 Gk. *ochýrōma* “strongholds” is a metaphor for “arguments and every proud obstacle to the knowledge of God” (v. 5).
- iv. Present Help
 1. Help - to find
 2. Trouble
 - a. **need, distress, anxiety** (the opposite of deliverance, salvation Anything causing pain or distress; suffering; calamity. From the biblical viewpoint, affliction began with the entrance of sin into the world. Both mankind and all creation were afflicted with “thorns and thistles,” sin, death, and decay

b. Us v.2

i. Not Fear

1. Unwarranted fear may harm the efforts of the people of God. Jeremiah was warned by God not to fear the faces of his opponents (Jer 1:8) lest God allow calamity to befall him (v.17). Similar calls to courage were given to Jeremiah’s contemporary, Ezekiel, and to a great many others (Jos 1:7, 9; Ez 2:6). We realize that even godly people are tempted to fear and may be temporarily overwhelmed (Ps 55:5). So God repeatedly counsels

his people not to succumb to that temptation (Is 8:12; Jn 14:1, 27).

Faith, then, is the indispensable antecedent of fearlessness

c. Earth v.3

i. Change – to alter

ii. Mountains

1. Though the mountains, traditional symbols of stability, may “slide” (v 3, טמ) into the seas, God’s city will not “slide” or “slip” (v 6, טמ), for God’s presence there would give it stability even on the dawn of the day on which chaotic forces assert themselves (v 6).

iii. Waters

1. Roar
2. Foam

iv. Mountains

1. Quake
2. it no doubt represents the experience of earthquakes, which were not unfamiliar to residents in the lands surrounding the great Rift Valley from the upper reaches of the Jordan to the Arabah in the south. The language is reminiscent of other contexts, in which the Hebrew poets employed language evocative of the shaking earth (Isa 24:19–20), the trembling mountains (Isa 54:10), and the disruption of land and sea alike (Hag 2:6). But at a deeper level, the poet is alluding to forces of chaos, never quite subdued and always threatening the order of creation; even in the face of chaotic powers, there would be no fear, for God had conquered chaos in creation
3. Swelling

II. People Unstable vs. 4-8

a. God’s Place

i. Holy Dwelling

1. Places of the Most High
2. Lord is with us
3. God in the midst

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

b. The psalmist observed that the peace of Jerusalem—**the city of God** with **the holy place where** God dwelt (i.e., made His presence known)—was secured by **God**. The

Lord's presence was like a peaceful flowing **river** (in contrast with perilous torrents, v. 3). (Cf. Isa. 8:6; 33:21, where the Lord is compared to a river encircling His city.) Because **God** was **within her**, the city would **not fall**. (Years later, however, the city *did* fall. Because of extensive idolatry in the temple, Ezek. 8, God's presence left, Ezek. 10. Without His protective presence, Jerusalem fell to the Babylonians.)

- ii. Not Moved- Sway
- iii. God will Help
- b. Nations Uproar
 - i. Kingdoms Uproar
 1. The psalmist then described God's mighty power: by His powerful word God **melts** the **nations** that roar against Him (cf. 2:5). Though **kingdoms** would **fall**, Jerusalem was safe.
 2. The central section of this portion of the psalm is to be found in the reference to "nations" and "kingdoms" in v 7. It is these human powers which now threaten their chaotic might, but they "slip" (v 7: טמו) like the mountains before them, while the city of God does "not slip" (v 6). The divine protection is here depicted as true stability in a world where powerful foreign nations are fundamentally unstable.
- c. God Defends
 - i. Lord of Host
 1. the very earth, which is the setting for the power of human states, "melts" beneath them (v 7d).
 2. primarily a military retinue or army, a meaning extension, the word also indicates warfare or military service
 3. the title is particularly appropriate in this context, for it is the "Lord of Armies" who offers protection against the armies of foreign nations and kingdoms. The title "God of Jacob" evokes specifically the *protective* character of God; see further the *Comment* on Ps 20:1.
 - ii. God of Jacob
 1. Fortress –
 - a. Thus **the LORD Almighty** is like a **fortress** (*mišgob*, "a high safe place," trans "fortress" in 46:11; 48:3; 59:9, 16–17; 62:2, 6; 94:22, and "stronghold" in 9:9; 18:2; 144:2) to His people (cf. 46:11). They find safety when they trust in Him

Word Studies

Refuge - Shelter or protection from danger or distress. The main thought underlying the Hebrew terms translatable as “refuge” is security¹, protection

Strength- **refuge, protection** (always God²sometimes as their stronghold, for defence³)

Present Help- The basic meaning of *māṣā*’ is “to find,” but the word takes on a variety of nuances depending on context⁴

Help- Deut 4:7; Ps 145:18- to **let oneself be found**

Trouble- **need, distress, anxiety** (the opposite of deliverance, salvation⁵)

Anything causing pain or distress; suffering; calamity. From the biblical viewpoint, affliction began with the entrance of sin into the world. Both mankind and all creation were afflicted with “thorns and thistles,” sin, death, and decay⁶ The Bible acknowledges that it is difficult to understand the many afflictions of the righteous (Ps 34:19; 37:39; 138:7). Even the prophet and “Servant of the Lord” (Messiah) were not spared (Is 53:2–12; Jer 15:15). Jesus Christ bore the griefs and sorrows of humankind as the culmination of the affliction begun by Adam’s sin (Is 53:4, 5; 1 Pt 2:24). The Bible sees this affliction as the outworking of the enmity between the “seed [offspring] of the woman” and the “seed of the serpent” (Gn 3:15).⁷

Fear

Unwarranted fear may harm the efforts of the people of God. Jeremiah was warned by God not to fear the faces of his opponents (Jer 1:8) lest God allow calamity to befall him (⁸v 17). Similar calls to courage were given to Jeremiah’s contemporary, Ezekiel, and to a great many others (Jos

¹ Allen C. Myers, [*The Eerdmans Bible Dictionary*](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1987), 877.

² Ludwig Koehler et al., [*The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*](#) (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1994–2000), 806.

³ Francis Brown, Samuel Rolles Driver, and Charles Augustus Briggs, [*Enhanced Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*](#) (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977), 739.

⁴ Randall Merrill, [“Seeking.”](#) ed. Douglas Mangum et al., *Lexham Theological Wordbook*, Lexham Bible Reference Series (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2014).

⁵ Ludwig Koehler et al., [*The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*](#) (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1994–2000), 1053.

⁶ Walter A. Elwell and Barry J. Beitzel, [“Affliction.”](#) *Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1988), 34.

⁷ Walter A. Elwell and Barry J. Beitzel, [“Affliction.”](#) *Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1988), 34.

⁸v verse

1:7, 9; Ez 2:6). We realize that even godly people are tempted to fear and may be temporarily overwhelmed (Ps 55:5). So God repeatedly counsels his people not to succumb to that temptation (Is 8:12; Jn 14:1, 27). He tells them to heap their anxieties upon the God of their redemption, whose care for his sheep is infinitely great (1 Pt 5:7). Faith, then, is the indispensable antecedent of fearlessness as seen in the words of Isaiah: “Thou dost keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusts in thee” (Is 26:3). The psalmist repeatedly stresses the role of faith in conquering fear (37:1; 46:2; 112:7).⁹

Change – alter

Psalm 46:3 affirms in a hyperbolic phrase, “though the earth be altered,” that God is still our refuge and strength. In Ps 15:4, the man who abides by his sworn word and does not change is the kind of man whom God will establish, but as for those who sin against him increasingly, he will change their glory into shame (Hos 4:7). When Israel worshiped the golden calf, they thereby changed their glory (i.e. their glorious God) into a bull that eats grass (Ps 106:20). Israel did what no other nation ever had done. The nations never changed their gods (which were not, after all, gods at all). But Israel changed their glory for that which did not profit at all (Jer 2:11).¹⁰

Moved - to **sway**

Lord of Host primarily a military retinue or army, a meaning¹¹extension, the word also indicates warfare or military service¹²

God of Jacob

Stronghold - **high point** for a refuge

A place of refuge or defense such as a mountain fortress, guard tower, or hideout (Judg. 6:2, 26; 1 Chr. 12:8 [M¹³T 9]; cf. Isa. 33:16; RS¹⁴V “fortresses”), a strategic point on the walls of a city (25:12; RS¹⁵V “fortifications”), or simply a well-fortified city as a whole (Ps.

⁹ Stuart D. Sacks, “[Fear](#),” *Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1988), 782.

¹⁰ Walter C. Kaiser, “[חַיָּל](#),” ed. R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer Jr., and Bruce K. Waltke, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1999), 495–496.

¹¹ E. Theodore Mullen Jr., “[Hosts, Host of Heaven](#),” ed. David Noel Freedman, *The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary* (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 301.

¹² E. Theodore Mullen Jr., “[Hosts, Host of Heaven](#),” ed. David Noel Freedman, *The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary* (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 302.

¹³MT Masoretic Text

¹⁴RSV Revised Standard Version

¹⁵RSV Revised Standard Version

89:40 [M¹⁶T 41; Lam. 2:2). “Stronghold” is a frequent metaphor for God as the one who gives judgment on behalf of the oppressed (Ps. 9:9 [M¹⁷T 10]; Heb. *mišgāb*; Jer. 16:19) or the one who guards the lives of those who trust him (Ps. 27:1; Nah. 1:7). At 2 Cor. 10:4 Gk. *ochýrōma* “strongholds” is a metaphor for “arguments and every proud obstacle to the knowledge of God” (v. 5).¹⁸

¹⁶MT Masoretic Text

¹⁷MT Masoretic Text

¹⁸ Allen C. Myers, [*The Eerdmans Bible Dictionary*](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1987), 971.

Commentary Studies

Form/Structure/Setting

Psalm 46 has the general character of a hymn, in which the refuge and protection that God provides are the focal point of the praise; but it is probably not a hymn in a more formal sense, lacking (as it does) an introductory exhortation to praise and having a distinctive internal structure (below). Since Gunkel's time, it has been recognized widely as a "song of Zion" (to which Gunkel added the adjective *eschatological*), along with Pss 48, 76, 84, 87 and 122; see further Kraus, *Psalmen 1–59*, 496–99. But whereas there are clear similarities between Ps 46 and the Songs of Zion, there are also grave problems with such a classification of the form. The implied association with Zion is to be found in v 5, with the reference to the "city of God" and the "holy dwelling place"; nevertheless, the psalm differs from the clearly established Songs of Zion in that it contains no explicit references to either Zion or Jerusalem. Indeed, Weiss (art. cit.) has stressed the universal character of the psalm, lacking reference to either Jerusalem or Israel: but against such a stress, the terminology is distinctively Hebrew (e.g. v 7 "God of Jacob"), although there are more universal elements as well (e.g. v 5: "Most High," or *Elyon*). Hence, after Krinetzki (art. cit.), it is best to classify the psalm as a *psalm of confidence*; but though such a classification is appropriate in descriptive terms, it is insufficiently precise with respect to the particular peculiarities of Ps 46 (see further below).

In terms of structure, the psalm falls into three units, each of approximately equivalent length, each separated by the word *SELAH*. (1) God's refuge in the context of natural phenomena (vv 2–4); (2) God's refuge in the context of the nations of the world (vv 5–8); (3) God's refuge in the context of both natural and national powers (vv 9–12). It is possible that the twice repeated refrain (vv 8, 12) originally occurred also after v 5 (cf. *BH¹⁹S*, note). The three parts of this literary structure have been closely woven together by the particular usage of certain words. The key word in the whole psalm is *earth* (אָרֶץ; cf. Kelly, art. cit.), appearing in all three sections (vv 3, 7, 9, 10, 11) and providing the overall unity of theme. The first two sections are closely related by the repeated use of the following terms: (a) עֲזַר "help" (vv 2, 6); (b) מוֹט "slide, slip" (vv 3, 6, 7); (c) הַמָּה "roar" (vv 4, 7). The second and third sections are linked through the repeated use of גוֹיִם "nations" (vv 7, 11). The whole psalm is further rounded out in that the substance of the refrains (vv 8, 12) reflects the substance of the opening declaration (v 2). Thus the central theme of the psalm is *protection* (vv 2, 8, 12) in God's *earth* (vv 3, 7, 9, 10, 11).

The classification of the text as a psalm of confidence does not provide any sure guide as to its setting; a cultic setting may be supposed on the basis of v 5, though it is by no means certain. Again, the words of v 11, which have something of the character of a cultic or prophetic oracle, might be indicative of a setting; but, in view of the finely worked literary structure of the psalm as a whole, the divine words of v 11 might more appropriately be interpreted in literary terms. Verse 11 brings together the two subthemes of the early parts of the psalm (protection from

¹⁹*BHS Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*. Ed. K. Elliger and W. Rudolph. Stuttgart, 1983.

nature and protection from nations); it is appropriate that the two sources of potential threat should be converted into praise by the divine declaration.

It is more likely that the particular and distinctive language and motifs of the psalm will provide a clue to its initial setting. There are elements of the chaos-motif, so familiar in Near Eastern mythology and, in adapted form, elsewhere in the psalms (e.g. Ps 29). But much more distinctive is the motif of the “river” (v 5), which is associated with the throne of El. Although both these themes were no doubt present in the ancient (pre-Hebrew) cult and mythology of Jerusalem, they are not distinctively “Jebusite” (contra Neve, art. cit.). El’s throne, at the “head of two streams,” is clearly illustrated in the Ugaritic texts (*CT²⁰A* 17.vi.47). Thus, following the suggestion of Eissfeldt (*Kleine Schriften*, IV, 10–11), it is probable that Ps 46 should be associated with the establishment of David’s royal cult in Jerusalem. It brings together the ancient Hebrew traditions and blends them with the Jerusalem traditions. The Hebrew antecedent to the psalm is probably to be found in the Song of the Sea (Exod 15:1–18), for many of that song’s themes are developed in the present psalm: (1) the Lord’s strength and protection (Exod 15:2; Ps 46:2, 8, 12; cf. Craigie, *V²¹T* 22 (1972) 145–46); (2) the Lord’s subjugation of the chaotic waters (Exod 15:4–5, 8, 10; Ps 46:3–4; cf. Craigie, *Tynd²²B* 22 [1971] 3–31); (3) the Lord’s *dwelling*, secured by his victory (Exod 15:17; Ps 46:5). These ancient themes are worked into the language already known in Jerusalem, such as *Elyon* (v 5; see Gen 14:18–24), thereby establishing the Lord’s rightful presence in the stronghold which was Jerusalem. The lack of specificity, in the absence of reference to Jerusalem or Zion in explicit terms, is no doubt to be explained by the original setting of Ps 46 in the very earliest period of the history of the Hebrew cult in Jerusalem. Thus Ps 46 appears to stand at a midway point between the very earliest of Hebrew traditions, represented by the Song of the Sea, and the later more classical representations of the tradition in the Songs of Zion.²³

Comment

God’s protection in natural catastrophes (46:2–4). Verse 2 introduces the theme of the psalm as a whole, which reappears in the refrains (vv 8, 12) that give the psalm its total structure. 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).

In powerful poetry, the psalmist describes a fearful earthquake; mountains tumble into the sea, and the tumult and tidal waves of the ocean make the remaining mountains tremble again. Though the language is poetic and not strictly descriptive, it no doubt represents the experience

²⁰*CTA Corpus des tablettes en cunéiformes alphabétiques*. Ed. A. Herdner. Paris, 1963.

²¹*VT Vetus Testamentum*

²²*TyndB Tyndale Bulletin*

²³ Peter C. Craigie, [Psalms 1–50](#), 2nd ed., vol. 19, Word Biblical Commentary (Nashville, TN: Nelson Reference & Electronic, 2004), 342–344.

of earthquakes, which were not unfamiliar to residents in the lands surrounding the great Rift Valley from the upper reaches of the Jordan to the Arabah in the south. The language is reminiscent of other contexts, in which the Hebrew poets employed language evocative of the shaking earth (Isa 24:19–20), the trembling mountains (Isa 54:10), and the disruption of land and sea alike (Hag 2:6). But at a deeper level, the poet is alluding to forces of chaos, never quite subdued and always threatening the order of creation; even in the face of chaotic powers, there would be no fear, for God had conquered chaos in creation. Thus the language of confidence here is rooted in creation, for God's order emerged from primeval chaos (Gen 1:1–2). But God's creation (Exod 15:17) of Israel had also been a consequence of his control of the chaotic waters, by which he conquered Pharaoh and redeemed his people (Exod 15:1–10); hence the psalmist now turns from confidence in the face of natural chaotic forces, to confidence in the face of national threats.

God's protection in national (or international) catastrophes (46:5–8). 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. The reference to the "river" and its "streams" describes the city in language reminiscent of Canaanite mythology. The throne of the high god El, at the head of two streams (CT²⁴A 17.vi.47), is localized in a particular place. But in the psalm, the ancient cult of El Elyon ("God Most High"), traditionally associated with King Melchizedek (Gen 14:18–19), is identified as the same true tradition as that associated with *Yahweh of Hosts*, the "God of Jacob" (v 8). 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).

The central section of this portion of the psalm is to be found in the reference to "nations" and "kingdoms" in v 7. It is these human powers which now threaten their chaotic might, but they "slip" (v 7: מוט) like the mountains before them, while the city of God does "not slip" (v 6). The divine protection is here depicted as true stability in a world where powerful foreign nations are fundamentally unstable. God speaks (v 7c; the allusion is to the *thunder* of God's voice, as in Ps 29 and the Ugaritic texts; see CT²⁵A 4.v. 70), and the very earth, which is the setting for the power of human states, "melts" beneath them (v 7d). In the refrain that concludes the section, the old titles or epithets for God, "Lord of Hosts" (or *Armies*) and "God of Jacob," refer back to Israel's ancient traditions. On the "Lord of Hosts," see further P. D. Miller, *The Divine Warrior in Early Israel* (HS²⁶M 5. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1973), 145–55; the title is particularly appropriate in this context, for it is the "Lord of Armies" who offers protection against the armies of foreign nations and kingdoms. The title "God of Jacob" evokes specifically the *protective* character of God; see further the *Comment* on Ps 20:1.

²⁴CTA *Corpus des tablettes en cunéiformes alphabétiques*. Ed. A. Herdner. Paris, 1963.

²⁵CTA *Corpus des tablettes en cunéiformes alphabétiques*. Ed. A. Herdner. Paris, 1963.

²⁶HSM Harvard Semitic Monographs

God's refuge in the context of both natural and national powers (46:9–12). The poetic invitation to *come* and *see* introduces the final section of the psalm, in which the two themes of the preceding sections are woven together in a passage forming a suitable climax. The worshipers can “see” what God has done in the earth (v 9), indicative of his control of the world of nature; and they can “see” what he has done to human powers, making peace and breaking the instruments of war (v 10), indicating thereby his control of the world of history. The divine words (v 11), which are probably not in the form of an oracle (see *Form/Structure/Setting*, above), indicate the transformation of all chaotic forces into instruments of divine praise. Both the “nations” and the “earth” (v 11), which earlier were depicted as posing a threat to orderly existence, are now harnessed in service to the exaltation of God. Hence the people may “relax” in appropriate confidence (v 11a); to know that God is God is to know his Lordship of nature and history, and therefore to be aware of his total capacity as Protector.

Explanation

Psalm 46 contains one of the clearest elaborations in the Bible of the theological implications of the faith in *creation*. The two versions of the fourth commandment provide the dimensions of Israel's creation faith. The primary faith in creation concerned God's creation of the world as such (Exod 20:11; cf. Gen 1); the secondary faith, given expression in the second form of the commandment, was rooted in God's redemption and creation of the nation Israel from Egyptian bondage (Deut 5:15; cf. Exod 15:1–18). In each case, creation represents the establishment of order where formerly there was chaos, either the chaotic primeval waters (Gen 1:1–2), or the bondage of Egypt which was crushed and ended by the waters of the Reed Sea. The first focus of creation faith established God's kingship and rule in the realm of nature; the second focus of creation faith established God's kingship in the realm of history (Exod 15:18).

In the psalm, the natural implication of this creation theology is drawn out and expressed in a statement of confidence. Because God controls both history and nature, the chaotic threat which both may offer to human existence may be faced fearlessly. The very worst manifestation of chaos is merely a threat, for the Creator has mastered chaos. And yet, as Gunkel rightly observed, there is an eschatological element in the psalm, though it is implicit rather than explicit. The order of creation has been established, and yet the reality of human existence is that there continue to be manifestations of chaos. Faith in God's protection, expressed so profoundly in this psalm, is both present and proleptic, reaching forward to the time of God's ultimate conquest of chaos and establishment of peace²⁷

²⁷ Peter C. Craigie, [*Psalms 1–50*](#), 2nd ed., vol. 19, Word Biblical Commentary (Nashville, TN: Nelson Reference & Electronic, 2004), 344–346.

Str²⁸. I. has three couplets; the second line of each, starting from the syn²⁹. idea, amplifies and intensifies it in stairlike advance.—**2.** *Yahweh*], original divine name of Ps., for which *God* was substituted in , also v³⁰. 5, 6a, b., 11.—*is ours*], belonging to us, our own; weakened in E³¹V^{32s33}. into “our,” which, moreover, obscures the force of the cæsura in the middle of the line.—*a refuge*], to whom His people may resort, |³⁴| *strength*], the place of it, the source of it, |³⁵| *help*]. Yahweh Himself is all this, in *troubles*, as subsequently explained, first as caused by a severe earthquake, and then by warlike commotions of the nations.—*to be found abundantly*], that is, not to be anxiously sought and difficult to reach, but accessible, to the full extent of the need.—**3.** *Therefore we will not fear*], because there is a sure resort from all danger.—*though the earth roar*], with the loud rumbling sound of earthquake. By an early copyist’s mistake, the verb was mistaken for another, meaning “change”, , E³⁶V^{37s}, moved from one place to another |³⁸| *mountains totter*], so severely shaken that they totter and fall *into the heart of the sea*. The poet had probably witnessed such an earthquake, and seen portions of Mt. Carmel falling into the Mediterranean Sea.—**4.** *The seas roar, their waters foam*], by the effect of the earthquake itself, and the masses of rock and soil falling into them. By an ancient copyist’s mistake the measure has been destroyed by the omission of “seas,” because of its closing the previous line; and the remaining noun has thus become the subject of both verbs, as in E³⁹V^{40s41}.—*Mountains shake*], those portions that have not tumbled into the sea.—*with the swelling of its stream*]. Great waves come in from the sea, produced frequently by such an earthquake, and, swelling up against the mountains, dash against them with so much power as to shake them to their foundations. An ancient copyist has made an error in dividing the verses, attaching “stream” to the following verse, destroying the measure of both verses and changing their thought.

²⁸**Str.** strophe.

²⁹syn. synonymous.

³⁰v. verse.

☪ The Elohist Psalter.

³¹EV English Versions.

^{32s} English Versions.

³³. English Versions.

³⁴|| parallel, of words or clauses chiefly synonymous.

³⁵|| parallel, of words or clauses chiefly synonymous.

³⁶EV English Versions.

☪ The Psalter of the Mizmorim.

^{37s} English Versions.

³⁸|| parallel, of words or clauses chiefly synonymous.

³⁹EV English Versions.

^{40s} English Versions.

⁴¹. English Versions.

The Rf⁴². has been omitted after v⁴³. 4, because unimportant in liturgical use; but it was originally at the close of this Str⁴⁴. as well as of the others, v⁴⁵. 8, 12.—*Yahweh*] has been preserved in the refrains by , though changed for God in the Strs.; but *God of Hosts*, the older form, is also needed for the measure. *God* was probably omitted by the editor of R⁴⁶., otherwise would have preserved it.—*God of Jacob*], the ancient poetic title of God, characteristic of ⁴⁷, —*is with us*], companionship, especially for help. Indeed, that was the original meaning of the divine name, “Yahweh,” acc. t⁴⁸o Ex. 3:12–15 (E⁴⁹.), BDB⁵⁰., cf⁵¹. Is. 8:10, and “Immanuel,” Is. 7:14.—*our high tower*], as Pss. 9:10; 18:3, RV⁵².^{53m} The “refuge” of E⁵⁴V^{55s} weakens the metaphor.

Str⁵⁶. II. has also three couplets which are stairlike in character.—**5.** *His brooks*], not those of the stream, which latter really belong to the previous Str⁵⁷., as the stream of the sea; but those of Yahweh Himself; and thus figurative of the rich blessings of His favour to His city. The poet had in mind the watercourses built by Hezekiah, bringing water from the Wady Urtas to Jerusalem, and distributing it into several brooks and ponds, cf⁵⁸. Is. 8:5 sq⁵⁹. 2 K. 20:20, also Ps. 1:3.—*make glad the city of Yahweh*], Jerusalem, the capital of the Davidic dynasty and of Yahweh Himself, whose temple, or palace, made it sacred.—*The holy place of the tabernacle*], combining the two ideas of the dwelling-place and the consecrated place.—*Elyon*], most High, the poetic divine name, as 47:3, cf⁶⁰. 57:3; 78:56.—**6.** *Yahweh is in her midst*], dwelling in her in His palace and capital. The poet has the same thought here as Zp. 3:15, and the historical situation is probably the same.—*she cannot be made to totter*], resuming the thought of the

⁴²Rf. refrain.

⁴³v. verse.

⁴⁴Str. strophe.

⁴⁵v. verse.

⁴⁶R. The Redactor, or editor.

☪ The Elohistc Psalter.

⁴⁷☪ The Korahite Psalter.

☪ The Elohistc Psalter.

⁴⁸acc. to according to.

⁴⁹E. Ephraemite sources of Hezateuch.

⁵⁰BDB. Hebrew and English Lexicon of the OT., edited by F. Brown, S. R. Driver, C. A. Briggs. The editor specially referred to is designated by BDB. F. Brown, BDB. S. R. Driver.

⁵¹cf. confer, compare.

⁵²RV. The margin of the Revised Version.

^{53m} The margin of the Revised Version.

⁵⁴EV English Versions.

^{55s} English Versions.

⁵⁶**Str.** strophe.

⁵⁷Str. strophe.

⁵⁸cf. confer, compare.

⁵⁹sq. followed by.

⁶⁰cf. confer, compare.

earthquake of v⁶¹. 3b preparatory to that of the commotion of the nations.—*at the turn of the morn*], as the morning turns in to take the place of the night. The night is the time of gloom, the morn of redemption, as 30:6; 90:14.—**7. Nations roared**]. The Scythian hosts, by their rapid invasion of Western Asia, were like the waves of an earthquake in the effect upon the nations, Zp. 1–2.—*kingdoms tottered*], falling into ruins. It was all the work of Yahweh Himself, as Zp. declares.—*Has He uttered His voice*], in this the great day of His historic judgment upon the nations, cf⁶². 68:34.—*the earth melteth*], in terror, as Am. 9:5, cf⁶³. Ez. 21:20; Pss. 75:4; 107:26.

Str⁶⁴. III. has three couplets of the same stairlike parall⁶⁵.—**9. Come, behold**], emphatic summons.—*the works of Yahweh*], the works He has wrought, the deeds He has done. These are defined as *desolations* in the earth, the destruction of kingdoms and nations by the invading hordes. All this is preparatory to a better future, in which universal peace will prevail.—**10. He is causing wars to cease**], by destroying the warlike nations and the kingdoms which have waged war against the city of God in the past.—*unto the ends of the earth*], to remote regions this destruction has extended. The instruments of war are destroyed, as in earlier prophets, Ho. 2:20; Is. 9:4; Mi. 4:1–4, cf⁶⁶. Ez. 39:9–10, which refers to an eschatological invasion of a similar kind. An additional line has been added by a later editor to emphasise this destruction, but at the expense of the measure and symmetry of Str⁶⁷., *Wagons He burneth in the fire*.—**11. Desist**], that is, from war. These are the words of Yahweh addressed to the nations,—*and know*], the fact *that it is I, Yahweh*, who am doing all this, and it is vain to resist me. This is not a recognition of God as God, which in Vrss⁶⁸. is due to the substitution of “Elohim” for Yahweh by .—*I shall be exalted*], repeated for emphasis; that is, in majesty, and the exhibition of it in the deeds above described,—*among the nations |⁶⁹| in the earth*], among all nations and throughout the entire world.

⁶¹v. verse.

⁶²cf. confer, compare.

⁶³cf. confer, compare.

⁶⁴**Str.** strophe.

⁶⁵parall. parallel with.

⁶⁶cf. confer, compare.

⁶⁷Str. strophe.

⁶⁸Vrss. Versions, usually ancient.

⁶⁹|| parallel, of words or clauses chiefly synonymous.

☪ The Elohistc Psalter.

2. נִמְצָא Niph⁷⁰. ptc⁷¹., Ew⁷²., De⁷³., Moll., Bā⁷⁴.; but Hu⁷⁵., Pe⁷⁶., Du⁷⁷., pf⁷⁸. ταῖς εὐρούσαις ἤμας is paraphrase.—3. בְּהִמְיֵר inf⁷⁹. cstr⁸⁰. מור not used in Qal; Hiph⁸¹. *change, alter*, BDB⁸². Bā⁸³., supplies in thought *ihre Stätte*; Du⁸⁴. פְּנִיָּה Aq⁸⁵., ⁸⁶Σ, ἀλλάσσεσθαι, *cum fuerit translata terra*. But ἐν τῷ ταρασσεσθαι τὴν γῆν favours בְּהִמְיֵר here as יהמו v⁸⁷. 4, המו v⁸⁸. 7. This gives a better mng⁸⁹., the *roar* of the earthquake.—[בְּלֵב] *into the midst*, as Ex. 15:8; Ez. 27:27, cf⁹⁰. Jon. 2:4.—4. יִהְמוּ Qal impf⁹¹. concessive, carrying on inf⁹². with ב. For המה v⁹³. 39:7.—[יִתְמְרוּ] in emph⁹⁴. coördination. ⁹⁵‡ חמר vb⁹⁶. Qal, *ferment, boil, foam*, elsw⁹⁷. of wine 75:2 (?). Pe'al'al of *bowels* La. 1:20; 2:11. The l. is defective in measure. Both vbs⁹⁸. need subjs⁹⁹. in tetrameter. ימים has been omitted by haplog¹⁰⁰. because of its occurrence at close of previous l.—בְּגִאוֹתוֹ for בְּגִאוֹת נהר, necessary for measure. נהר has been attached by error to next l., making it too long.

⁷⁰Niph. Niphal of verb.

⁷¹ptc. participle.

⁷²Ew. H. Ewald.

⁷³De. Franz Delitzsch.

⁷⁴Bā. F. Baethgen.

⁷⁵Hu. H. Hupfeld, *Psalmen*.

⁷⁶Pe. J. J. S. Perowne.

⁷⁷Du. B. Duhm.

⁷⁸pf. perfect.

⁷⁹inf. infinitive.

☞ Greek Septuagint Version.

⁸⁰cstr. construct.

⁸¹Hiph. Hiphil of verb.

⁸²BDB. Hebrew and English Lexicon of the OT., edited by F. Brown, S. R. Driver, C. A. Briggs. The editor specially referred to is designated by BDB. F. Brown, BDB. S. R. Driver.

⁸³Bā. F. Baethgen.

⁸⁴Du. B. Duhm.

⁸⁵Aq. Version of Aquila.

⁸⁶Σ The Version of Symmachus.

⁸⁷v. verse.

⁸⁸v. verse.

⁸⁹mng. meaning.

⁹⁰cf. confer, compare.

⁹¹impf. imperfect.

⁹²inf. infinitive.

⁹³v. *vide*, see.

⁹⁴emph. emphasis, emphatic.

⁹⁵‡ prefixed indicates all passages in ψ cited.

⁹⁶vb. verb.

⁹⁷elsw. elsewhere.

⁹⁸vbs. verb.

⁹⁹subjs. subject.

¹⁰⁰haplog. haplography.

נהר is the stream of the sea, as 93:3; 98:8.—5. קִדְשׁ *holy place*, for קִיְשׁ, as ¹⁰¹Σ, ¹⁰²; קִדְשׁ as adj¹⁰³; ἡγίασεν ¹⁰⁴= קִדְשׁ, *consecrate*, with עליון subj¹⁰⁵, so Bā¹⁰⁶, Du¹⁰⁷, is opposed by usage of Pss.—מְשַׁכְּנֵי א.ל.¹⁰⁸ for מְשַׁכְּנֹת improb. ¹⁰⁹, Houb¹¹⁰, Horsley, Bā¹¹¹, Du¹¹², משכנו still leaves 1. defective; rd¹¹³. יהוה; יהוה; משכן יהוה; omitted by.—6. [לְפָנוֹת] inf¹¹⁴. cstr¹¹⁵. לְ temporal.—7. [נָתַן בְּקוּלוֹ] as 68:34 for usual יהוה צבאוה ¹¹⁷. יהוה, and singularly enough a later copyist restored it, doubtless because of its use in Rfs.—¹²¹ [שְׂמוֹת] שְׂמָה n¹²².f¹²³. (1) obj¹²⁴. of astonishment and horror, Dt. 28:37, τέρατα, Hu¹²⁵, Ew¹²⁶, Pe¹²⁷, Bā¹²⁸; (2) better, *desolations* Ps. 73:19; Is. 5:9; Ho. 5:9; Je. 2:15, , Calv¹²⁹, Dr¹³⁰.—10. [עֲגָלוֹת]

¹⁰¹Σ The Version of Symmachus.

¹⁰²Ⲛ Latin Version of Jerome.

¹⁰³adj. adjective.

¹⁰⁴= equivalent, equals.

¹⁰⁵subj. subject.

¹⁰⁶Bā. F. Baethgen.

¹⁰⁷Du. B. Duhm.

¹⁰⁸α.λ. ἀπαξ λεγόμενον, word or phr. used once.

¹⁰⁹Ⲛ Greek Septuagint Version.

¹¹⁰Houb. C. F. Houbigant.

¹¹¹Bā. F. Baethgen.

¹¹²Du. B. Duhm.

¹¹³rd. read.

¹¹⁴inf. infinitive.

¹¹⁵cstr. construct.

¹¹⁶v. verse.

¹¹⁷יְ, *Yahweh*.

¹¹⁸Imv. imperative.

¹¹⁹‡ prefixed indicates all passages in ψ cited.

¹²⁰elsw. elsewhere.

¹²¹‡ prefixed indicates all passages in ψ cited.

¹²²n. noun.

¹²³f. feminine.

¹²⁴obj. object.

¹²⁵Hu. H. Hupfeld, *Psalmen*.

¹²⁶Ew. H. Ewald.

¹²⁷Pe. J. J. S. Perowne.

¹²⁸Bā. F. Baethgen.

¹²⁹Calv. John Calvin.

¹³⁰Dr. S. R. Driver, *Parallel Psalter*.

carts, always for transportation, BDB¹³¹., dub¹³². θυρεούς, *scuta*, עגלִין, cf¹³³. Aram¹³⁴. עגיל, *round shield*. This l. is trimeter and excessive to the Str¹³⁵. and is doubtless a gl¹³⁶. of intensification.¹³⁷

46. A song of Zion whose refrain of reassurance, “Yahweh of hosts is with us,” could also justify its classification as a psalm of confidence.

2. *our shelter and stronghold*. See NOTE on Ps 28:8.

found from of old. Reading *mē`ād*, the Canaanite form of *mē`āz*, for M¹³⁸T *m^e`ōd*. Ugar¹³⁹. *id*, “time, then,” equals Ar¹⁴⁰. *’id* and Heb¹⁴¹. *’āz*, while Ugar¹⁴². *idk* answers to Ar¹⁴³. *’idāk*, “then”; cf. Driver, CM¹⁴⁴L, p. 135a. Other dialectal words involving the interchange of *d* and *z* have been noted at Ps 21:7 and in PNWS¹⁴⁵P, p. 32. Another dialectal form can be seen in vs. 9,

¹³¹BDB. Hebrew and English Lexicon of the OT., edited by F. Brown, S. R. Driver, C. A. Briggs. The editor specially referred to is designated by BDB. F. Brown, BDB. S. R. Driver.

¹³²dub. dubious, doubtful.

¹³³cf. confer, compare.

¹³⁴Aram. Aramaic.

¹³⁵Str. strophe.

¹³⁶gl. gloss, glossator.

¹³⁷ Charles A. Briggs and Emilie Grace Briggs, [*A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Psalms*](#), International Critical Commentary (New York: C. Scribner’s Sons, 1906–1907), 394–397.

¹³⁸MT Masoretic Text

¹³⁹Ugar. Ugaritic

¹⁴⁰Ar. Arabic

¹⁴¹Heb. Hebrew

¹⁴²Ugar. Ugaritic

¹⁴³Ar. Arabic

¹⁴⁴CML *Canaanite Myths and Legends*, by G. R. Driver

¹⁴⁵PNWSP *Proverbs and Northwest Semitic Philology*, by M. Dahood

where consonantal *šmwt* equals Ugar¹⁴⁶. *šmt*, “oil, fatness,” and where classical Hebrew has *šemen* and *š^emēnāh* (Gen 49:20).

This assumption brings within reach a solution of the long-standing crux in Ps 139:14, *w^enapšī yāda tā* (M¹⁴⁷T *yōda at*) *mē ād* (M¹⁴⁸T *m^e ōd*) “And my soul you knew from of old.” The standard emendation *mē āz* becomes unnecessary. Very frequent in Isaiah, the adverb *mē āz* is found in Pss 76:8 and 93:2, *nākōn kis^okā mē āz*, “Your throne has been established from of old.” Ps 93:5, *m d* is Canaanite for 93:2, *mē āz*, “from of old.”

3. *we will not fear*. Notice the rare construction *nīra b^e*, found elsewhere only in Jer 51:46 and possibly in Ps 49:6. Were Ugaritic to employ *yr* with a preposition, it would be with *b* (or, less likely, with *l*), since *min* is extremely rare in that dialect. The motif of the fear of death is mentioned in U¹⁴⁹T, 67:iii:6–7, *yraun aliyn b l tt nn rkb rpt*, “Victor Baal feared him (i.e., Mot), filled with dread of him was the Mounter of the Clouds.”

jaws of the nether world. Explaining *h^amīr* (pointing uncertain) *āreš* through U¹⁵⁰T, 67:i:6–8, *lyrt bnpš bn ilm mt bmhmrt ydd il ġzr*, “Indeed you must descend into the throat of divine Mot, into the jaws of El’s beloved, Ghazir,” and U¹⁵¹T, 51:viii:8–12, *tspr byrdm arš idk al ttn pnm tk qrth hmry*, “Be numbered among those who descend into the nether world, be now on your way toward his city Hmry.” Both *mhmrt* and *hmry* can derive from *hmr*, which in Arabic denotes “to pour down.” Scholars (e.g., Cassuto in IE¹⁵²J 12 [1962], 81) have correctly identified *mhmrt* with Ps 140:11, *mah^amārōt*, usually rendered “miry depths,” and it is here proposed that *h^amīr* be associated with the name of Mot’s city *hmry*. Fuller discussion may be found in *Biblica* 40 (1959), 167 f., and, more recently, in M. H. Pope, JB¹⁵³L 83 (1964), 277, who arrives at the same conclusion as Cassuto regarding the meaning and etymology of Ugar¹⁵⁴. *mhmrt*, biblical *mhmrt*. This root has recently been recognized by Nicholas Tromp (unpublished) in a “Northern” dual form in Job 17:2, *im lō hattillēm* (M¹⁵⁵T *h^atūlīm*) *immādī ūb^ehamīrōtēm* (M¹⁵⁶T *ūb^ehamm^erōtām*) *tālīn* (M¹⁵⁷T *tālan*) *ēnī*, “Indeed the two mounds are before me, and in the twin miry deeps my eye will sleep.” For the vocalization *tillēm*, see U¹⁵⁸T, 51:viii:4, *m tlm ġšr arš*, “toward the two mounds at the edge of the nether world.” That this is the general sense of the verse in Job is tolerably clear from the preceding verse, “My spirit is broken, my days are snuffed out, the grave is mine.”

¹⁴⁶Ugar. Ugaritic

¹⁴⁷MT Masoretic Text

¹⁴⁸MT Masoretic Text

¹⁴⁹UT *Ugaritic Textbook*, 4th ed., 1965, of C H. Gordon’s *Ugaritic Grammar*

¹⁵⁰UT *Ugaritic Textbook*, 4th ed., 1965, of C H. Gordon’s *Ugaritic Grammar*

¹⁵¹UT *Ugaritic Textbook*, 4th ed., 1965, of C H. Gordon’s *Ugaritic Grammar*

¹⁵²IEJ Israel Exploration Journal

¹⁵³JBL Journal of Biblical Literature and Exegesis

¹⁵⁴Ugar. Ugaritic

¹⁵⁵MT Masoretic Text

¹⁵⁶MT Masoretic Text

¹⁵⁷MT Masoretic Text

¹⁵⁸UT *Ugaritic Textbook*, 4th ed., 1965, of C H. Gordon’s *Ugaritic Grammar*

toppling of the mountains. Referring to the cosmic upheaval of the latter days. The imagery would readily spring to mind along the Phoenician littoral where the Lebanon Mountains in many places begin their rise at the edge of the Mediterranean waters. Briggs, CECB¹⁵⁹P, I, p. 394, suggests that the poet may have seen portions of Mount Carmel falling into the Mediterranean Sea. An originally geographical description had become a part of mythological language so that any poet could have used it. The images of the “jaws of the nether world” and the “toppling of the mountains” belong to the picture of the great final catastrophe.

heart of the sea. Hebrew lexicons point out that *b^elēb* is seldom used of things. Its use with *yam* may reflect a mythopoeic origin; in Canaanite mythology, personified Yamm or Sea was one of Baal’s chief rivals. Consonantal *ymym* may be parsed as either a plural of majesty or as singular *yam* followed by enclitic *mem*. The suffixes in vs. 4 point back to a singular antecedent, as the customary version, “sea,” recognizes.

4. *in its midst.* Namely, of the sea. Identifying *ga^awātō* with *ga^awāh*, “back,” in Ps 89:10; Deut 33:26 (according to my analysis in *Biblica* 45 [1964], 399); Job 41:7; and Prov 14:3 (LX¹⁶⁰X, some commentators). The double meaning is also found in *gēw*, “back, midst” On *gē[’]*, “midst,” see NOTE on Ps 23:4. Ps 89:10 claims a word of comment: *’attāh mōšēl b^ega^awat* (M¹⁶¹T *gē[’]ūt*) *hayyām b^ešō[’] gallāyw ’attāh t^ešabb^ehēm*, “You rule upon the back of the sea; when he lifts up his waves, you check them.” The verb *šābah* is closely related to Ugaritic-Hebrew *šbm*, “to muzzle” (Ps 68:23), and actually occurs in parallelism with it in U¹⁶²T, *’nt:iii:37, lištbm tnn išbhnh*, “Indeed, I muzzled Tannin, I checked him.” That *išbhnh* is to be read for *editio princeps išbm[n]h* follows from the operation of the Barth-Ginsberg law: when the vowel of the first syllable in the qal conjugation of the verb is *i*, the thematic vowel must be *a*. In the present instance a laryngal must be read for Virolleaud’s *m*; since the text is badly damaged and since the signs for *m* and *h* are very similar in the Ugaritic script, one must opt for *h*. Moreover it seems very unlikely that the infixed *-t-* conjugation of *šbm* would be followed by a qal form. With the proposed rendition of Ps 89:10 cf. Job 9:8, “Alone he stretched out the heavens, / Trod on the back of the Sea” (Pope, *The Anchor Bible*, vol. 15).

the river and its channels. Attaching vs. 5, *nāhār p^elāgāyw* to vs. 4. One would expect the copula *w^e*, but ellipsis characterizes the style of this hymn, e.g., vss. 4a, 7, 8, 9, Here *nāhār* signifies the ocean current, as in Ugaritic; cf. NOTE on Ps 24:4. Notice the rhyme of *mēmāyw* and *p^elāgāyw*, which suggests that consonantal *g[’]wtw* might more correctly be vocalized as plural *ga^awātāw*; the meaning would remain the same.

stand in a heap. As the result of an earthquake. For M¹⁶³T *selāh*, reading the verb *sālāh*, “to heap up.” Similar imagery is found in Exod 15:8, “The waters piled up, the rivers stood in a heap.”

¹⁵⁹CECBP *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Psalms*, by C. A. Briggs

¹⁶⁰LXX The Septuagint

¹⁶¹MT Masoretic Text

¹⁶²UT *Ugaritic Textbook*, 4th ed., 1965, of C H. Gordon’s *Ugaritic Grammar*

¹⁶³MT Masoretic Text

5. *brings happiness*. The plural vocalization $y^e\acute{s}amm^e\grave{h}\ddot{u}$ may be retained, since the plural of majesty $^e\acute{l}\ddot{o}h\ddot{i}m$ can govern a plural predicate, as in Gen 20:13 or Exod 22:8. Cf. G¹⁶⁴K, § 145h; Brockelmann, *Hebräische Syntax*, § 50; Speiser, *Genesis*, p. 150.

his city. Being parallel to $mi\acute{s}k^en\ddot{i}$, “his habitation,” $\acute{i}r$ needs no suffix by right of the double-duty suffix; cf. NOTE on Ps 3:4.

sanctifies his habitation. That is, by his presence. With LX¹⁶⁵X, Vulg¹⁶⁶, vocalizing $qidd\acute{e}\acute{s}$ to balance $y^e\acute{s}amm^e\grave{h}$; and for doubtful $mi\acute{s}k^en\acute{e}$, which is a masculine plural construct not used elsewhere (Baethgen, *Psalmen*, p. 135), reading $mi\acute{s}k^en\ddot{i}$ with third-person singular suffix -y. This version is supported by LX¹⁶⁷X *hēgiase to skēnoma autoú ho hýpsistos*, “The Most High has sanctified his dwelling.” A perfect parallelism of the two cola emerges: A+B+C // A+B+C, with 3+3 meter, with seven syllables in the first half verse and seven in the second. This verse also illustrates the breakup of the divine composite title $^e\acute{l}\ddot{o}h\ddot{i}m \acute{e}ly\ddot{o}n$ (Ps 57:3) into its components, $^e\acute{l}\ddot{o}h\ddot{i}m$ being placed at the end of the first colon and $\acute{e}ly\ddot{o}n$ at the end of the second, with the result that the two cola are ever more tightly interlocked. On third-person suffix -y, see NOTE on Ps 2:6.

Contrast this treatment with that of H. Junker in *Biblica* 43 (1962), 197–201, who on p. 199 proposes, “Ein Strom, dessen Arme die Stadt Gottes erfreuen, ist das heiligste im Gezelt des Allerhöchsten” [“The holy of holies in the tent of the Most High is a river whose streams gladden the city of God”].

Note the sequence $yqtl$ ($y^e\acute{s}amm^e\grave{h}\ddot{u}$) and qtl ($qidd\acute{e}\acute{s}$); cf. Ps 8:7.

6. *shall not be toppled*. I.e., unlike the mountains in vs. 3.

at break of dawn. I.e., the time when attacks were made. Cf. U¹⁶⁸T, Krt:118–21, “And lo! with the sun ($\acute{s}p\acute{s}m$) on the seventh day King Pabil will not sleep for the rumble of the roaring of his buffaloes.” This was the result of the approach of King Kirta’s troops who moved to attack the city, since in lines 133 ff. we are informed that Kirta was requested, “Do not attack Great Udm, etc.” The assault had been planned for dawn, and this may be relevant for the exegesis of our phrase, especially since military metaphors appear in vss. 2, 11, and 12. Consult J. Ziegler, “Die Hilfe Gottes am Morgen,” in *Alttestamentliche Studien F. Nötscher gewidmet* (Bonn, 1950), pp. 281–88.

7. *Nations tremble, kingdoms totter*. Nations and kingdoms are personified in order to develop the motif of a person going to pieces upon sensing that bad news is in the offing. The classic Canaanite description is U¹⁶⁹T, $\acute{n}t:iii:29–32$, $bh p \acute{nm} t\acute{t} b \acute{dn} ksl t\acute{t}br \acute{i}n pn\acute{h} td \acute{t}g\acute{s} pnt ksl\acute{h} an\acute{s} dt zrh$, “Her feet totter; behind, her loins do break; above, her face does sweat. The joints of her loins shake, weakened are those of her back.” Cf. Ginsberg, LK¹⁷⁰K, p. 46; Dahood,

¹⁶⁴GK Gesenius’ *Hebräische Grammatik*, ed. E. Kautzsch

¹⁶⁵LXX The Septuagint

¹⁶⁶Vulg. The Vulgate

¹⁶⁷LXX The Septuagint

¹⁶⁸UT *Ugaritic Textbook*, 4th ed., 1965, of C. H. Gordon’s *Ugaritic Grammar*

¹⁶⁹UT *Ugaritic Textbook*, 4th ed., 1965, of C. H. Gordon’s *Ugaritic Grammar*

¹⁷⁰LKK *The Legend of King Keret*, by H. L. Ginsberg

PNWS¹⁷¹P, pp. 29 f. Other biblical texts with this theme include Pss 60:10, 97:4–5; Exod 15:15; Isa 15:4; Ezek 21:11; Mic 4:9; Prov 13:20.

he gives forth his voice. Namely, as thunder. Cf. U¹⁷²T, 51:v:70, *wtn qlh b' rpt*, “And he gave forth his voice from the clouds.” Other texts where *qōl* equals “thunder” are Ps 18:14; Exod 19:16; Isa 30:30, etc.; see Moshe Held in *Studies and Essays in Honor of Abraham A. Neuman*, p. 287, n. 4.¹⁷³

A. *God is the Defense of His saints (46:1–3)*

46:1–3. The psalmist declared that **God** is the **Refuge** (*maḥseh*, “shelter from danger”; cf. comments on 14:6) **and Strength** (cf. comments on 18:1) of believers. 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.

B. *God is present in Zion (46:4–7)*

46:4–5. The psalmist observed that the peace of Jerusalem—the **city of God** with **the holy place where** God dwelt (i.e., made His presence known)—was secured by **God**. The Lord’s presence was like a peaceful flowing **river** (in contrast with perilous torrents, v. 3). (Cf. Isa. 8:6; 33:21, where the Lord is compared to a river encircling His city.) Because **God** was **within her**, the city would **not fall**. (Years later, however, the city *did* fall. Because of extensive idolatry in the temple, Ezek. 8, God’s presence left, Ezek. 10. Without His protective presence, Jerusalem fell to the Babylonians.)

46:6–7. The psalmist then described God’s mighty power: by His powerful word God **melts** the **nations** that roar against Him (cf. 2:5). Though **kingdoms** would **fall**, Jerusalem was safe.

Thus **the LORD Almighty** is like a **fortress** (*mišgob*, “a high safe place,” trans¹⁷⁴. “fortress” in 46:11; 48:3; 59:9, 16–17; 62:2, 6; 94:22, and “stronghold” in 9:9; 18:2; 144:2) to His people (cf. 46:11). They find safety when they trust in Him.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷¹PNWSP *Proverbs and Northwest Semitic Philology*, by M. Dahood

¹⁷²UT *Ugaritic Textbook*, 4th ed., 1965, of C H. Gordon’s *Ugaritic Grammar*

¹⁷³ Mitchell Dahood S.J., [Psalms I: 1-50: Introduction, Translation, and Notes](#), vol. 16, Anchor Yale Bible (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2008), 278–281.

¹⁷⁴trans. translation, translator, translated

¹⁷⁵ Allen P. Ross, [“Psalms.”](#) in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 828–829.