

**LIFE GROUP NOTES ON PSALM 46 STRENGTH IN TROUBLED TIMES**

**Welcome:**

Has anyone brought a Psalm they’ve written? Or has anything to share from their Psalm Journal?

**Discussion starter:**

How much time do you spend daily focussing on the News? How much on God?

**Read:**

In some translations, the word ‘Selah’ appears at the end of verses 3, 7 and 11. It’s a Hebrew word which indicates an intentional pause for reflection. As you read the Psalm aloud, follow this direction.

**Questions:**

1. What two major matters for concern in our world today are mirrored in verses 2-3 and 6-9 in this ancient poem? What perspective does the psalmist offer us? Reflect on how this should affect our thoughts and behaviour. Can we also apply this perspective to our recent political turmoil and the cost of living crisis?

2. Where and what do you think is ‘the city of God, the holy place where the Most High dwells’? Does verse 5 (‘God is within her, she will not fall; God will help her at break of day’) help you work it out? Psalms 84 and 122 might suggest what is in the psalmist’s mind.

3. What is the beautiful river in verse 4? Discuss before reading on!

Here is one commentator’s interpretation: ‘Having enough water is a life or death issue in the Middle East. So, when we read that in God’s city there is a river, a never-ending supply of life, it’s deeply comforting…. The river of life in Revelation represents God’s life-giving presence. God never leaves us; he’s always with us. Psalm 46:4-5 says much the same thing. God, the Most High, makes his dwelling place (his people) holy. God is with his people. The city (God’s people) will never be shaken or disturbed or thrown off because God will help her with his personal presence.’

**Experience:**

Two quotations have come to mind in recent days :

‘Things fall apart, the centre cannot hold’ (W B Yeats) and, in contrast, ‘At the still point of the turning world… at the still point, there the dance is’ (T S Eliot)

This is a silent meditation in 4 parts. Sit comfortably with both feet on the ground, mindful of your body. Quieten your breathing. Spend time in each part, which will be introduced by the leader saying:

Be still and know that I am God

Be still and know

Be still

Be

**Consider:**

How do you understand verses 8 -10?

**Pray:**

Pray God’s perspective into today’s situations: climate change, war, political and economic crises. Finish by proclaiming verse 1 together.

**In the coming week:**

If you’ve begun keeping a Psalm journal, carry on! Record experiences which connect with anything in this Psalm.

How about writing a Psalm yourself, reflecting aspects of this one, to bring and share next week?

Go on looking for opportunities to share your experiences of the goodness of the Lord, of trust, comfort and answered prayer. Be an encourager!