

Sermon Topic: Challenges by Mrs Joyce Seet

Sermon Text: Psalm 46

### **Psalm 46 : The Structure Of The Text**

- v1: God's Presence
- v2-3: Natural Disaster
- v4-5: God's Presence
- v6: Political Turmoil
- v7-9: God's deliverance
- v10: God's sovereignty
- v11: God's Presence

### **Significant Lesson Of The Text**

The Psalmist, in his days, acknowledges the presence of very real natural and political upheavals that affect daily living. He did not deny their existence. But instead of dwelling in distress and defeat, the Psalmist moved himself from reality into the truth of God. In our context, these may be terrorism, political instability, climate change, etc. There are challenging realities that we face in our world. How are we to respond?

### **REMEMBER THAT GOD IS PRESENT IN THE CHALLENGES WE FACE.**

Psalm 46 tells us to turn to an unchanging truth: God is present in the midst of calamities and challenges. We can know the end from the beginning that God is victorious.

### **The Benefits Of God's Presence Amid Challenges**

Verses 2 and 3 describe a scene of calamity. Yet right up in verse 4, the Psalmist immediately affirms that God is a **constant flowing river**. This word picture describes the effects of God's presence in 3 ways:

- Has the power to **transform atmosphere**, no matter how distressing or negative the challenge may be (Ezekiel 47:9).
- Has the power to **bring us peace** in trying times (Isaiah 48:18).
- Has the power to **give us life** (Revelations 22:11).

In other words, God actively cares for us amid our challenges. We can stay secure and never be shaken.

## **The Giving Of God Himself To Us**

Psalm 46 also affirms that God gives us not only the benefits of His presence, but the very presence of Himself to us. This truth that “I AM IN YOUR MIDST” (also referenced to Hebrew 13:5, Matt 28:20, Psalm 75:1) always invite us to respond into a relationship with Him. Yet, despite this repeated assurance, we do question God every time we face hard times. “Where are you?”, “Are you even real, God?” As we examine ourselves, could it be due to reasons of:

- Listening and believing the enemy’s lie about God’s goodness, telling us we are alone in this battle of faith?
- Concentrating so much on our pain that we miss being attentive to the presence of God?

Remember the promise in Psalm 46: **GOD IS CLOSER TO US THAN WE THINK.**

Sally McClung (missionary with YWAM) suggests these practical steps when we face challenges:

- Stay in God’s presence
- Stand on God’s word
- Practice rejoicing (counter culture of complaining and whining)

## **God’s Presence With A Promise**

God will help us and bring us to a place of breakthrough in His time (v5)! Wait for Him, wait on Him. Pause in Him and remember His truth.

## **Study & Discussion Questions**

1. Read through Psalm 46. What troubles or challenges are you dealing with currently?
2. How do you remember that God is in control when everything seems to be falling apart?
3. Our society doesn’t like the thought of being still. Being still is another way of pausing and surrendering to God. In what challenging moment(s) of your life do you need to pause and reflect on God?
4. The Psalms have a way of addressing worldly turmoil while still remembering God’s sovereignty. Why is it so easy to focus on one or the other, but not usually both at the same time? What is God telling you to do differently with what you are facing?