

¹ God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. ² Therefore we will not fear, even though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; ³ though its waters roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with its swelling. ⁴ There is a river whose streams shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacle of the Most High. ⁵ God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved; God shall help her, just at the break of dawn. ⁶ The nations raged, the kingdoms were moved; He uttered His voice, the earth melted. ⁷ The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. ⁸ Come, behold the works of the LORD, Who has made desolations in the earth. ⁹ He makes wars cease to the end of the earth; He breaks the bow and cuts the spear in two; He burns the chariot in the fire. ¹⁰ Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth! ¹¹ The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge.

Text: Psalm 46 A 11/3/24 Romans 8:28-39 Matthew 14:22-33 Psalm 66 Responsive Ps.: 90
Hymns: 17, 783, 262, 738 (alternate wording)

GOD IS OUR REFUGE AND STRENGTH

A mighty Fortress is our God, A trusty Shield and Weapon;
He helps us free from every need That hath us now o'ertaken.
The old evil Foe Now means deadly woe;
Deep guile and great might Are his dread arms in fight;
On earth is not his equal.

With might of ours can naught be done, Soon were our loss effected;
But for us fights the Valiant One, Whom God Himself elected.
Ask ye, Who is this? Jesus Christ it is.
Of Sabaoth Lord, And there's none other God;
He holds the field forever. (TLH #262:1-2)

Dear fellow believers in Christ,

In a few days we will hold a Presidential election. What will happen? We don't know. God knows. Place your trust in God and His Word. God and all His promises in His Word never change.

Our text begins, "God is our refuge." A medieval castle and a wilderness fort were a refuge for the people who lived near them. If the people were under attack, they could run into their castle or fort and be safe. But if they failed to go into their refuge, they had to fight their enemies on their own. Three times in our short text we're told, "*God is our refuge.*" Don't try to solve your problems and bear your burdens by yourself. Bring them to God.

"*God is our refuge and strength.*" Our source of strength is not from within ourselves. God is our source of strength. Don't be afraid or discouraged because of your weaknesses. Come to the Lord for help. Rely on Him whose "*strength is made perfect in [our] weakness*" (2 Cor. 12:9). We were taught to sing as children, "We are weak, but He is strong." Our Lord promises us that "He gives power to the weak, and to those who have no might He increases strength. ... Those

who wait on the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.” (Is. 40:29, 31)

“*God is ... a very present help in trouble.*” Sometimes we don’t feel God’s presence. We’re tempted to ask, “God, where are You when I need You the most?” Jesus promises us, “I am with you always” (Mt. 28:20). Sometimes we feel God’s presence, and sometimes we don’t. It doesn’t change the fact that God is always with us. God’s presence doesn’t depend on our feelings. God’s presence depends on His Word: “*God is ... a very present help in trouble.*” The psalmist says, “*The Lord is near to all who call upon Him*” (Ps. 145:18). *Our Lord assures us, “I will not forget you.”* (Is. 49:15)

“*Therefore we will not fear, even though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea.*” We’re human. Sometimes we’re anxious and afraid about things that are happening in the world, and in our own lives, and about the future. Sometimes “*the earth [is moved], and ... the mountains ... [are] carried into the midst of the sea.*” Sometimes our whole world can change and seem to fall apart. But “God *is our refuge and strength*” (my emphasis). We don’t have to be stressed or worried or afraid. Go to the Lord who is our “*very present help in trouble.*” He assures His Church, “God *is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved*” (my emphasis). “*I will not fail you, or forsake you*” (Dt. 31:6, 8). God sees us through whatever life brings us.

We’re told, “*There is a river whose streams shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacle of the Most High.*” The Lord is using figurative language here. As we must have water to live, so we must have the Gospel of Jesus Christ to give us eternal life. Jesus says, “*Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled*” (Mt. 5:6). “*Whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life.*” (Jn. 4:14)

Sometimes problems we have and suffering we’re going through can seem more than we can bear. God will not let that happen: “*God shall help her, just at the break of dawn.*” The Bible promises us, “*No temptation*” (or “*trial*”) “*has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted*” (or “*tested*”) “*beyond what you are able, but with the temptation*” (or “*trial*”) “*will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it*” (1 Cor. 10:13). “*The God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, [will] perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you.*” (1 Pet. 5:10)

“*The nations raged, the kingdoms were moved; He uttered His voice, the earth melted.*” The unbelievers have great power and influence in the world. But God is in control. The Bible says, “*All nations before [the Lord] are as nothing. ... He brings the princes to nothing*” (Is. 40:17, 23). “*If God is for us, who can be against us?*” (Ro. 8:31). The Lord God Almighty is still on His throne. The “*King of kings*” and “*Lord of lords*” is our Rock and our Deliverer!

“*Come, behold the works of the LORD, Who has made desolations in the earth. He makes wars cease to the end of the earth; He breaks the bow and cuts the spear in two; He burns the chariot in the fire.*” God controls people, rulers, and nations. With them or in spite of them, His will

for our good is always and ultimately done. Even better, the Lord has given us the victory, and peace, in our battle against the devil. Jesus won this for us on the cross when He declared, *“It is finished!”* (Jn. 19:30). *“Comfort, yes, comfort My people! Says your God. ... Cry out to her that her warfare is ended, that her iniquity is pardoned.”* (Is. 40:1-2)

“The Lord of hosts is with us.” God and His good angels already defeated Satan and his evil angels. And God and all of His heavenly angels are helping us and fighting for us in all of our spiritual battles. The Bible says, *“Greater is [Christ] who is in you than [Satan] who is in the world”* (1 Jn. 4:4b). *“He shall give His angels charge over you, to keep you in all your ways.”* (Ps. 91:11, my emphasis)

“The God of Jacob is our refuge.” Sometimes the Old Testament believer Jacob did foolish things, and wrong things. But he repented of his sins and placed his trust in the Lord. And the Lord forgave Jacob’s sins. He remained faithful to Jacob, saw him through the difficult times, and blessed him. *“The God of Jacob is our refuge”* (my emphasis). Like Jacob, we too sometimes do foolish things, and we sin every day. But by God’s grace we repent, and God forgives us. By God’s grace we place our trust in Him, and He remains faithful to us and sees us through the difficult times and blesses us.

Our Heavenly Father tells us, *“Be still and know that I am God.”* Stop worrying and fussing. Jesus asks us, *“Which of you by worrying can add [a single hour to his life?] ... Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble”* (Mt. 6:27, 34). Do we think that if we worry hard enough we’re we going to fix a problem or change anything for the better? Our worrying only makes things worse for us. *“Cast all your care on Him, for He cares for you”* (1 Pet. 5:7). Jesus says, *“Come to Me all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest, ... rest for your souls”* (Mt. 11:28-29).

In a few days we will hold a Presidential election. What will happen? We don’t know. God knows. Whatever happens now and in the future, God and all His promises in His Word never change. Entrust the present and the future to **GOD** who **IS OUR REFUGE AND STRENGTH**.

Though devils all the world should fill, All eager to devour us.
We tremble not, we fear no ill, They shall not overpower us.
This world’s prince may still Scowl fierce as he will,
He can harm us none, He’s judged; the deed is done;
One little word can fell him.

The Word they still shall let remain Nor any thanks have for it;
He’s by our side upon the plain With His good gifts and Spirit.
And take they our life, Goods, fame, child and wife,
Let these all be gone, They yet have nothing won;
The Kingdom ours remaineth. Amen. (TLH #262:3-4)