



The economy slowed. The commute to work outside the city was halted. The travel to the city was quarantined. There was a fear that spread over the city because the nation was in crisis. It was a time when the people of Israel needed comfort because their world was in confusion and fear! They found a great refuge and help. **What can we learn?**

secret ways.”¹ So the intention is to address those times that seem like the end of the world to us. Ultimately, there will be an end to the world and Yahweh will be victorious!

This is terra firma, - solid ground! You can bet the farm on Jesus for He is the victory that overcomes the world!

The principles shared in this Psalm help you stand strong during this world pandemic or any event or crisis in our life that seeks to consume our attention. It gives great hope and security when the unthinkable happens. It is I solid ground when the foundations of life are shaken.

This is safe place ground zero!²

2. Your Savior -like no one else!

God is our refuge and strength. The Psalmist begins with the protection of God. He uses the word, Elohim, a general word for God in the beginning of the Psalm. However, as the description of God’s work and victory are clarified the Psalmist further identifies God as Yahweh. Verses 4-7 declare Yahweh as the “ever present help” and verses 8-11 it is Yahweh who is “preeminently victorious” over all. Why is this important? Because Yahweh is Jesus. The New Testament declares this over and over again.³ Jesus is our ever- present help. Jesus is the victorious pre-eminent Yahweh who is Lord, whom every knee shall bow. Jesus is the Son in whom all are blessed who take refuge in him, Psalm 2:12. This is not some abstract god but rather the God who is-the Great I AM! This is a trusted safe place for your earth- shaking situation today!

Because of Jesus - you can come boldly to the throne of God. “Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.” Hebrews 4:12

A wise Scottish Pastor stated: “Each time before you intercede be quiet first, and worship God in His glory. Think of what He can do, and how he delights to hear the prayers of His redeemed people. Think of your place and privilege in Christ, and expect great things.”⁴

This very action above will be seen in King Hezekiah’s response to the crisis of Sennacherib’s soldiers threatening the people of Jerusalem. It is one to be patterned. Lay your greatest fears and your requests before the throne of God in Jesus name!

Yahweh. It is Yahweh that the world will bow down to- Yahweh is Jesus Christ; I Peter 3:15 “Sanctify (set apart) Christ as Lord” quotes Isaiah 8:12-13 “Sanctify the Lord of hosts himself...” **Point: OT Quotes showing Jesus to be Yahweh.**

⁴ Andrew Murray

Psalm 46 gives great hope today. Open your Bible and read the Psalm but also read Isaiah 36 and 37, which is the historical setting of this Psalm. Let’s look deeper!

1. Your Safest Place on Earth

God is our refuge and strength very much found to be a help in distresses. On account of this we will not fear when the earth changes and when the mountains slip into the heart of the seas. Let its waters foam, let the mountains shake in its swelling. Selah. Psalm 46:1-3 [Interlinear Hebrew-English]

I wonder who was the first to notice a regiment of Assyrian Soldiers moving into position outside the wall. **Like a virus poised to attack, overnight 185,000 Assyrian Soldiers surrounded the city of Jerusalem. [Isaiah 36-37]**

Can you imagine how life changed on that day? The economy slowed. The commute to work outside the city was halted. The travel to the city was quarantined. There was a fear that debilitated the lives of every citizen within the walls. It was not just a fear for life, it was also a fear for their livelihood. The Assyrian leader Sennacherib had a reputation of torturing in war. He had already annihilated the nations around Israel.

The fear factor that backdrops Psalm 46 is very similar to current crisis. God has placed this wonderful testimony before us to point us to our security and lead us to peace in the midst of the storm. But it goes beyond that, it gives us strong ground to stand on when the “mountains are being thrown into the heart of sea.” When this Psalm was translated from Hebrew to Greek for those living in the 1st Century BC, the translation heading read. “For the end, a psalm in the name of the sons of Korah, because of the

¹ Septuagint - Psalm 45:1 (Psalm 46 is Psalm 45 in LXX)

² Ground Zero = Dictionary : “a starting point or base”

³ Matthew 3:3 quotes Isaiah 40:3 that uses Yahweh; Romans 10:9-13 “That if you confess with your mouth Jesus is Lord...” quotes Joel 2:32 Yahweh; Philippians 2:9-11 “...everyone shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord...” quotes Isaiah 45:18-25 that speaks of

2. **Your Greatest Solace – this WORLD IS NEVER OUT OF GOD’S CONTROL**

God does not send pestilence, God does not do things to hurt people- that is Satan. But the enemy cannot go beyond God’s allowance. The situation with Sennacherib was enemy initiated, but God allowed. This Psalm shows the power of God to turn around evil.

Let’s look at the history, Isaiah 36, 37 is a documented in history event.



[Pictured Left. Annals of Sennacherib. Baked Clay. Assyria, Nineveh. Neo-Assyrian, 694 B.C. The Trustees of the British Museum, London (BM 103000)]

Ira Spar, Research Assyriologist, states. “Hezekiah became king of Judah in ca. 727 B.C. We learn from the Bible that he purified and repaired the Temple, purged its idols, reformed the priesthood, and witnessed the

land prosper. But events in far-off Assyria were to have a fateful effect upon his kingdom. When Sargon II, the king of Assyria, died in battle in 705 B.C., states, including Judah, that were subject to Assyrian hegemony saw the opportunity for revolt (2 Kings 18:7). In 703 B.C. Sennacherib, Sargon’s son and successor, began a series of major campaigns to quash opposition to Assyrian rule.”⁵ The setting of Isaiah 36 and 37 is that account.

By the time Sennacherib’s 185,000 soldiers camped outside the Northern wall of Jerusalem, his reputation of heinous torture and annihilation of previous people groups and kings had preceded him. Hezekiah knew his enemy and prepared by fortifying the city. He guarded the city water supply by building a tunnel and widened

the Northern wall of the city to strengthen his defense for Jerusalem.

I walked through “Hezekiah’s tunnel” that brought water from the spring into the city. I stood in Jerusalem at the very place where Hezekiah reinforced the Northern wall. As you rely upon the Lord He directs you to prepare. Reliance is not passive. **The most important action Hezekiah took was consistently drawing close and relying on the Lord.**

Sennacherib foolishly taunted Yahweh! Isaiah 37:10-12 “Say to King Hezekiah king of Judah: Do not let the god you depend on deceive you when he says, “Jerusalem will not be handed over to the king of Assyria. Surely, you have heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all the countries, destroying them completely. And you will be delivered? Did the gods of the nations that were destroyed by my forefathers deliver them – the gods of Gozan, Haran, Rezeph and the people of Eden who were in Tel Assar?”

What did King Hezekiah do with this threat? His faith-walk led him to take it immediately to Yahweh! Look at the clear response of Isaiah, Isaiah 37:21-35. “Because you (Hezekiah) have prayed to me concerning Sennacherib King of Assyria, this is what is spoken against him: he will not enter this city...I will defend this city and save it!” God wiped out Sennacherib’s army with one decision! **Spoiler alert: [Isaiah 37:36] 185,000 ‘woke up dead’ literal Hebrew text.**

Four points from the text.

1. God allows everything that touches His people.
2. God’s people did not understand the “why?” but anchored themselves in “who”.
3. This Psalm testifies of who really is in charge. You can rest on the Lord.
4. Reliance upon the Lord is the greatest power and protection possible. Come boldly to Him! Give Him the battle!!! God is at work- always!

⁵ Assyria History Sennacherib Stele, <https://www.metmuseum.org/exhibitions/listings/2014/assyria>

ia-to-iberia/blog/posts/sennacherib-and-jerusalem Accessed March 17, 2020.

“A mighty fortress in our God is our God ...did we in our own strength confide, our striving would be losing. Were not the right man on our side, the man of God’s own choosing. Dost ask who that may be? Christ Jesus it is He! ... and He must win the battle!” Martin Luther

