

SONGS FOR ALL SEASONS FROM THE PSALMS

The Significance of Songs Selected Scriptures



LET'S BEGIN HERE

Ever felt the ground move under your feet? Know what it's like to pitch from side to side in a small boat on strong seas? While some people could answer Yes! to both questions, most of us only imagine such experiences.

Still, sooner or later we all face trials that take on cataclysmic proportions. Left unchecked, fear runs its course and has a way of bringing us to a point of helplessness. If you've felt the pinch of life's uncertainty or if you're stuck between a rock and a hard place, then Psalm 46 is for you.

This psalm provides help for the helpless. No matter how bad life may seem, God is in control. And because He's sovereign, He's a perfect refuge and place to hide when life comes unglued.

Why is God's sovereignty such a help to us? We'll see in Psalm 46 how the Lord's sovereign power puts our fears to rest and instills triumphant confidence.



LET'S DIG DEEPER

1. What Is Sovereignty?

God's sovereignty is His supreme authority in the universe. He reigns with absolute control over every event and individual (Daniel 4:17, 25, 35; 1 Timothy 6:15). Several of God's attributes contribute to His sovereignty: His *omniscience* means that He knows everything, and He has unlimited understanding and wisdom. His *omnipotence* gives Him complete power to do whatever He wishes. His *omnipresence* means that no place or person escapes His notice or stands outside His reach. And His *eternal nature* makes Him unbounded by any time constraints. All of these attributes contribute to His sovereignty.

Though God's sovereignty weaves its way through His dealings with creation, the word rarely appears in Scripture. One instance, in Psalm 103:19, proves that nothing takes God by surprise. He does everything according to His own will (Psalm 115:3; Ephesians 1:11).



Quotable

Are you waiting

for a great

voice before

you sing?

God hears

your heart.

So sing!

— Charles R. Swindoll



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God is perfectly holy, in total control, and therefore completely reliable. That's sovereignty. That's God! And that's the foundation on which Psalm 46 stands.

2. The Sovereign God Delivers Us (Psalm 46:1–11)

Psalm 46 begins with a confession of trust in our strong God, which the second and third stanzas echo in two affirming refrains (Psalm 46:7, 11). Psalm 46 opens and closes focused on our sovereign God—the only one able to help in times of trouble.

The first three verses of this psalm show that God not only provides perfect protection in a calamity, but He also gives us the inner strength necessary to endure life's most daunting odds. In those times, we shouldn't fear because God shelters us, strengthens us, and stays close to us.

Psalm 46:4–7 continues the theme of relying on God's strong presence. This stanza zooms in on Jerusalem, the city of God, which represents those who live in covenant relationship with Him. For the people of faith, God's presence brings comfort amid the darkest of circumstances.

The closing verses, Psalm 46:8–11, urge believers to look at and ponder what God has done and will do. As God's people review His faithful acts, they find evidence of His care, protection, and sovereign control. The "destruction" mentioned in verse 8 refers to God's righteous judgment against people who perpetuate evil, violence, and war. One day, the Lord will destroy every evil foe, along with their weapons of warfare, and bring lasting peace to the world. As a result of God's sovereign justice and love, we can be quiet and let God be God! The Lord commands heaven's mighty army, and one day all nations and all people will give Him due honor.



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A CLOSER LOOK

Letting Go of Fear

Fear grips and guides many in these uncertain times. The twentieth century celebrated the progress of humanity resulting from our own rational and scientific giftedness. The twenty-first century has seen that dream fail in disastrous conflicts and loss of true community. Today's people see little we can rely upon. This modern-day condition creates a perfect opportunity for truths such as we see in Psalm 46. When our world is in upheaval, we have Someone we can rely upon. God is still in heaven. He has retained His power and strength. And He remains deeply engaged with His creation. Because our refuge is in God, the One to whom we can run in terrible times, we can set fear aside. Let us not be afraid of governments or disease or neighbors. Instead, just as God is a strong refuge, let us be a people of strength, a people who offer refuge to others in a world turned upside down.



LET'S LIVE IT

Tired of striving? Concerned about the future? Great! You're right where God wants you. Are you ready to trust His sovereignty and accept His help and His strength? Sometimes He allows us to get to the end of our rope, so we discover that He's what we have needed all along.

What battles are you facing right now? Do fear, anxiety, and worry hinder you from experiencing God's blessing? How?



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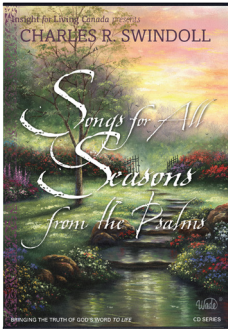
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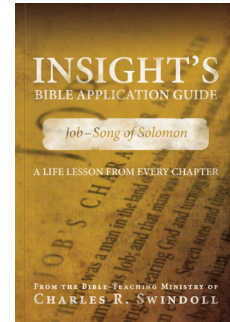
Tools for Digging Deeper



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from the Psalms**
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