

Day 8: July 12th Sunday

Bible Text: Psalm 46:1-7

By Faith Walter

Reflection:

In the middle of a disaster, what's a refuge that actually works to protect us? A proper refuge is one that is bigger and stronger than we are, so that when we seek refuge there, we truly *find* refuge. The shelter holds and we are kept safe. We might emerge with some injuries or have to face new realities after the storm passes, but in essentials we are safe.

What then does it mean that God is our refuge? Apparently, trouble will still come to us - not only the psalmist of Psalm 46, but Jesus Himself confirms it in John 16:23b - 33: "Yet I am not alone, for the Father is with me. I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world."

So we find that God is our strength in different ways: He can protect us from physical harm and death - though He may choose not to - and He can be a place where we pour out our concerns and fears regarding what the world is throwing at us. In either case, He can give us peace and sustain our hearts. Graciously, the Lord invites us to operate from a place of stillness and rest. Not because what we encounter isn't a big deal – sometimes it really is – but because He's strong enough to carry it and give our hearts true peace and true strength in the middle of hard circumstances.

1. In the past, how have you experienced the Lord as your "refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble"?
2. What fears and anxieties are you navigating during this season? What is God's invitation to you as you seek Him today?

Closing Prayer:

Lord, thank you that you are an actual refuge for those who seek You. Help us to grow in our understanding of what that means, and of the peace you offer for our souls.

Recommended Song of Reflection: Oh God Our Help In Ages Past/Every Generation

<https://youtu.be/XCLXhbb4JF8>