

Worship Through Chaos [Psalm 46]
Draft by Steve Carr [www.houseofcarr.com/thread]

INTRODUCTION

1. While there was unfortunately another mass shooting this weekend, I missed hearing of it.
2. I can be forgiven, as it seems to be that these disasters are more and more
 - a. From Hurricane Sandi, to Sandy Hook Elementary; DC Naval Yard to Boston Marathon.
 - b. International events: Syria, Savar building collapse in Bangladesh killed 1,000
3. I opine that these events aren't more frequent, but more evident because of media
 - a. We have the chance to know what's happening everywhere
 - b. The issue, though, is that we're living in chaotic times.
 - c. *How can we continue to worship God when it seems he's nowhere to be found?*
 - d. Psalm 46 was written in a chaotic time for his people.
 - 1) Jerusalem was under siege from the Assyrian army
 - 2) The most violent and ruthless army the earth has ever seen
 - 3) Inexplicably, God killed off the majority of the army and his people were spared.
 - e. God had saved their city, including their temple, from certain destruction.
 - 1) If your lives had been spared, how joyful would you be?
 - f. Psalm 46 was a response psalm: it was made to be sung at the temple courtyard.
 - 1) A priest would speak a line and the people would respond
 - 2) Today we're going to do it just like that. I'll say the first part; you then respond.

VERSES 1-3

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

²**Therefore we will not fear though the earth gives way**, though the mountains be moved into the heart of the sea,

³**though its waters roar and foam**, though the mountains tremble at its swelling. Selah

1. Remember the 2012 Movie? End of the world scene is similar to this situation
2. The end of the world scene is a scenario that cannot happen
 - a. **Psalm 104:5**: *He set the earth on its foundations, so that it should never be moved.*
3. This Psalm was an inspiration for the hymn, *A Mighty Fortress Is Our God*.
 - a. Written by Martin Luther about this very Scripture.

*A mighty fortress is our God, a bulwark never failing;
Our helper He, amid the flood of mortal ills prevailing;
For still our ancient foe doth seek to work us woe;
His craft and power are great, and, armed with cruel hate,
On earth is not his equal.*
4. WORDS FOR WORSHIPPING IN CHAOS: BE FEARLESS [vs2]

VERSES 4-7

⁴**There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God**, the holy habitation of the Most High.

⁵**God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved**; God will help her when morning dawns.

⁶**The nations rage, the kingdoms totter**; he utters his voice, the earth melts.

⁷**The LORD of hosts is with us**; the God of Jacob is our fortress. Selah

1. What is the Selah? A suspension of music. **Suspension is tension**.
 - a. Music all about is tension and release.
 - 1) Selah is thought to be when the musicians play without the singers.
 - 2) The musicians play and then the singing comes back in.
 - 3) It comes back into the scene of a river
2. VERSE SIX part A: The world is in a place of chaos
 - a. Still, it submits to the voice of God, melting all.
3. WORDS FOR WORSHIPPING IN CHAOS: TRUST THE HOLY SPIRIT
As Ambrose of Milan, who lived three hundred years after Jesus wrote concerning this text:

“So, then, the Holy Spirit is the River, and the abundant River, which according to the Hebrews flowed from Jesus in the lands, as we have received it prophesied by the mouth of Isaiah. This is the great River which flows always and never fails. And not only a river, but also one of copious stream and overflowing greatness.”

- a. The river is indicative of the moving of the Holy Spirit
- b. What does the Holy Spirit do? Gives us a supernatural grounding.
- c. **Jeremiah 17:8** *“He is like a tree planted by water, that sends out its roots by the stream”*
- d. The combination yielded the African American spiritual

*I shall not be moved
Glory hallelujah, I shall not be moved
Anchored in Jehovah, I shall not be moved
Just like a tree that's planted by the waters
I shall not be moved*

VERSES 8,9

⁸ Come, behold the works of the LORD,

how he has brought desolations on the earth.

⁹ He makes wars cease to the end of the earth;

he breaks the bow and shatters the spear he burns the chariots with fire.

1. Behold God's work: his desolation isn't within the chaos
 - a. The chaos we discussed at the beginning of this evening isn't the doing of God
 - b. It's the result of sin in this world.
2. The state that God longs for is a return to the beginning: a world of peace
3. WORDS FOR WORSHIPPING IN CHAOS: SEEK THE PEACE OF GOD

VERSES 10,11

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 fortress. Selah

1. We usually like to move in response to tragedy by keeping our hands busy.
 - a. Almost ten years ago, my aunt (my father's sister) took her life.
 - b. My father responded, that night, by putting in hardwood floors.
 - c. Sometimes, our response to chaos is action.
2. Rather, in response, perhaps we should be still and see how God responds.
3. WORDS FOR WORSHIPPING IN CHAOS: STOP MOVING

CONCLUSION

Romans 12:1

“Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God--this is your spiritual act of worship.”

WORDS FOR WORSHIPPING IN CHAOS:

FOCUS LESS ON THE CHAOS, MORE ON YOUR OWN WORSHIP