

The Christian Soldier's Battle Cry – Sample Chapter

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.
Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though
the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea;
Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains
shake with the swelling thereof. Selah.

Psalm 46: 1-3

As far as I am concerned, these verses are among the most powerful
of scripture. The psalmist is declaring before the whole world that God is
our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble, therefore will not
we fear.

Now wait a moment, let us not rush through the passage! These days
we do have the tendency to do exactly that. We seem always to be in
a hurry; we live in the “hurry, hurry” society—always in the fast lane!
Everything needs to be done, and done quickly.

We adopt that attitude not only in ordinary aspects of daily life, but
also when it comes to the word of God. And so we rush through the Bible,
assuming we find the time at all to read it! Our morning meditation, if
indeed we devote our time for one, is done in a rush so that we may not
miss the bus or train that will take us to school or work.

I am not saying I am immune to that tendency. Indeed, that is how far
you and I, living in our fast-moving world, have come. No wonder many of
us have become lukewarm in our Christian life. Let us sit down to consider
it; if the Lord Jesus Christ, the perfect one Himself, spent several hours in
prayer and meditation, what do you and I, ordinary sinners, need to do?
Now the psalmist is declaring that:

i) God is our refuge and strength,
ii) a very present help in trouble,
iii) therefore we need not fear, though the earth be removed, and
though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; even though
the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake
with the swelling thereof. Selah.

To better appreciate what he is driving at, we can consult the dictionary
and find out exactly what the words refuge and strength stand for. The
Oxford English Dictionary defines refuge as: shelter or protection from
danger, trouble, etc.

The word strength in its turn is defined as: the ability that something
has to resist force or hold heavy weights without breaking or being
damaged.

The psalmist is declaring to the whole world that God Almighty, the
creator of the whole universe—of the planets, the sun, the galaxies: yes
everything seen and unseen—from the tiny bacteria to the huge whales
of the ocean, from the mighty lion to the little mouse, from the beautiful
roses to the thorns and thistles of the field, is his refuge and strength.

Yes, the psalmist is proclaiming that He who called the huge mountains,
the vast oceans, the arid deserts into existence, the King of Kings and Lord
of Lords, the God Everlasting, is our refuge and strength. Awesome, just
awesome!

Let us imagine the tiny ant having the huge elephant for protection!
Let us picture the little and vulnerable mouse entering into a defence pact

with the mighty and fierce lion, the lion guaranteeing the mouse a lifelong protection from his most dreaded enemy, the cat!

We might well consider the situation where a dollar billionaire from the US travels to an impoverished village in my native Ghana and picks up the most destitute child he/she spots playing on the street and declares in the presence of the whole world: "I swear by my honour, that I will make sure this little child never tastes poverty throughout the rest of his/her days on earth!!"

You could also suppose yourself, dear reader, to be a fierce opponent of the government of little Togo in West Africa. The president of that country, intent on showing you where power lies, dispatches some of his security forces to arrest you. Just as they are under way, someone calls you on your mobile phone to warn you about the impending threat to your life. Sensing danger, you make it through the back door of your home and flee to the US embassy in the capital, Lomé.

Somehow the agents of the president get the news of your escape and give you chase. Just as they are about to grasp you, you manage at the very last minute to enter the premises of the embassy. On producing your ID card and telling your story, you are offered refuge within the walls of the compounds of the most powerful country on earth. Through the glass window of the premises of the consulate you spot your enemies on the street, retreating, a sense of anger written over their faces. In the safety of your refuge you, who minutes earlier feared for your life, have the audacity to make mocking gestures towards them!

Of course there is no way we can compare the refuge provided by mere mortals to that guaranteed by the Almighty. I hope however that the illustration I have just referred to has helped to bring home to you what the psalmist is driving at. The psalmist is declaring to the whole world that he is now within the gates of the castle of the Almighty God of heaven and earth—therefore Satan can just go to hell where he indeed belongs!

For a certainty, the psalmist is proclaiming before the forces of darkness; before all the witchcrafts, wizards, and all other sources of evil in the universe pursuing him, that he has sought refuge under the wings of the God above all gods, the Power above all powers, the Principal Power above all principalities, so they beware or beware!

Oh indeed, the psalmist is pronouncing to his enemies that because God Almighty is his refuge and strength, he is neither afraid, nor frightened, nor alarmed, nor shocked, nor terrified.

How often do we hear people these days say things like—I am scared; it is scary. Scared, scary, scared. Even sons and daughters of the Rock of Ages, yes the children of the Good Shepherd, souls He has purchased with His own blood, are often heard telling the whole world how much they are afraid, or scared or apprehensive of this and that! Not so the psalmist. He is declaring that come what may, he does not care, he does not bother—he does not mind!

He is telling Satan to his face: "Hey you, you dare not venture near my place of abode, near my husband, near my wife, near my children, near my place of work, near my car whether it is parked or in motion, near my business, near my bank accounts!" In short, he is telling Lucifer and all the demons under his control to his face that they can just go and get

drowned in the mighty ocean!

It is said that Psalm 46 used to be the favourite of Martin Luther, the great German reformer of the church. Eventually he wrote a powerful hymn based on it:

A sure stronghold our God is,
A timely shield and weapon;
Our help he will be, and set us free
From every ill can happen.

Indeed, a sure stronghold is our God, a timely shield and weapon. Our help He surely is, come what may!

Child of God, God is your refuge and strength, so do not shake! Let Satan borrow from the American or the Russian or the United Kingdom armies the most destructive weapon in their arsenal—laser-guided precision bombs, inter-continental ballistic missiles, bunker-penetration assault bombs—you go on naming them—and aim them at you! Rest assured, my friend: no matter the destructive power the weapons Satan is aiming at you carries, they cannot harm you! Why should they when you have the Lord Zebaoth for refuge!!

Child of God, you have the Rock of Ages as your refuge, so rest assured; there is no need to panic. I read a story the other day of a young girl who was travelling in a ship that was captained by her father. In the course of the journey, they encountered a terrible storm which threatened to capsize the ship. Whereas all around her became panicky the little girl maintained her calm. Asked by the others why she was not scared, her reply was: “Papa is at the helm; all will be well!”

Child of God, the psalmist wants you to know that Papa God is at the helm of affairs so all will be well; indeed, all will be well. The psalmist is telling us, children of God, that we might as well disconnect the alarm system in our homes and also cancel all the insurance policies we have in place, for Almighty God will take care of all the dangers sent to us before they strike! Of course you and I may not have that degree of faith, to go to that extent, but that in effect is what the psalmist is driving at.

Child of God, you have Almighty God for your refuge, so you can march through life with an open chest, unperturbed about the enemies surrounding you on all sides. No fears, brother, no fears, sister, no fears, soldiers of Christ; yes indeed, let us throw fear to the dogs, for the enemy dare not venture too close to us.

Indeed, the blood of the righteous one was shed on Calvary on our behalf, so the principalities and powers in the high places dare not draw near us. Tell yourself, “They dare not!” Shout it at the top of your voice:

“They dare not approach me, no way!”

Indeed, you are precious in the sight of the Lord, so those bent on destroying you should beware! Tell Satan he is too filthy so he should not draw near you, for you are pure. You have sought refuge under the wings of the pure and righteous one, so filthy Satan dare not approach you. You are washed in the blood of Jesus.

“God is our refuge and strength!” Do not murmur the words; do not declare them with a low voice. No, say it loud! Shout, scream; yell! Declare it at the top of your voice.

Indeed, that is the attitude we have to adopt towards the great

deceiver. For, indeed, Satan does not understand diplomatic language. No, diplomatic language should be left to the diplomats who are trained to choose their words with the aim of promoting cordial international relationships. Why the need for us to practice the art of word-weighing when we are confronted by a force bent on destroying us at all cost and for no reason!!

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