

Very present

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

Psalm 46:1

This oft-quoted psalm emphasizes the steadfast presence of the Lord in the lives of His people. While the child of God can experience the presence of the Lord in good times and in troublous times, it seems to be in the troublous times that we are more keenly aware of it. The psalm describes various types of troublous times, from the various motions and commotions of nature, in the trembling of the land or raging of the waters, to the raging of the nations that know not God. It also describes the powerful responses of the Lord, from the establishment of a peaceful river in His holy city, in spite of the natural disasters about it, to His quelling of men's wars and the destruction of their war machines. Twice we are reminded with the refrain: "The LORD of hosts is with us: the God of Jacob is our refuge." The refuge to which the people of God may run does not require swiftness of feet, but swiftness of spirit, to recognize in fact that His presence is our constant strength through whatever circumstances may come. He is not only present; He is *very present*. From *Strong's*, one rendering of the Hebrew for "very" here could be "vehemently." So when our troubles may tempt us to wonder if we have been forsaken of the Lord, let us remember the truth propounded here, that His very presence is our present help. He alone is our refuge – "The name of the LORD is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe" (Proverbs 18:10). In the midst of unrest in nature or in mankind, we can be still, which helps us once again to remember His presence and that He is God over all (verse 10). Therefore, our lives need not be characterized or motivated by fear (verse 2), but by power, love, and a sound mind (II Timothy 1:7).