

God is our Refuge – Psalm 46

Please read the Psalm – perhaps you could read it in a couple of different translations. Remember it's a poem as you read it.

What does this psalm speak to you as an individual? What do you find is its main message or purpose?

When you remember the psalm was written to be sung, how do you imagine it sounding as a song? What do you find is the difference in singing words, not just saying them? Why do you think in some of the lockdown situations around the world, people have gone out onto their balconies to sing?

In Andrew's talk he mentioned three features that are often found in the poetry of the psalms and which are present in Psalm 46

1. **Parallel ideas** – which lines of the psalm repeat a similar or related thought? How does this affect the way you read and understand it? (Look at verses 1, 5 and 7)
2. **Powerful images** – can you try to visualise some of the images in this psalm such as:
 - 'Though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea' (verse 2)
 - 'He makes wars cease to the ends of the earth' (verse 9)
 - 'the God of Jacob is our fortress' (verses 7 and 11)

What pictures do these help you to imagine in your mind? Share them with one another.

3. **Prophetic imagination** – Jerusalem, the city of God, does not have a real river flowing through it. Its water supply comes from springs. What might the psalmist then mean by this river? How do you imagine the meaning and significance of this river? Read John 7 v 37-39 and Revelation 22 v 1-2.

'Be still and know that I am God' (verse 10) – we are in a time of turmoil and anxiety when many thoughts and fears may preoccupy us. How can you practice being still and receiving the peace of God's presence? When might you do this each day? Where might you do it? If your daily routine is being significantly affected, for example by working from home, how might you best set aside some time for God?