

DAY 1 (Week - Monday 11 February)**Read:** *Romans 12:2; Psalm 46*

Today's Psalm is a song of Holy Comfort. It gives us the assurance that God is able to give help when it is needed most. This Psalm can and does give comfort to those with troubled hearts. It also encourages us to carry on when we find ourselves in the midst of all our trouble.

The text highlights three thoughts that we need to understand as to why God is *'our refuge and strength and a very present help in a time of trouble'* and what we need to do when faced with trouble.

First the psalmist reveals the shelter of God's help. He says *"God is our refuge."* In other words, God is our safe place...our safety zone from danger. A beautiful hymn has these words: *"The Lord's our rock, in Him we hide, A shelter in the time of storm; Secure whatever ill betide, A shelter in the time of storm."* God shelters us to prepare us and help us face the troubles of life. So no matter how bad our troubled situation may seem, know that God is our refuge.

Secondly the Psalm also reveals the strength of God's help..... God infuses us with His strength. Therefore we are able to stand in the midst of trouble. In other words God has to vaccinate us with His power. So we don't have to face problems in our own strength.

Third the Psalm reveals the steadfastness of God in a time of trouble. God is dependable and always shows up right on time. The Psalmist says that God is *"a present help in a time of trouble."*

Meditation: *Where did I experience God in a time of trouble?*

DAY 2**Read:** *Romans 12:2; Romans 8:31-39*

In times of strife it is often difficult to think that God is right there with you. The idea of knowing the will of God is foreign to many Christians. Far too many Christians simply accept life as it comes, from whomever it comes. But God has called us to be victors, not victims. We need to get our minds to accept this.

At creation God declared everything as good. But Paul here says these days all of creation is groaning. And it is likened to the pain of a woman giving birth.

But in this passage he emphasizes that those who love the Lord are secure in His love. And he presents five arguments to prove that there could be no separation between the believer and the Lord.

1. *God Is For Us...* the Greek translation says *"Since God is for us."* The Implication here is that if anyone were able to rob us of salvation they would have to be greater than God Himself, since He is the giver and the sustainer of Salvation.
2. *Christ Died For Us.* His love is so great that He went to the Cross to save us. Our security is in that love of God who sent Christ to die for us.
3. *God Has Justified Us.* This means that He has declared you and me righteous in Christ. No one can successfully accuse us because God Himself has declared you and me righteous.
4. *Christ Intercedes for Us....* Christ represents us before the throne of God and we do not need to represent ourselves. We have a great high priest.
5. *Christ Loves Us.* Paul suggests that the love of Christ for us is greater than any strife that could come our way....death, life, angels or demons, nothing in creation will stop His love for us.

Prayer: *Thank you Lord for such intense love. AMEN*

DAY 3**Read:** *Romans 12:2; Mark 4:35-41*

I have found that as our view of Jesus becomes more accurate, so does our view of ourselves. In this passage the disciples asked: *"Who is this?"* From this question it could be assumed that they still didn't know who they were with.

"So in an attempt once more to help us transform our minds, let's try to answer this question from the disciples experience... their minds were not fully transformed.

Had they been they would have seen:

First He is PERSONAL. Jesus wanted to be alone with His disciples so he tells them to get into a boat with Him so that they can sail to the other side. Jesus purposefully gets them to leave the crowds behind. He wanted to share personally with them.

He is also a God who is POWERFUL. Speaking to the waves and storm and stilling it proves Jesus' Power. We should remember this was a very severe storm! Keep in mind too that it was experienced fishermen who had been through all kinds of storms at sea.

Also he is a God who is PATIENT. 12 people who should have known better really blew it here, didn't they? Yet, Jesus didn't hold their mistakes against them, He didn't punish them or decide to abandon them...He still intervened on their behalf.

We can also see Him as a God Who PROVIDES. You see, Jesus work doesn't end with forgiving you for your sins...He wants to PROVIDE you with support throughout your life! Jesus promised I will be with you till the end of time [Mt. 28:20].

Meditation: *Am I walking a faith walk blindly? Am I fully aware of who Jesus is?*

DAY 4**Read:** *Romans 12:2; Psalm 107:23-32*

In the reading of this whole Psalm we see the author once again paint the picture with different scenarios of people finding themselves in trouble. Trouble seems to follow us without our permission.

But he reaffirms that God does not desert people when they are in distress of any kind. Here he paints a picture of people going out to sea on a ship and soon finding themselves in a storm of note. In fear of their lives, *“they cried out to the LORD in their trouble, and he brought them out of their distress. He stilled the storm to a whisper;”*

But three things are note worthy, in transforming their minds into knowing what to do:

First they *Called to God*. Because their minds were transformed they knew who their rescue would come from. No mortal could save them from the perilous situation they now found themselves in. God is in control of the winds and the waves. He is the one they call to. If God is in your life you can call on him to save you.

Next the Psalmist says they must *Give Thanks*. As soon as the storm was *“brought to a whisper”* they ought to give thanks. It is so easy to forget where ones help comes from in times of trouble. How often have you and I called on God to rescue us and then promptly forget to give thanks.

Third the Psalmist encourages that they who were once in trouble ought to *“exalt Him also in the congregation of the people, And praise Him at the seat of the elders.”* Testify to your experiences. This is to encourage others about the Goodness of the Lord.

Meditation: *Transform your mind to call on God, give thanks and praise Him among others?*

DAY 5**Read:** *Romans 12:2; Romans 8:31-39*

When we are suffering through difficult times, when the storms come, we can know that God will cause the bad situation to work together for good. This doesn't mean that God caused the storm. Storms are because of the broken world we live in. God will bring us through it.

The word “know” means to learn by instruction. In other words our minds are transformed through our experiences and learning. If it were not for the revelation of God's Word we would tend to think that too many things that happen in life work for evil instead of God.

How many times have you seen what seemed like a hopeless situation turn into something good? We have some examples in the scriptures of this principle.

An example..... How many of you think it would be terrible to be sold into slavery by your own brothers? Then how many of you think it would be bad to be thrown into prison for something you were completely innocent of after things seemed to be going well for you? This all happened to a man named Joseph in the bible. Joseph's brothers thought he was going to get them back but Joseph said the following in Genesis 50:20, *“Even though you planned evil against me, God planned good to come out of it. This was to keep many people alive, as He is doing now.”*

God does not promise that we won't have tough times; in fact all the passages we have read indicate that tough times come pretty much to everyone some time. But, whatever we are facing in life, God promises that it will work together for good. Nothing will separate us from God's love.

Meditation: *What was my last trial and where and how did God come through for me?*

DAY 6**Read:** *Romans 12:2; Mark 4:35-41*

I have often heard people lament that God is testing them and that is why trials and storms come their way. That is so far from the truth and so I try to explain that instead of focusing on the tough time, they should rather be trusting God.

Trusting in God doesn't always mean that the outcome goes the way that you wanted, but it is trusting and believing that God will catch you when you fall and not let you be out there by yourself.

If we are going to make any attempt at understanding God and being able to trust Him during difficult times we will have to understand this: Your problem may be bigger than you are, but it is not bigger than your God.

At times you may not have all the answers or understand what is going on, but God is never confused or sidetracked by any situation. Anyone who seeks God first, knows that God is ready and willing to guide us. Lead us and grow us.

If you are able to remember other times that God has seen you through rough times, it is easier to let Him have control of the situation you are in. It means that your mind is being transformed.

But our responses could be one of faith or of panic. The disciples showed panic. Yet the creator of the wind and waves was lying in the boat.

When we completely trust or have faith in God, we look like Jesus resting in the boat while the storm rages. We are not phased by the difficulty but ride it out with Him in faith and trust.

Prayer: *Father teach me to trust You alone in the storms of my life. Amen*