

The presence and protection of God (Quality: Good)

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[0 : 00] The Lord may help me that I should attention to the book of Psalms and Psalm 46 and verse 7.

Psalm 46 and verse 7. The Lord of hosts is with us. The God of Jacob is our refuge.

See you. My subject this evening, as the Lord enables me, follows on indeed from our brother's subject this afternoon.

And I trust that we shall find that this is confirming that we are reminded yet again, though both of us have come, that in a sense wholly unknowing what the other was about to take for his subject, now service is here today.

[4 : 05] Not in any sense the ground with respect to any supposed dessert in those that are the recipients. No, indeed not.

For what encouragement is there for us? However, we may have been enabled to walk what might be considered uprightly before the Lord.

What encouragement is found for us? And that even with respect to that, particularly when we're brought to realise, and we'll do so under divine teaching, that our best is stained and dyed with sin.

Our all is nothing worth. No, it is, but it is founded, I say, upon covenant love and mercy, for the unchanging faithfulness of our God and Saviour.

Oh, a sure foundation this, for the faith and the hope of the living family of God. And that must most surely draw out our hearts in that love unto the Lord, the very fruit and effect of his love, though indeed what is declared a witness to here.

[5 : 21] Yes, it speaks of God's power. It speaks of his unchanging faithfulness. But also does it not testify of his love?

Oh, that great love, wherewith he hath loved his people, even when they were dead in trespasses and sins. I mention that oft times the Church of Jesus Christ, the Lord's people personally, be brought to turn to this psalm, and find it a source, encouragement, and consolation for them.

As in their needs, their troubles and distress, they are thus drawn unto the Lord himself, as he is pleased to reveal himself, here in the blessed Testament that has given us, gracious ministry of the Holy Spirit in this psalm.

It was recorded of Martin Luther, that often of the times when the Church and cause of Jesus Christ, in his death, was beset and threatened, and with danger and distress, he says, Let us sing together, that forty-six are, oh, here is a refuge, the help and the hope, of the tried and burdened and exercised people of God, in the face of all, those things which may and do oppose, not only from without, but also from within, that God is, our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

Ah, and one as well commented upon that, a present help in trouble, even nearer to us than the trouble itself.

[7 : 11] What a thought is that? It indeed remained with us. God is, and God is present with us. The very words of our text, bear witness to this.

The Lord of hosts is with us. The God of Jacob is our refuge. And in considering these words this evening, I want to look at them.

In this, as it is set before us here, the God of Jacob is our refuge. And that the Lord of hosts is with us.

For that reason, I read that chapter out of the book of Genesis. Of the Lord appearing not only unto, but for Jacob there, as he, having left his father's house, and going on that journey to Adanaram, a way that he had not gone heretofore, and with all that was involved for him in that way.

Remember, he set out on that path alone. As he said, years afterwards, on his return, when he pleaded with the Lord, when he heard of the news of Esau coming to meet him with 400 men, he says, but with my staff, I passed over this Jordan.

[8 : 41] Meaning, that when he left his father's house, all the possession he had was that which he could carry. Ah, how the Lord had fulfilled that word that he had spoken unto Jacob on this occasion.

Looking back, he did over the twenty-odd years. Oh, he could there surely testify that the goodness of God to him, the unfailing reality, that word that the Lord has spoken.

So we find the Lord conveyed to him there, in that vision of the night, as he saw that ladder set up on the earth, the top of it reached to heaven, the angels of God ascending and descending upon it, and the Lord spoke to him.

And it is with regard to that, and the truth that is opened up to us in that event, in respect to its application still, to concerns the people of God, confirmed as that is unto us, in what the Lord has been pleased, to reveal of himself, the precious truth of his word, and that through the person, our Lord Jesus Christ, the gracious teaching of God, the Holy Spirit.

Yes, God, the refuge of his saints, as Jacob proved, and indeed, he says, the Lord of hosts is with us.

[10 : 18] Let's just look at that aspect for a moment. The Lord of hosts is with us. It literally can be interpreted, the Lord of armies, expressive of this, that the whole, the power of God, is that which is on the side, and indeed involved, on the behalf, of that which pertains, to his glory, and the welfare, of those whom he hath loved, and chosen, and given, that covenant ordered in all things, and sure, to our Lord Jesus Christ.

Yes, God is with us. Or as Paul says in the epistle to the Romans, and puts it forward, in this question, if God be for us, who can be against us?

Ah, where is there authority, or power, on earth, or in hell, that can ever, frustrate the outworking, of God's purposes, or rob God, and one, whom he hath loved, and chosen, and given, beloved son, I mentioned earlier, that the safety, security of the church, is that, and as a believer, is that they are found, in the hand, of the Lord Jesus Christ, and oh, what a mighty hand that is, what a sure hold, the Lord has upon his people, and will he, friends, let them go, ah, blessed be his great, and holy name, most certainly, he will not, but the Lord of hosts, is with us.

Look at that, as it beautifully, opened up to us further, in the scriptures of truth, and look, consider, what is brought, before us here, of the Lord of hosts, just, first of all, direct your thought, to the book of Judges, and chapter five, there in the book of Judges, remember, how Israel, and the leadership, of Joshua, have been brought over, the river Jordan, the Lord, making that way, for them, even though, the river, at that time, was in full flood, and humanly speaking, impossible, barrier for them, at that time, but, is there anything, to harm for the Lord, to impossibilities, mean anything, with respect, to the Lord, our God, no, there is, there is nothing, in that sense, with regard, to what the Lord, has spoken, and promised, as it was with Joshua, that he is not able, and most surely will, and perform, but as they brought, over Jordan, and came there, outside, the city of Jericho, from the first, obstacles, in the way, and remember,

Jericho, as it said, was walled up, ah, and it was, a secure place, indeed, the inhabitants thereof, were on the watch, for what, for this approach, the armies, of the children of Israel, and, let's read, in the last few verses, of chapter 5, and it came to pass, when Joshua, was by Jericho, they lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold, there stood a man, with his sword, drawn in his hand, and Joshua, went unto him, and said unto him, art thou for us, or for our adversaries, and he said, nay, the captain, of the host, of the Lord, am I now come, and Joshua, fell on his face, to the earth, and did worship, and said unto him, what saith my Lord, unto his servant, the captain, of the Lord's host, said unto Joshua, loose thy shoe, from off thy foot, the place, whereon thou standest, is holy, and Joshua did so, oh, this was not, just an angel, that appeared, unto Joshua there, over, by Jericho, where Joshua had been, instructed, to worship, as he did, as this one, described, in speak of himself, as a captain, of the Lord's host, here, is none other, and friends, how this directs us, and opens up to us, this glorious truth, the captain, of the Lord's host, our Lord, and Savior,

[14 : 56] Jesus Christ, how clear his identity, here, brought before us, our present, as the Lord was, even with his, church there, from the whole, of the Old Testament, dispensation, and oh, no lesser, in a sense, more gloriously so, is a manifestation, of this, unto his church, and people, still, for this, captain, of the Lord's host, the Lord of hosts, is with us, and look at that word there, the Lord of hosts, with us, consider it, as we believe rightly, must do so, in the light, of new covenant mercies, oh, what, we, we view here, the person, of our Lord, Jesus Christ, what is that, glorious name, by what, which is made known, unto his people, how, embodied as it does, the very truth here, the Lord of hosts, is with us, remember friends, what was spoken, by the angel,

Gabriel, before, when announcing, that, that, that, that child, that should be born, unto Mary, true, they said, his name, shall be called, Jesus, he shall save, his people, from their sins, or, as they're not, clearly indicated there, divine authority, and power, are, not said, he will attempt, to do so, or do his best, that he can, or put his people, in a saveable condition, no, he shall, O, I love, friends, the shalls, and the wills, of our God, are set before us, in the word, our, blessed be his great, and holy name, is there any encouragement, to the faith, of God's elect, but that, which is but founded upon, the shalls, and the wills, of our triune God, he shall save, his people, from their sins, but also, that name, as well, that was heard, that thou, should call, his name,

Emmanuel, which being interpreted, is God with us, the Lord of hosts, is with us, our glorious Emmanuel, our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, he is with us, as it concerns his church, and his people personally, he is never friends, absent from them, true, we may not, and are not always certainly, perceiving it, we often have those, times surely, in experience, of the child of God, when they have, a sense of lament, the felt sense, of his, what they fear, is absent from them, and are, there is often friends, a reason why, they're brought thus, down as it were, in sorrow, and in mourning, over, and after, the Lord, on the account, their own sins, and failings, ah, but is the Lord, ever absent, from his people, are they ever, outside, as I said often, the circle, of his love, though, we perceive it not, concerns a believer, ah, yet, the Lord is there, the Lord of hosts, says, the psalmist here, rather, the Holy Spirit, the Lord of hosts, is with us, a glorious Emmanuel, the Lord Jesus Christ, ah, see, one is testified, of him, what did he say, to his disciples, when, following, his resurrection, from the dead, when he, would send them forth, ah, to that work, which he called them, and appointed for them, as he instructed them, that a tarry at Jerusalem, to end you, with that power, from on high, what was a word, of promise, he spake to them, you know it, as its application, still, the church, the people of God, he says, and lo,

I am with you, always, even, unto the end, of the world, ah, does the Lord, mean what he said, blessed, be his great, and holy name, he does, and he is present, with his people, he indwells them, that gracious, ministry of the Holy Spirit, that will exercise, the riches of his grace, of the living faith, God is with us, the blessed, testament, the word, ah, see the implications, of it, for the church, of Jesus Christ, and the Lord's people, individually, as well as collectively, yes, we may be, and indeed, one said, this surely so, we are but a remnant, in the earth, the times, accompanies, the Lord's people, a few, ah, but oh, friends, have we not, this, as a glorious, promise, unto us, ah, and an abiding reality, that the Lord, of hosts, is with us, we may be weak, we are weak, we are, through sense, we are nothing, in ourselves, what is the church, what does it stand in place, in this fallen world, amongst the affairs, of men and nations, is anything, regard to the true, church of God, ever has, a place, or even a thought, in the, in the affairs, of men and nations, of those in authority, indeed over us, still, in our day, and generation, ah, the blessed, be the Lord's name, we are not friends, dependent, upon whether, the society, in which we live, is favourable, to us, or not, ah, we are thankful, that we live, in reasonably, peaceful times, and are free, to worship, the Lord our God, the way, and manner, that we do, but even, where there is opposition, to that, the very, the cause, of the Lord Jesus Christ, oh, does that affect, the glorious reality, of this, the Lord is with us, and even in the most, troubling times, as expressed here, in the language, of the psalmist, oh, here is a refuge, of the people of God, the Lord of hosts, is with us, our Emmanuel, the Lord Jesus Christ, the very name, as I said, testifies, this glorious truth, is that one, that hath all authority, and power, in heaven, and in earth, look at the illustrations, that are given us, of this, in the word of God, in more than one instance, there, in the Old Testament scriptures, was in the days, of Asa, it was in the time, of Jehoshaphat, when, the armies, of the Assyrians, were gathered together, and came, against Jerusalem, it was at the time, of Asa, when the Ethiopians, a vast number, came up, against,

Judah, and Asa, there acknowledged, before the Lord, that they had, no might, that it was in the Lord's name, that they went, against that host, of the Ethiopians, and how the Lord, delivered them, into their hand, likewise, in the days, of Jehoshaphat, the armies, of Sennacherib, surrounded Jerusalem, and threatened, with a blasphemous speech, the Sennacherib, of Rabshakeh, his general name, are challenging, the very Lord God, that the gods, of the nations, not being able, to deliver, any of them, the hand, of the Assyrians, therefore, he says, that neither, shall the God, in whom Jehoshaphat, trusts, deliver him, his people, out of my hand, oh, the Lord of hosts, is with us, as Jehoshaphat says, we have, we have, rather, Hezekiah it was, but Jehoshaphat prior, also to that, we have no might, against this company, that cometh up against us, neither know we, what to do, but our eyes, are up unto thee, and oh, as they went forth, as the Lord instructed, the Lord, delivered that host, into their hand, the battle, is not yours, but God's, he declared, likewise, referring again, to Hezekiah, surrounded, with the army, of the Assyrians, oh, see how the Lord, spoke that word, and promise, to Hezekiah, and that very night, the angel, the Lord, went out, in the, once the hosts, of the Assyrians, 180,000, were slain, that night, the Lord, of hosts, is with us, the God of Jacob, is our refuge,

[24 : 24] I just, refer to those instances, do not they speak, still surely, the church, and people of God, yes, true, with us, that it is with the believing, people of God, we wrestle not, against prince, against flesh, and blood, but oh, friends, very formidable, are those things, that oppose, the true church, of Jesus Christ, we wrestle not, against flesh, and blood, but against, against spiritual, powers, and against the, the darkness, of this world, the spiritual wickedness, in high places, all the very activity, of the evil one, as stirred up, as he does, those very, powers of darkness, that ever, in opposition, to the church, of Jesus Christ, the Lord's people, personally, and the worst, of the opposition, of believer experiences, rises from the work, of his own fallen, and carnal nature, oh, how, how powerful, of these things, how, how indeed, impotent, we are, in of ourselves, rightly, to oppose, the firm, but here, is a consolation, the Lord, of hosts, is with us, our glorious Emmanuel, ah, he, stood the fiery test, as one says, and we, shall stand, through him, the victory, is sure, to the people, of God, ah, for our, for our Emmanuel, the Lord Jesus Christ, has overcome, he's overcome sin,

Satan, death, hell, and the grave, ah, to the praise, of the glory, of his great, and holy name, the Lord, of hosts, is with us, the God, of Jacob, is our refuge, let's look, a little further, I said, considering, what Jacob, made known, to Jacob, there, in that vision, of the night, yes, when Jacob, lay down, in that place, to sleep, one sense, how, what an uncomfortable, position it was, all he had, was a stone, for his pillow, how different, to the home, that he had left, indulged, as he had been, undoubtedly, by his mother, ah, not, not subject, to such privations, as never then, and subsequently, afterwards, he experienced, and yet, yet, as the Lord, revealed himself, to Jacob, there, in that vision, of the night, yes, the word, and promise, the Lord gave him, he had the blessing, of Isaac, his father, ah, and indeed, that was important, and precious, to Jacob, but see, the gracious, confirmation, of it, as the Lord, spoke, unto him, ah, and also, assured him, that he would, be with him, in all places, whither he went, ah, that he would not, leave him, until he had done that, which he had spoken, to him of, and friends, it was not only a promise, to Jacob, there, surely, its application, and realization, the Lord's dealings, with each one, that, that which he had promised, would not go back upon, indeed,

I am with thee, says the Lord, I will not leave thee, until I have done that, which I have spoken, unto thee of, and what is the promise, that the Lord has given, unto his people, ah, that the Lord, he it is, that doth go before thee, he will be with thee, he will not fail thee, nor neither forsake thee, fear not, neither, abet thou dismayed, but there is something, also, beautifully opened up to us, there, in that vision, that was shown there, to Jacob, ah, and it has its, glorious realization, concerns the church, of Jesus Christ still, for it was the Lord, that was above, of that ladder, that spoke to, to Jacob there, from heaven, you know, and what does that, in the, look about the light, new covenant mercies, that revealed to us, the gospel of our Lord, and Savior, of Jesus Christ, oh, there friends, in that ladder, indicated there,

God himself, opened that way, there of access, and acceptance with him, whereby, his word, came unto his, down to Jacob, and Jacob's, words as it were, going out again, unto the Lord, look at that, I say in the light, of new covenant mercies, what says, what says, our Lord Jesus Christ, our glorious Emmanuel, see the fulfillment, of it, in him, I am the way, the truth, and the life, no man, cometh unto the Father, but by me, oh, what an open way, is there, made known there, to Jacob, for poor sinners, needy sinners, still, in and through, the Lord Jesus Christ, and by grace, through faith, in his name, the way, that God has opened up, never could be closed, against the needy sinner, brought for his grace, to cry unto him, ah, in a sense, our Lord Jesus, indicated this, remember, we read in the first chapter, of the book, gospel as recorded, by John, when, when Nathaniel, came unto him, and when Nathaniel, bringeth him unto the Lord Jesus, ah,

Nathaniel has said, can any good thing, come out of Nazareth, come and see, and as he, Jesus saw Nathaniel, coming unto him, he says, behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom, is no guile, Nathaniel said, whence, knowest thou me, before that Philip, called thee, when thou wast, under the fig tree, I saw thee, Rabbi, thou art the son of God, thou art the king, of Israel, oh, how those things, were brought home, there to Nathaniel, that this, Jesus of Nazareth, indeed, the glory is Emmanuel, the one spoken of, and promised, through the prophets, very fulfillment, Jesus says, because, he says, thou shalt, believest thou, thou shalt see, greater things, than these, that hereafter, thou shalt see, heaven opened, the angels of God, ascending, and descending, upon, the son of man, that surely, has, only some reference, to that, incident, in Jacob's life, but surely, a glorious, reminder, the fulfillment, of it, the way, of access, divine communication, and blessing, from God, to needy, guilty sinners, in and through, the person, of his beloved son, our Lord Jesus Christ, and surely, no sinner, that through his grace, is brought there, to flee, unto him, to hide them, shall ever friends, be sent empty away, know we sometimes, sing, the door, of his mercy, stands open, all day, for the poor, and the needy, that not by the way, no sinner, shall ever be empty, sent back, come seeking mercy, for Jesus is sake, remember, in the case of Jacob, was not Jacob, first seeking, the Lord, we do not even, any account, that when he laid down, in that place, to sleep, a stone of his pillow, whether there, before he lay down, he sought the Lord, ah, but friends, the Lord, that true sense, sought him, the initiative, was not from Jacob, it was from Jacob's, covenant God, and so that is still, to concern his people, no sinner, is ever beforehand, and with God, ah, all proceeds, from our covenant God, and it is, all a grace, for was Jacob deserving, was in one sense, any better, than his brother Esau, true, their lives diverged, they were very different persons, and personalities, unquestionably, as it pointed out to us, but why, was it, could it be, did God say,

[33 : 23] Jacob I loved, Esau, have I hated, what was the reason, what is the reason, that God, manifested grace, and mercy, to any sinner, to not upon the ground, of what we deserve, what we are, what we have come from, or indeed, what relationship, we are in, regard to the things, of this time state, no, it is because, it is that which arises, out of the wonder, and reality, of his electing, love, and grace, it is because, God hath chosen, according, to his own sovereign will, and good pleasure, as I said many a time, nothing is more hateful, nothing stirs up the enmity, of fallen human nature, than the glorious truth, the sovereignty, of our God, the sovereignty, of God, in redemption, in the law, and in the choice, of those, whom he will, and are saved, alone, throughout the, person, and finished work, of the Lord,

Jesus Christ, that which is hateful, in the eyes, of unbelieving, men and women, oh, what a glorious truth, it is, the eyes, of the sinner, saved by grace, our ever cause, for thankfulness, unto our God, our, the Lord of hosts, is with us, the God of Jacob, is said here, is our refuge, and what a glorious refuge, our Lord, Jesus Christ is, our, full, and free, and indeed, a, such, see how often, in the book of Psalms, we find reference, to this, and that which, that which, which is expressed, in the very language, of the, and in the Psalms, but that which, surely echoes, so often, the inward exercise, and concerns, the living family, of God, as I said before, how often, surely, of the Lord's people, have found, and do find, the language, of the Psalms, expresses, not only, inward desires, and concerns, that, but expresses, that which is, that which is, that which is, that their need, even far better, that they themselves, can put into words, and if we thus, find such an affinity, with the Psalmist, and the language, of the Psalms, is there not, surely, an indication, of this, that we are taught, of the same,

Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit, of God, often, then, in the Psalms, see it in the language, the Psalmist, when he says, when my heart, is overwhelmed, within me, lead me, to the rock, that is higher, than I, ah, David, oft times, speaks, as the Lord, is rock, is refuge, is strong tower, is hiding place, each of these things, expresses, the glorious reality, of the eternal God, yes, it is, the eternal God, reminding, this afternoon, this afternoon, which is, that the eternal God, is a refuge, of his saints, the eternal God, not only, in the sense, of what he does, that provided, for them, but what he is, in himself, ah, there is, the glorious reality, of it, the eternal God, is our refuge, underneath, the everlasting arms, yes, the Lord, of hosts, is with us, the God, of Jacob, is our refuge, but the psalmist, testifies of, in this 46th psalm, ah, for the Lord's people, approve, that Moses could say, he blessed the children, of Israel, before his death, ah, he shall thrust out, the enemy, from before thee, and shall say, destroy them, true, that at its fulfillment, a realization, when Israel, began to take possession, of the land, that God had promised, but friends, it had its full realization, in that, which is wrought out, for his people, through the person, and finished work, of our Lord,

Jesus Christ, we overcome, ah, not in our own strength, no, not by our own, wisdom of ability, we, we overcome, as a word, and testament, it is, those there, before the throne, they, they overcame, through the blood, of the lamb, therefore, are they, before, the throne, of God, forever, yes, glorious truth, the Lord, of hosts, is with us, the God, of Jacob, is our refuge, twice, is this repeated, in this psalm, and that little word, there also, sealer, it's not just, lightly, Passover, it is that, which, reminds us of this, a real sense, it were, to pause, to consider, indeed, to bow, in worship, in love, and praise, unto our, triune God, for all that he is, as well, as all that he has done, the Lord, of hosts, is with us, what more friends, can we want, the God, of Jacob, is our refuge, our triune God, our Emmanuel,

God with us, are, that very one, in whom, and through alone, that access, and acceptance, with God, and from which, and through which alone, every grace, and every favour, flows, unto undeserving, indeed, hell deserving, sinners, as we are, are, and yet, friends, sinners, saved by grace, I leave the remarks there, may the Lord add his blessing, Amen.