

## **Sermon Notes – 1/7/ 2024**

**Text:** Psalms 46:1-3 (NIV) *1 God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. 2 Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea, 3 though its waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging.*  
*Selah*

### **View from My Place**

I was pondering a line from an old spiritual song that goes, “Long as I live when troubles rise, I’ll hasten to His throne.” Those words originally came from the pen of Isaac Watts, a prolific hymn writer, way back in 1806. It made me ask myself, “When trouble rises do I hasten to His throne or hesitate to it?”

When I hesitate, it can be due to any number of things, such as thinking I can handle the situation myself, or feeling ashamed for getting myself in such a mess, or because I’m mad and I don’t want to deal with the trouble in a godly way and I know God is not a fan of my present attitude. Or it could be a sense of futility rooted in the belief that taking it to the Lord won’t make a difference.

There may be many reasons, but the primary cause of hesitating to go to the throne is always that I have forgotten who is on the throne. I don’t mean I’ve forgotten His name, or even that He is there, I’ve forgotten what He’s like and what kind of relationship He has with me.

The Lord rides through trouble with me.

When I hesitate, I have forgotten that the throne upon which He sits is one of mercy and grace, not condemnation and judgment. And when I remember who He is, I do indeed hasten to His throne.

### **1. Refuge and Strength**

The Lord is our Super Power and all the super power we will ever need.

He is not just a refuge from terrifying circumstances but from inner storms, like doubt, shame, weariness and sorrow.

There is no person on earth that is more worthy of our trust than He is. There is no one more worthy of our full disclosure than He is. There is no one safer to invite into our human moments than He is.

My issues are not just something I need to grow past; if they cause me to hasten to His throne, they become a means by which I can grow closer to the Lord. And it is in growing closer to Him that I can recognize the stifling effects of those issues on my own growth and on my relationships.

“Help me today to hasten to Your throne, Lord, because of my solid belief in Your unlimited and unquenchable love for me.”

I want the relationship with You and not just the benefits of the relationship.

I want to start the day with the One who satisfies my deepest longings and the One who can scratch the itch that nothing else can reach.

Sometimes the warrior within us has to battle the easy thing to do in order to liberate the noble thing to do. We need the Lord’s strength.

## **2. Ever-present help in trouble.**

Our world is in trouble. War. Crime. Climate. Politics. The good news is though we are “in trouble.” The Lord is in trouble too. Not as a victim, but as the Lord.

The evil one means it for evil. And He is perpetrating evil. But the Lord means it for good, and He is translating it into good for multitudes.

“If what You have given me is all that I need, I will rest content.” His grace is sufficient for the need of the moment.

## **3. We will not fear.**

We may not be able to direct the future, but we can direct our faith.

“Therefore, we will not fear though the earth gives way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea.” What the psalmist is obviously communicating is no matter how big the change, how great the threat: God will be there.

The Psalmist’s hope is not in the avoidance of disaster but in what is available if it does happen. The refuge and strength. And because He is there we will not fear.

Hezekiah’s Letter 2 Kings 19 – Spread your concerns out before the Lord.

## **4. Selah.**

Possibly “pause and calmly think about that. Because sometimes *the light we need is in remembering what we already know*. My goal is not just to know but to believe what I know.

Lord, may Your promises be as real as they are familiar.

## **Finally...**

Remember when we hasten to take refuge in the Lord:

We are hastening to a warm reception.

We are hastening to genuine affection.

We are hastening to heartfelt care.

When it comes to hastening, don't hasten just when there is trouble,

Hasten because He's the One who satisfies our deepest longings.

Hasten because He can scratch the itch that nothing else can reach.

Not only hasten in trouble but in triumph.

Hasten with victory.

Hasten with praise

Hasten with thanksgiving

Hasten with jubilant rejoicing.

Hasten to celebrate. There is as much celebration in the Psalms as there is supplication.

Hasten don't hesitate.