

# psalm 46

played on the *alamoth*  
translation by Robert Alter and NRSV

For the lead player, for the Korahites, on the *alamoth* a song:

- <sup>1</sup> God is a shelter and strength for us,  
a help in crisis, readily found.
- <sup>2</sup> Therefore we fear not when the earth breaks apart,  
when mountains collapse in the heart of the seas.
- <sup>3</sup> The seas' waters roar and roil,  
mountains heave in its surge. *Selah.*
- <sup>4</sup> A brook, its bubbling streams gladden God's city,  
the holy dwelling of the Most High.
- <sup>5</sup> God is in the midst of the city, it will not collapse.  
God helps it as morning breaks.
- <sup>6</sup> Nations roar and kingdoms collapse.  
He sends forth His voice and earth melts.
- <sup>7</sup> *The LORD of armies is with us,  
a fortress for us, Jacob's God.* *Selah.*
- <sup>8</sup> Go, behold the acts of the LORD,  
Who made desolations on earth,  
caused wars to cease to the end of the earth.
- <sup>9</sup> The bow He has broken;  
spears are splintered,  
and chariots burned in fire.
- <sup>10</sup> "Let go, and know that I am God.  
I am exalted among nations, I am exalted upon earth."
- <sup>11</sup> *The LORD of armies is with us,  
a fortress for us, Jacob's God.* *Selah.*

# your prayer

Use this space to respond to God and to the psalm, or to collect your notes.

# prompts for psalm 46

## Reading the Psalm

- In what context is this psalm used, and how can that provide direction for the scope of your prayers?
- What is the structure of this psalm?
- What does this psalm say about God?
- To whom is God speaking in verse 10?
- How do you feel about “LORD of armies” in this psalm compared to last time?

## Letting the Psalm Read You and Our Community

- God speaks at the end of this psalm. What is God speaking to you? How do God’s words affect you, resonate with you?
- What do you need to “let go”?
- How can this psalm lead you to pray for our city? our congregation?
- What crisis faces this community (city and church)?
- How have you found God in crisis? Praise and thank Him for that.
- What spears, bows, and chariots do you see that need to be destroyed by God?
- What gladdening streams run through your life? Your church? Your city?
- This psalm refers to Jerusalem as God’s holy dwelling. Can Los Angeles be God’s holy dwelling? What does it mean for God to be in the midst of Hollywood? Pray for this.
- How is God a shelter for you and our community?
- How does praying this psalm assist your relationship with God? your relationship with community, congregation, and city?

# praying a psalm

## Dwelling in the Psalm

- The goal of praying a psalm is to seek God's voice and presence through the psalm—it is *not* to write a scholarly commentary afterwards.
- Read the psalm all the way through. It's okay if you find yourself stopping in a certain place. Dwell there, listen to what God might be saying to you through that part, or what you might need to say to God. Try reading out loud.
- This isn't the time for analysis. Read the psalm like you might watch a sunset... drink it in, rest, breathe deeply. Read what the psalm has to say to you with trust and expectation.
- You are listening to the voice of God through the voice of the psalmist. God may speak in many different ways: through words, through verses of the psalm, through images, through a memory. Might be hard to hear God at first, but as we pray together over the next few weeks, I hope that God's voice in these psalms becomes clearer to you.
- Pay attention to the phrases and images that resonate with your life.

## Focusing on the Psalm

- Look at repeated words. Is there anything important happening with those words in the psalm—and in your heart?
- Look at the structure of the psalm. Is there any significance in how the psalm begins and where the psalm ends? Is there an emotional journey? Does it resonate with your own life's journey? Are there different sections to the psalm?
- Do you agree or disagree with parts of the psalm? Why?

## Responding to the Psalm

- Re-read the psalm. After each verse or section, acknowledge God's voice in those words, speak to God, and write your own responses.
- Write. Speak. Sing. Draw. Listen.
- How is this psalm your own prayer? How can you pray for your friends and family, loved ones and enemies?