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# FAITH @ HOME

## WEEK OF JUNE 28, 2020

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Some ideas for continuing Psalm 46 through the week

*A note about imagery and children:*

*Don't be afraid to unpack the metaphors in the Psalms with kids. Children are literal, but studies show that young preschoolers can understand analogies and symbolic relationships. This ability grows, and by upper elementary school, children are quite adroit at understanding and making comparisons. Have fun with this!*

*Parents with littles – if you just need one or two ideas, the don't-miss ideas for young kids are in green.*

*Black font is an all-play for children, teens, and adults*

Try reading or listening to Psalm 46 in several translations this week.

You might want to listen to Shane and Shane's version of Psalm 46 with lyrics:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nbr-Oky1qV0>

### God is our refuge (verses 1-6)

- ? Who is the main actor in this Psalm?
- ? What is the job of the psalmist, audience, us?
- Talk, list, or journal about things that trouble you or cause fear or worry. You may even want to sketch this out:
- Draw a big rock (Reminder of Psalm 19:14) in the middle of a piece of paper. Draw yourself hiding in a cleft or cave or under a ledge of the rock. Write or draw things that are worrisome, that have troubled you or that make you afraid. You may want to label it with the words of Psalm 46:1 and hang it up.
- Talk, list, or journal about times when you have been in trouble, afraid and worried. Which of these times did you turn to God to shelter you? Remember how he did that. Have there been times when you haven't turned to God for shelter? What was that experience like?
- *Play tag - Find a big box or a bush/tree/fort you built that players can squeeze into and hide. Review the rules for tag: One person is "it," and chases the players. When the players run to home base, they're safe. If "it" tags, them, they trade roles. Tell the players that this is a lot like what happens when we are scared of something. If we let that fear take hold of us, we get trapped, but God says he is a home base – a refuge or shelter for those who trust him. Have fun playing tag! Make sure everyone gets a chance to be "Fear" and everyone has a chance to make it safely to the Refuge of home base!*

- Let one of this year's VBS songs, "My God Is So Great," help you think about how we can trust God to take care of us <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=da2GzIDjsQ8>

## Our fortress (7 and 11)

- ? What are the qualities of a good fortress? How do these qualities also describe God?
- Take some time to think about what it means to take refuge in the God of Jacob. You might like to reflect with 2019 indie band Okay Kenedi's "God of Jacob": <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CexIKIQLPP4>
- Explore the excavated remains of the type of fortress the psalmist may have had in mind at this Megiddo excavation site: <https://megiddoexpedition.wordpress.com/introducing-megiddo/>
- If you have a child who is interested in history, architecture, or engineering (or you yourself are), have fun with a Google search exploring fortresses through history and thinking about how that fits with our need for the safety and security we find in God. You might also enjoy the David Macaulay Caldecott Honor Award Winning Castle.
- Read through the lyrics to "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God," while you sing or listen to this timeless hymn. Some of the lyrics are a bit archaic, so it may be beneficial to talk through them and translate it into your own words, considering how the meaning has been true from the time of the Psalms to the time of Martin Luther, to your home in 2020, and on into the future!

## See and know (verses 8-10)

- ? What does it mean to be still and know that God is God?
- ? How am I exalting God in my life?
- ? Are there things competing for the place of "Most High?"
- ? In what ways do I need to be still?
- Take a look at Exodus 14:13-14 to see what has happened in a time when God told his people to be still. Kids may want to draw about this story. Is there a time like this in your own life's story? If yes, is there someone who needs to hear your testimony?
- Fear is a normal part of life. Even Jesus' disciples were afraid. Take a look in Mark 4:35-41 to read about a time when Jesus gave them a chance to see and know. How was Jesus exalted through this story and others?
- Consider doing Lectio Divina with a reading of Exodus 14:10-14 or Mark 4:35-41, using a Bible app to serve as your "reader" if you are doing this as a solo exercise. (See the Lectio Divina resource on the next page).

Lectio Divina is an ancient practice of the church. It means “divine reading.” It is different from the way many of us usually encounter scripture because it is not a Bible study. It is praying the scripture, listening to God. It is interacting and absorbing scripture in an attitude of prayer.

There are four phases or movements of lectio divina:

- ◆ Reading
- ◆ Meditation
- ◆ Prayer
- ◆ Contemplation

### **1. Reading**

We begin for the first phase by becoming comfortable and quiet. Find a comfortable position and relax your body. Close your eyes. Slow your breathing and concentrate on it. This is in preparation for listening to the living word of God. After a time of silence, the reader will read a text of scripture out loud. Listen as though this word is directed specifically to you.

### **2. Meditation**

The meditation phase begins with another period of silence. In this phase we focus on our desire to know more about God and to welcome him into our lives, and open up to Him in greater trust and confidence. We want to learn who He really is for me and what he wants to reveal to me. The reader will read the same passage of scripture a second time. This time, listen for one word or phrase of scripture. Write it down.

### **3. Prayer**

In this phase we pray the scripture. We do this by entering into the passage as though we were there. After a time of silence the reader will read the passage again a third time. Listen this time as though you were there. When the passage is read a third time, experience it as though you are there. What do you see? What are the sounds and smells around you? Do you smell the smells in the marketplace and feel the jostling of the crowd? And who are you in the story... one of the key players, a disciple, a bystander? After the passage is read this time, pause for a minute, and then write a letter to a friend describing your experience. Do not worry about planning what you are going to write... just let the words flow from your pen. You may be surprised what comes out. You may begin by writing, “Dear Sadie, I had the most amazing experience today...”

### **4. Contemplation**

Contemplation is the phase by which we hear all of the strands come together. The reader will read the passage again a fourth time. This time, listen for what you hear God is saying to you

in one simple word or sentence. Write down this word or sentence. You do not have to understand what it means. Just listen, and write it down.