

“Be Still”

Introduction. We’re almost six months into 2020, and the events of just this year have been incredible. We’ve had wildfires in Australia, drone strikes in Iraq, an impeachment trial in Washington, D.C., an NBA legend who died in a helicopter crash, and a worldwide COVID-19 pandemic.

With all these events, it’s good to look into the scriptures to find solace, and Psalm 46:10 is a fine verse to study. The historical background is likely God’s deliverance of Jerusalem from the Assyrians in the time of Hezekiah — a time of great distress. The emphasis in this psalm is on the presence of the Lord with His people, and the difference it makes when we trust Him in the changes and uncertainties of life. Let’s learn what can happen when we be still and know who God is.

I. Be Still

- A. This phrase suggests that calmness of mind and heart and slowing the activities of life are necessary to properly appreciate God.
 - 1. There are times when we need to just simply stop what we are doing and consider the God of heaven.
 - 2. This means to stop talking and turn off your phone. Quit listening to and fixating on the news. Stop grumbling and complaining and listen.
- B. This is an especially important lesson for today. We live in a time which is more hustle and bustle than any other time in history.
 - 1. When people either lived on a farm or spent their whole lives within the confines of a single city block, life was far slower and simpler. There was time for prayer and Bible study. Now even the simplest of lives is fraught with too much coming and going.
 - 2. In this environment, it is no wonder why people struggle with their commitment to God. It’s impossible to pray satisfactorily while on the run (you can certainly pray, but it won’t be the deep, meditative prayer that it needs to be), and you can’t adequately study the Bible in “drive-by” fashion. You need to “be still.”
- C. Paul, in Romans 11:22, teaches us to “consider” the goodness and severity of God. This is much more than simply surface reading of the fact. It is to ponder and absorb the truth of it. God is a God of goodness, but also of judgment.
- D. In Philippians 4:8, Paul teaches us to meditate. The characteristics that are true, noble, just, pure, lovely, and of good report are deserving of our careful thought. The reason why most people don’t behave in ways that are true, noble, just, pure, lovely, and of good report is because they don’t ever meditate on these principles of godly living — and they never get added to their lives.
- E. Paul taught Timothy in 1 Timothy 4:15 to meditate. The work of preaching requires a lot of thinking and pondering. The bulk of a preacher’s work is done in his head. It is not enough to pull out paper and scribble a few verses of scripture and call it a sermon. A preacher must carefully think about every angle of his theme. He must compare and contrast passages which bear on the theme. He must ponder about the proper application of said passages.

II. And Know

- A. The “knowledge” of God includes a factual knowledge about Him, His past acts, and His promises.
- B. The Israelites were destroyed for lack of knowledge in Hosea 4:6 because they had nothing to produce real faith in them. They rejected knowledge and God’s messengers (2 Chronicles 36:16). Christ warned His disciples that people would not listen (Matthew 10:14). Christ warned Paul to leave Jerusalem because the Jews would not receive testimony about Him (Acts 22:18).
- C. The inspired word (2 Timothy 3:16-17), properly preached and believed (2 Timothy 4:1-2), will build strong faith (Romans 10:17). It allows us to stop doubting and be sure.
- D. This is the kind of faith that encourages devoted action (Romans 1:5; 16:26). That action is based on a right view of God. If that’s the case, then what can I learn about God that changes my life?

III. That I Am God

- A. He has all authority.
 - 1. He is the judge of all the earth (Genesis 18:25; Psalm 58:11).
 - 2. He will judge all mankind (Ecclesiastes 3:17; Revelation 20:11-15).
- B. He is powerful.
 - 1. “Almighty” is used in connection with “God” 30 times in the Old Testament.
 - 2. These two terms together signify the Lord’s power in subduing His enemies.
- C. He is in control.
 - 1. Nebuchadnezzar learned this lesson in Daniel 4:25.
 - 2. The prophets declared the control of God (Isaiah 40:22-23; Jeremiah 27:5).
- D. He is gracious.
 - 1. God is love (Deuteronomy 7:6-8; Romans 11:5).
 - 2. He gives us what we don’t deserve (Matthew 7:11; 1 John 4:9; 5:11).
- E. He is my helper.
 - 1. He is my rock, fortress, and hope (Psalm 18:2; 39:7).
 - 2. He is a help in trouble (Psalm 46:1-3).
 - 3. He is my shepherd (Psalm 23:1-4).
- F. He is my Savior.
 - 1. He was a physical Savior to the Israelites (Exodus 14:13).
 - 2. He is the spiritual Savior of us (1 Timothy 2:3; 4:10; Titus 1:3; 2:10; 3:4).

Conclusion. Though it was tempting to ally themselves with foreign powers, to rely on military strength, or to give themselves over to idolatry and pagan ways, the godly must learn to persevere to the end.

No matter what happens in our world, God Himself calls for the people to trust in Him and know that He is God, for He will be exalted throughout the earth. Put your trust in Him and don’t be anxious when events occur.