

ספר תהילים מו | Tehillim / Psalms 46

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Under what Condition is God our Refuge and Strength?

This week's study is from *Tehillim / Psalms 46:1-11*, David opens the Psalm saying, א לְמַנְצֵחַ לְבַנְיָיִם קָרַח עַל-עֲלָמוֹת שִׁיר: For the director of music. Of the Sons of Korah. According to alamothe. A song. (NASB) The Psalm continues saying ב אֱלֹהִים לָנוּ מַחְסֵה וְעֵז עֲזָרָה בְּצָרוֹת נִמְצָא מְאֹד: ג עַל-כֵּן לֹא-נִירָא בְּהִמְרֵי אֲרָץ 46:1 God is our refuge and strength, A very present help in trouble. 46:2 Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change And though the mountains slip into the heart of the sea; (NASB) Based upon Parashat Ha'azinu, on the time-scale of mankind, the earth is considered to be unmovable. The idea of the earth changing and the mountains slipping into the sea appears to be an impossible thing, yet in the midst of these things the Lord is our strength and refuge, He is able to help us no matter what the circumstance as in the case of the waters roaring and foaming and the mountains quaking (ד יְהִימוּ יַהֲמָרוּ). David continues saying ה נָהָר פְּלִגְיוֹ יִשְׁמַחוּ עִיר-אֱלֹהִים קֹדֶשׁ מִשְׁכְּנֵי עֲלִיּוֹן: (מימיו ירעשו הרים בגאותו סלה: 6:4 There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, The holy dwelling places of the Most High. 46:5 God is in the midst of her, she will not be moved; God will help her when morning dawns. (NASB) What is that river that makes the city of God glad? In the case of the Lord God being in the midst of the city, is He in the midst of the city at all times? What about the times when the people behaved wickedly? In Yeshua the Messiah, how does behaving wickedly effect what He has done in our lives? David says ו הָמוּ גוֹיִם מָטוּ מִמְּלָכוֹת נָתַן בְּקוֹלוֹ תְּמוּגָה אֲרָץ: 46:6 The nations made an uproar, the kingdoms tottered; He raised His voice, the earth melted. (NASB) However, ח יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת עֲמָנוּ מִשְׁגָּב-לָנוּ אֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב סֵלָה: ט לְכוּ-נִחַז מִפְּעֻלוֹת יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר-שָׁם שְׁמוֹת בְּאֲרָץ: י מִשְׁבִּית מְלַחְמוֹת עַד-קִצְהָ 46:7 The Lord of hosts is with us; The God of Jacob is our stronghold. Selah. 46:8 Come, behold the works of the Lord, Who has wrought desolations in the earth. 46:9 He makes wars to cease to the end of the earth; He breaks the bow and cuts the spear in two; He burns the chariots with fire. 46:10 'Cease striving and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth.' (NASB) The Lord is our strength, He saves us from our enemies, He causes wars to cease breaking the weapons of war, and the psalmist calls the people to cease their striving, the Lord will be exalted among the nations. The Psalm concludes saying יב יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת עֲמָנוּ מִשְׁגָּב-לָנוּ אֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב סֵלָה: 46:11 The Lord of hosts is with us; The God of Jacob is our stronghold. Selah. (NASB)

עברית Hebrew	ארמי Aramaic	ελληνικός Greek
ספר תהלים פרק מו	ספר טוביה פרק מו	ΨΑΛΜΟΙ64
א לְמַנְצֵחַ לְבַנְיָיִם קָרַח עַל-עֲלָמוֹת שִׁיר: ב אֱלֹהִים לָנוּ מַחְסֵה וְעֵז עֲזָרָה בְּצָרוֹת נִמְצָא מְאֹד: ג עַל-כֵּן לֹא-נִירָא בְּהִמְרֵי אֲרָץ וּבְמוֹט הָרִים בְּלֵב יָמִים: ד יְהִימוּ יַהֲמָרוּ מִימֵינוּ יִרְעָשׁוּ הָרִים בְּגִאוֹתָם סֵלָה:	א לשבחה על ידיהון דבני קרח ברוח נבואה בזמן דאתכסי אבוהון מנהון והינן ואינן אשתזבו ואמרו שירתא: ב אלהא לנא רוחצנא ועושנא סייעתא סיוע בעקתא נשבכח לחדא: ג מטול היכנא לא נדחל בעידן כד דאשתלחיפו אבהן מן ארעא כד מתמוטטין היך טו-ריא בפילגוס דימא רבא:	46:1 εις το τέλος υπερ των υιων Κορε υπερ των κρυφίων ψαλμός ο θεός ημων καταφυγη και δυναμις βοηθός εν θλίψεσιν ταϊς ευρούσαις ημάς σφόδρα 46:2 δια τουτο ου φοβηθησόμεθα εν τῷ ταράσσεσθαι την γην και μετατίθεσθαι ὄρη εν καρδιαϊς θαλασσῶν 46:3 ἤχησαν και ἐταράχθησαν τὰ ὕδατα αὐτῶν ἐταράχθησαν τὰ ὄρη εν τῇ κραταιότητι αὐτοῦ διάψαλμα

to? Could it be a reference to the nations who do not know God which is paralleled to Korach who in similar manner perished because he too did not know God or obey His word?

<p>Tehillim / Psalms 46 For the director of music. Of the Sons of Korah. According to al-moth. A song. 46:1 God is our refuge and strength, A very present help in trouble. 46:2 Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change And though the mountains slip into the heart of the sea; 46:3 Though its waters roar and foam, Though the mountains quake at its swelling pride. Selah. 46:4 There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, The holy dwelling places of the Most High. 46:5 God is in the midst of her, she will not be moved; God will help her when morning dawns. 46:6 The nations made an uproar, the kingdoms tottered; He raised His voice, the earth melted. 46:7 The Lord of hosts is with us; The God of Jacob is our stronghold. Selah. 46:8 Come, behold the works of the Lord, Who has wrought desolations in the earth. 46:9 He makes wars to cease to the end of the earth; He breaks the bow and cuts the spear in two; He burns the chariots with fire. 46:10 ‘Cease striving and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth.’ 46:11 The Lord of hosts is with us; The God of Jacob is our stronghold. Selah. (NASB)</p>	<p>Toviyah / Psalms Chapter 46 46:1 For praise, by the sons of Korah, through the spirit of prophecy when their father was hidden from them, but they were saved, and they recited this song. 46:2 God is for us security and strength; a help in distress we shall find indeed. 46:3 Because of this we will not be afraid in the time our fathers passed from the land, when the mountains totter in the depth of the great sea. 46:4 His waters shake, they become muddy from their dust; the mountains tremble in your pride forever. 46:5 Peoples like rivers and their fountains come and make glad the city of the Lord, and they pray in the Lord’s sanctuary, his exalted dwelling. 46:6 The presence of the Lord is within it, it will not be shaken; the Lord will help her for the merit of Abraham who prayed on it at the morning hours. 46:7 When the Torah was given to his people, the Gentiles trembled; kingdoms shook when he raised his voice; and when he gave the Torah to his people, the inhabitants of the earth melted. 46:8 The word of the Lord Sabaoth is our help; the God of Jacob is a stronghold for us forever. 46:9 Come, see the deeds of the Lord who has put devastation on the wicked of the land. 46:10 He annuls war to the ends of the earth; he will break the bow and shatter the lance; the round shields he will burn with fire. 46:11 Cease from war, and know that I am the Lord, exalted among the peoples, exalted over the inhabitants of the earth. 46:12 The word of the Lord Sabaoth is our help; the God of Jacob is a stronghold for us forever. (NASB)</p>	<p>Psalmoi / Psalms 46 For the end, for the sons of Core; a Psalm concerning secret things. 46:1 God is our refuge and strength, a help in the afflictions that have come heavily upon us. 46:2 Therefore will we not fear when the earth is troubled, and the mountains are removed into the depths of the seas. 46:3 Their waters have roared and been troubled, the mountains have been troubled by his might. Pause. 46:4 The flowings of the river gladden the city of God: the Most High has sanctified his tabernacle. 46:5 God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her with his countenance. 46:6 The nations were troubled, the kingdoms tottered: he uttered his voice, the earth shook. 46:7 The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our helper. Pause. 46:8 Come, and behold the works of the Lord, what wonders he has achieved on the earth. 46:9 Putting an end to wars as for the ends of the earth; he will crush the bow, and break in pieces the weapon, and burn the bucklers with fire. 46:10 Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth. 46:11 The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our helper. (LXX)</p>
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ב אֱלֹהִים לָנוּ מִחֶסֶה וְעֵז עֲזָרָה בְּצָרוֹת נִמְצָא מָאֵד: ג עַל-כֵּן לֹא-נִירָא בְהָּ The Psalm continues saying 46:1 *God is our refuge and strength, A very present help in trouble. 46:2 Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change And though the mountains slip into the heart of the sea;* (NASB) Based upon Parashat Ha’azinu, and the time-scale of mankind, the earth is considered to

be unmovable. By “*on the time-scale of mankind*” is meant that mans life on earth was limited to 120 years which is considerable shorter than that of the earth from the creation (*Bereshit / Genesis 1*). The idea of the earth changing and the mountains slipping into the sea appears to be something that happens either on a long time-scale or in an immediate disaster that occurs rapidly. The psalmist says in the midst of these things, the Lord is our strength and our refuge. According to Parashat Ha’azinu (“*to listen, give ear,*” *Devarim / Deuteronomy 32:1-52*), the entire Torah portion Moshe writes is devoted as a song that he spoke to the children of Israel. In Parashat Vayelech (*Devarim / Deuteronomy 31:1-31:30*), the Lord God told Moshe that Joshua will lead the people after his death. The Lord inspired Moshe to write down this song (וְעֵתָהּ כְּתָבוּ לָכֶם אֶת-הַשִּׁירָה הַזֹּאת) and the song will be a witness against them (*Devarim / Deuteronomy 31:29-30*). *31:30 Then Moses spoke in the hearing of all the assembly of Israel the words of this song, until they were complete (NASB.)* In the opening verses of Parashat Ha’azinu, Moshe calls Heaven (הַשָּׁמַיִם) and Earth (הָאָרֶץ) as witnesses to the covenant (הַאֲרֶץ אֲמַרִי-פִי). Calling the solid unmoving (unchanging) Heaven and Earth as a witness suggesting that the unmovable things are watching should the children of Israel break the covenant and disobey God. In these verses, Moshe appears to be speaking of the eternality of the Promises and the Land that will bear testimony in the event that Israel sins (violates the covenant). Moshe proclaims the name of the Lord (פִּי יְשֵׁם יְהוָה אֶקְרָא) saying He is our Rock (הַצּוּר), that His work is perfect (תְּמִימִים פְּעָלוֹ), all of his ways are in truth (אֵל אֱמוּנָה) , there is no injustice (אֵין עָוֹל), only righteousness (צְדִיקָה) and that He is right or straight (וַיִּשָּׁר) , the Lord God is upright and just. Moshe says וְשָׂחָת לוֹ לֹא בָנָיו מוֹמָם דּוֹר עֲקָשׁ וּפְתִלְתַּל “*They have acted corruptly toward Him, They are not His children, because of their defect; But are a perverse and crooked generation.*” In these opening verses, Moshe is contrasting the absolute goodness of God with the corruption of mankind. Parashat Ha’azinu speaks of the question “*Do I take for granted the mercy of God?*” “*Am I examining my heart closely enough to know where my devotion really lays, in a love for God and His ways or out of the pride of life before others?*” And “*Does my life truly demonstrate (indicate) that I am a covenant member of His holy kingdom?*” Have you ever asked yourself those questions before?

In *Devarim / Deuteronomy 32:5*, Moshe accuses the children of Israel saying you are a perverse and crooked generation. In Ginsburg’s Masoretic Text, the letter פ is enlarged giving emphasis on the word “*u’ftaltol*” וּפְתִלְתַּל meaning “*twisted,*” the NASB translates as “*crooked.*” In the Hebrew language, the word וּפְתִלְתַּל is among the “*doubled root-letter*” words where the last two letters of the root are repeated. It is believed that this doubling of the letters is meant for emphasis in the sense that the root word “*fatal*” פתל means “*to twist*” and “*u’ftaltol*” וּפְתִלְתַּל means “*twisted.*” This word may then be translated to mean “*you are twisters*” or “*you are perverters*” which is a serious accusation Moshe is making against the people. The text says that the people twist God’s word making them לֹא בָנָיו מוֹמָם דּוֹר “*not his children, a deformed/malformed generation*” because of the corruptness of their hearts. When David wrote this Psalm making mention of the earth changing and the mountains slipping into the sea, was he drawing a parallel to the corruptness of mans heart and the mercy of God to be our refuge and strength to reveal God’s love for His people?

Examining Parashat Ha’azinu further, in *Devarim / Deuteronomy 32:6*, the letter ה is also enlarged drawing emphasis to this word in verse 6 similarly to that in verse 5. The marginal Masorah has a lot more to say about this verse since there is more variation within the Hebrew manuscripts on the letter ה as compared to the previous letter פ. The Scribes who copied the Torah scrolls, according to the Masorah, some traditions have the word joined as one word הַלִּיהוּה, the Babylonian tradition separates הַל from לִיהוּה, and the Syrian tradition has it as we see it here in Ginsburg’s Masoretic text (הַלִּיהוּה). Ginsburg chose to render this verse in the Syrian tradition. In the Hebrew Language, we know that the ה can introduce a question and is usually vowelized with a patach, the niqqud vowel sign represented by a horizontal line. Ginsburg’s choice for writing the text this way suggests that the ה may be introducing a question and this is the traditional translation of the text with a question on how we repay the Lord. (*32:6 ‘Do you thus repay the Lord,*

O foolish and unwise people? Is not He your Father who has bought you? He has made you and established you. NASB) Note that this verse dispels the idea that according to the Torah man earned his salvation by bringing a sacrifice (i.e. the teaching that man needed to bring a sacrifice in order to be forgiven). In addition to this, Parashat Ha'azinu is a song, and the Psalms are known as songs David composed, *Tehillim / Psalms 46* specifically is composed for the Sons of Korach. Parashat Ha'azinu is contrasting disobedience with obedience before the Lord and contrasting the absolute goodness of God with the corruptness of our hearts. The Scriptures speak about obedience and disobedience, and Moshe says the people are crooked and twisted. The lewd imaginations of the people deceive them and God sees their crooked and twisted imaginations. The Lord sees our twisted imaginations today too. *Devarim / Deuteronomy 32:6* states וְהִלֵּיהֶנּוּהָ 32:6 'Do you thus repay the Lord, O foolish and unwise people? Is not He your Father who has bought you? He has made you and established you. King Solomon later wrote in *Mishley / Proverbs 21:2*, כֹּל-דַּרְךְ אִישׁ יֶשֶׁר בְּעֵינָיו וְתִכְן לְבוֹת הַהוֹה, 21:2 *Every man's way is right in his own eyes, But the Lord weighs the hearts.* (NASB) Within each one of us there is a certain amount of the imagination that has the possibility of leading us astray (e.g. take for example the idea that we make a false assumption about others and then walk contrary to the Scriptural requirement of being gracious to one another).

Considering these scriptures from *Devarim / Deuteronomy 32:6* and *Mishley / Proverbs 21:2-3*, the Lord our Father has purchased us (אָבִיךָ קָנָה הוּא) and He has established (לְכוּנֵן) us (עָשָׂה וַיְכַנְּנֶךָ) and that a correct relationship with the Lord is based on our hearts being just (מִשְׁפָּט) and righteous (צְדָקָה) before God (circumcision of the heart). Other Scriptures state that obedience is greater than sacrifice (e.g. *1 Samuel 15:22*). What is the Lord trying to say in the Scriptures about sacrifice since, if the Temple existed, the offering of a sacrifice would be observing Torah? Is the Torah requirement for atonement in blood not important? These passages do not denigrate, belittle, or marginalize the importance of sacrifice. According to David in the Psalm, God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble (*Tehillim / Psalms 46:1*). The point is whether our hearts are right or wrong (i.e. crooked and twisted) before God. If our hearts are wrong, how effective will our walk be before the Lord? If our hearts are twisted and crooked the path we walk will also be twisted and crooked. The principle that Moshe is teaching is that the Lord has purchased and established us, we do not purchase and establish ourselves. The bringing of a sacrifice is not what has "paid for," "purchased," or "established us" in the Lord. What establishes us is our faith in the Lord and His promises and the evidence of the Holy Spirit working in our lives enabling us to walk in righteousness (צְדָקָה) and justice (מִשְׁפָּט) towards God and towards others. This Torah principle of being "purchased and established" is what the Apostle Paul had in mind when he wrote *Romans 4:13-5:1* in the Apostolic Writings.

The Aramaic Targum states ב אלהא לנא רוחצנא ועושנא סייעתא סיוע בעקתא נשבכח לחדא: 46:2 *God is for us security and strength; a help in distress we shall find indeed.* 46:3 *Because of this we will not be afraid in the time our fathers passed from the land, when the mountains totter in the depth of the great sea.* (EMC) The rabbis are certain that the Lord is our strength and security in the time of distress. They say that we will not be afraid in the time our fathers passed from the land. Why would we be afraid when our fathers passed from the land? This may be a reference to the Sons of Korach who would have been afraid when their father passed from the land, the ground opened up and swallowed him alive. It seems that our fathers maybe paralleled to mountains and those mountains perishing in the sea. An interesting point here is that the centrality of the covenant in biblical thought does not guarantee the covenant promises to later generations who behave wickedly. This is related to the Patriarchal covenant and the inheritance of the land. How might this relate to us who are in Yeshua the Messiah? In the mind of the rabbis, there is a connection between the covenant of the Patriarchs and that of Israel, and specifically here in the Psalm to the Sons of Korach. The idea is rooted in the violation of the covenant, when the people violate the covenant they will be sent out of the Land; they will then remember the covenant that God made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the Land. In action of remembering the covenant they turn from their wicked ways. This reasoning may

suggest that the mountains that perish in the sea, their fathers who passed away from the land, as in the case of Korach, Datan, and Aviram, their passing does not effect their children who remain faithful to our Father in Heaven. This comes back to the Torah principle that the sons shall not be punished for the sins of their fathers and visa-versa. According to The Apostle Paul in *Romans 4:13-5:1*, the promises of God are made firm (εἶναι βεβαίαν τὴν ἐπαγγελίαν) by faith (πίστεως) not only to those who are of the Torah but to all of those who are of the faith of Abraham (*Romans 4:16*) are become the true children of Abraham; having faith in God, in the Rock (הַצִּוּר) of our Salvation, our strength and refuge (*Tehillim / Psalms 46:1-2*) and in the Lord God the sure foundation and in the Name of Yeshua the Messiah our Savior. The relationship of Yeshua to the Father is as a foundation stone, cut out of the mountain of the Lord (*Daniel 2:45*). The emphasis placed on the Lord God our Father and His purchasing us (אֶבְרַתְּנוּ הוֹאֵהוּ) and established us (וַיִּסְמְנוּנוּ) according to Parashat Ha'azinu, the Torah is directing us to Yeshua the Messiah, the ultimate and final goal of the revelation of scripture. The love of the Father through the Son (Yeshua) offering redemption in His blood and salvation in His name so that we might have the opportunity to know and experience the abiding presence of the Father in our lives and in our communities. We can say as David did in *Tehillim / Psalms 46:1* *God is our refuge and strength, A very present help in trouble. (NASB)*

David says that the Lord is able to help us no matter what the circumstance as in the case of the waters roaring and foaming and the mountains quaking (דַּי יִהְיוּ יַחְמְרוּ מִיָּמָיו יִרְעָשׂוּ הָרִים בְּגִאֲזָתוֹ סֶלָה:). David writes “*though the waters thereof roar and be troubled,*” is paralleled to men’s hearts, the roaring waters are those that cause men’s hearts to fail because of fear, similar to what Yeshua wrote of the last days in *Luke 21:25*. This verse also states “*the mountains shake or quake;*” expressing figurative confusion and disorder that appears to be a part of life in this world. The children of God have no reason to fear because the Lord hears the prayer of the righteous. Ibn Ezra, a Jewish commentator (*M. Friedlander PH. D., The Commentary of Ibn Ezra on Isaiah, Publisher: Society of Hebrew Literature, 1873, pg 32-33*) thought that the roaring waves and trembling mountains may be applied to the wars of Jerusalem, or of some other persecution, time of calamity, etc. The passage may be applied to the destruction of Jerusalem, and wars preceding it, and the dispersion of the children of Israel resulting from its destruction. Based upon this kind of interpretation, though we see the slaying of the prophets, the witnesses of God, in the hour of temptation, we can find our refuge and strength in the Lord in the midst of times of trouble, we do not have to fear even in the face of death.

ה נְהַר פְּלִגְיוֹ יִשְׁמְחוּ עִיר-אֱלֹהִים קֹדֶשׁ מְשַׁכְּנֵי עֲלִיוֹן: David continues in *Tehillim / Psalms 46* saying, 46:4 *There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, The holy dwelling places of the Most High. 46:5 God is in the midst of her; she will not be moved; God will help her when morning dawns. (NASB)* What is that river that makes the city of God glad? The reference is either to the river Kidron, which ran by Jerusalem, or to the waters of Shiloah. “*The waters of Shiloah*” are mentioned in the Tanach in *Isaiah 8:6* and “*the pool of Siloah*” in *Nehemiah 3:15*. According to the Jewish Encyclopedia, “*Josephus writes the word Σιλωά (Siloa), Σιλωᾶς (Siloas), and Σιλωάμ (Siloam). The pool was surrounded by the royal gardens on the south, and part of it belonged to the fortress of Jerusalem, while the spring which fed it was at the entrance to the Tyropæon valley dividing the upper from the lower city. Probably as early as the reign of Solomon, water was brought from this spring to a tank in the valley of Kidron, in order to irrigate the royal gardens south of the city, although the site of this reservoir, which Josephus calls “Solomon’s pool” (“B. J.” v. 4, § 2), is no longer known.*”

“Waters of Shiloah” - The Jewish Encyclopedia

According to the Talmud, the spring of the pool is exactly in the center of the Holy Land (Zabim i. 5); and owing to its peculiar ebb and flow it has always been popularly regarded as an arm of the sea. After the service in the Temple on the eighth day of the Feast of Tabernacles, Solomon and the people descended to the pool, from which water was drawn and poured upon the altar (Suk. v. 1). When, moreover, the priests were obliged to eat large quantities

of sacred meat, they drank of the water of Shiloah to aid digestion (Ab. R. N. xxxv.). King Hezekiah had the opening, which was not larger than a coin, enlarged, that the water might flow more freely; but the work had scarcely been done when the stream grew less in volume. He therefore had the orifice made smaller, whereupon the original quantity again appeared (Yalkut Shim'oni, ii. 285, ed. Wilna, 1898). Before Shiloah was connected with the pool it may have been called "Gihon"; for the Targum of Jonathan renders the "Gihon" of I Kings i. 33, 38, by "Shiloah"; the two places were furthermore identified by Theodoret ("Quæstiones," ii.), as they are also by Burckhardt ("Travels in Syria and the Holy Land," v. 461) and by Isaac Helo (Tobler, "Jerusalem," ii. 62). See Siloam Inscription.

So, the river David is referring to ran through the city of Jerusalem, and supplied several parts of it with water, to the joy and comfort of its inhabitants. Figuratively speaking, these streams are later referred to as the streams of which comes forth living waters that went out from Jerusalem. In the case of Yeshua, he said "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink" making a reference to the living waters in John 7.

According to the Psalmist, this river makes the city of God glad, and specifically the holy dwelling places of the Most High God. David speaking of the river that gives gladness and joy, life to the city paralleled to the city of God, the dwelling places of the Most High God, could he be thinking of a Messianic hope that the Lord will deliver His people, and we can take refuge in Him? The presupposition of scholars who approach interpreting the text of the Hebrew bible, with regard to the Messiah, have a considerable impact, for instance, the person who comes believing that Yeshua is the Messiah will immediately see every verse in the scriptures support their presupposition that Yeshua is the Messiah. On the other hand, those who reject Yeshua as God's Messiah are able to find scriptures to back up their claims as well. The attitude to the subject of the Messianic expectation in the Tanach reflects strongly on the personal opinion that has been established in the mind of the expositor. Every biblical scholar will bring to their studies a certain theology that influences their perspective based upon what we have learned in the past. When trying to understand the meaning of the Scriptures, what the author is trying to say, we need to look at the historical and cultural background that is Torah centric in order to step outside of man's traditions and our own presuppositions (e.g. Greco Roman Philosophy). What David says here in Tehillim / Psalms 46:5 is a very important Torah principle, "God is in the midst of her; she will not be moved." The key verses in the Torah that explain to us what he is saying and what the Lord God Almighty is seeking to do in our lives is found in Parashat Bechukotai (Vayikra / Leviticus 26:9-13) where the Lord says וְהִקְיַמְתִּי אֶת-בְּרִיתִי אִתְּכֶם "I will establish/raise up my covenant with you." Following this statement the Lord says that He will make his dwelling among His people and walk among them saying וְהָיִיתִי לָכֶם לֵאלֹהִים וְאַתֶּם תִּהְיוּ-לִי לְעָם "and I will be their God and they will be my people." These from Vayikra / Leviticus 26:11-12 are very significant for understanding all of the Torah, and God's plan of redemption, in and through His Messiah. How will God establish His covenant in such a way that will cause him to walk and dwell in our midst in such a way that only God could do exactly like David is saying here in the Psalm?

Vayikra / Leviticus 26:9-13

26:9 'So I will turn toward you and make you fruitful and multiply you, and I will confirm My covenant with you. 26:10 'You will eat the old supply and clear out the old because of the new. 26:11 'Moreover, I will make My dwelling among you, and My soul will not reject you. 26:12 'I will also walk among you and be your God, and you shall be My people. 26:13 'I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt so that you would not be their slaves, and I broke the bars of your yoke and made you walk erect. (NASB)

פרשת בחקותי ספר ויקרא פרק כו פסוק ט-יג

ט וּפְנִיתִי אֵלֵיכֶם וְהִפְרִיתִי אִתְּכֶם וְהִרְבִּיתִי אִתְּכֶם וְהִקְיַמְתִּי אֶת-בְּרִיתִי אִתְּכֶם: [שלישי] [חמישי כשהו מחוברין] י וְאֶכְלֶתֶם יֶשֶׁן נוֹשֶׁן וְיֶשֶׁן מִפְּנֵי חֵדָשׁ תּוֹצִיאֹוּ: יא וְנָתַתִּי מִשְׁפְּנֵי בְּתוֹכְכֶם וְלֹא-תִגְעַל נַפְשִׁי אִתְּכֶם: יב וְהִתְהַלַּכְתִּי בְּתוֹכְכֶם וְהָיִיתִי לָכֶם לֵאלֹהִים וְאַתֶּם תִּהְיוּ-לִי לְעָם: יג אֲנִי יְהוָה

In the Scriptures we find a theme that God is drawing mankind (both Jew and Gentile) to Himself by His mercy and grace. From the very beginning we learned in the Scriptures that God walked in the garden of Eden in the cool of the day following His creation, *Bereshit / Genesis 3:8* states, ה וַיִּשְׁמְעוּ אֶת-קוֹל יְהוָה, 3:8 *They heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. (NASB)* The Lord reveals Himself to us using human characteristics or attributes (using anthropomorphisms) by describing how Adam and Chavah (Eve) heard the sound of the Lord walking in the garden. The Masoretic text provides in straight forward terms a description of how God's Anointed one will come as a man and inflict a wound upon the enemy of God in *Bereshit / Genesis 3:15*, טו וְאֵיבָה | אֲשִׁית בֵּינְךָ וּבֵין הָאִשָּׁה וּבֵין זַרְעֶךָ וּבֵין זַרְעָהּ הוּא יִשׁוּפְךָ רֹאשׁ וְאַתָּה תִּשׁוּפֶנּוּ, 3:15 *And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, And you shall bruise him on the heel. (NASB)* The word זרע (zara) is used in the Torah to refer to “seed,” “offspring,” or “descendent’s.” The word זרע (zara) is used as a noun to refer to offspring in the promised line of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (*Bereshit / Genesis 12:7*, ז וַיֵּרָא יְהוָה אֶל-, (אֲבָרָם וַיֹּאמֶר לְזַרְעֶךָ אֵתֵן אֶת-הָאֶרֶץ הַזֹּאת וַיְבֹרֵךְ שָׁם מִזֶּבֶחַ לַיהוָה הַנִּרְאָה אֵלָיו: *“offspring”* in the singular form. The reference to the promised offspring is not written in the plural form in the Tanach. In addition to this, the majority of the times the singular form of “offspring” is written it is followed by a singular verb (see *Bereshit / Genesis 3:15, 13:16, 16:10, 48:19, Bamidbar / Numbers 14:24, Isaiah 53:6, 61:9, Tehillim / Psalms 22:13, 25:13, 37:28, 89:37, 112:2, Mishley / Proverbs 11:21*). The point is within the statement in *Tehillim / Psalms 46:4* *There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, The holy dwelling places of the Most High. 46:5 God is in the midst of her, she will not be moved; God will help her when morning dawns. (NASB)* we find a direct link to the covenant promises of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the hope that we have in God as our refuge, our dwelling place, and how the Lord will help His people in their times of trouble.

When we speak of the Lord dwelling in our midst, in Yeshua the Messiah, the Lord sends His Holy Spirit to dwell within our bodies, to take up residence in our bodies as His temple. We find this occurring at the festival of Shavuot (*Acts 1-2*) and the Apostle Paul speaks at length on this in his letters in the Apostolic Writings. So we find a fulfillment of the Torah principle of the Lord dwelling in our midst in the Apostolic Writings. The question is though, whether the presence of God via the Holy Spirit would dwell in a wicked vessel? What about the times when the people behaved wickedly? In Yeshua the Messiah, how does behaving wickedly effect what He has done in our lives? In Parashat Kedoshim we read the command not to curse the deaf or place a stumbling block before the blind man and the text says “*you shall fear the Lord your God*” (*Vayikra / Leviticus 19:14*). The Scriptures say that God does not wink at evil or injustice, and those who practice wickedness have a genuine reason to be afraid (*Matthew 5:29-30, 18:8-9, Galatians 6:7-8*). The Apostolic Writings say that God is our Judge and every deed that we have done will be made known as Paul wrote in *1 Corinthians 3:13*:

1 Corinthians 3:9-18

3:9 For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, God's building. 3:10 According to the grace of God which was given to me, like a wise master builder I laid a foundation, and another is building on it. But each man must be careful how he builds on it. 3:11 For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. 3:12 Now if any man builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, 3:13 each man's work will become evident; for the day will show it because it is to be revealed with fire, and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work. 3:14 If any man's work which he

has built on it remains, he will receive a reward. 3:15 If any man's work is burned up, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire. 3:16 Do you not know that you are a temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? 3:17 If any man destroys the temple of God, God will destroy him, for the temple of God is holy, and that is what you are. 3:18 Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you thinks that he is wise in this age, he must become foolish, so that he may become wise. (NASB)

Paul also says “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Messiah, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil” (2 Corinthians 5:10). Yeshua said in John 3:20 ‘For everyone who does evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. 3:21 ‘But he who practices the truth comes to the Light, so that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought in God.’ (NASB) Both Jewish and Christian traditions have tended to regard the fear of God as God’s retribution for our sins and that our lives should be governed by the rewards and punishments that await us in the Olam Haba (the World to come). If we live practicing wickedness, the Lord will not dwell in our midst. The Scriptures teach us that we will be held accountable for the things done in our lives and that we should with fear and trembling seek the Lord because of the sin that is withing our hearts. Our actions matter and there will be a final day of reckoning for all of us. The book “*Chofetz Chaim*” (*Desirer of Life*) is from the writings on Jewish ethics and laws of speech written by Rabbi Yisrael Meir Kagan, who later became know simply as the “*Chofetz Chaim*.” The Chofetz Chaim wrote that “*even though the fear of God’s punishment may deter us from sin in the short run, by itself it is insufficient for spiritual life since it is based upon an incomplete idea about God.*” The concept is if we avoid sin only because of the fear of God’s punishment, you are only cleaning the outside of the cup while the inside is full of corruption. Outwardly, obedience (Torah observance) may appear righteous, but inwardly there may still be a state of rebellion and sin as the Scriptures say “*the heart of man is deceitful above all things.*” (Jeremiah 17:9) This is the reason why we seek the Lord in purity of heart, in truth, and in innocence. Without the transforming power of God by the Holy Spirit, if we are not transformed and made new from the inside out, all that is left is the fear of hell itself. Within this Psalm, specifically out of verses 46:4-5, we find the covenant connection of God dwelling in our midst, and the necessity of faith in Yeshua the Messiah, the new man, and the empowering of the Holy Spirit.

David continues saying, ז 46:6 *The nations made an uproar, the kingdoms tottered; He raised His voice, the earth melted. (NASB)* What does it mean that the Lord raised His voice and the earth melted? A literal translation of the Hebrew text states *הָמוּ גוֹיִם מָטוּ* “*the nations slipped, wavered, fell, was cast down*” *מִמְלְכוֹת נָתַן* “*from the kingdoms and were given,*” *אָרְץ* “*at His voice the earth melted.*” Based upon the context of the Psalm, the psalmist is saying “*come and see the effects of God’s desolating judgments against the nations.*” The Septuagint states, *ἐταράχθησαν ἔθνη ἔκλιναν βασιλείαι ἔδωκεν φωνὴν αὐτοῦ ἐσαλεύθη ἡ γῆ* 46:6 *The nations were troubled, the kingdoms tottered: he uttered his voice, the earth shook. (LXX)* The Aramaic Targum states, ז במיתן אוריתא לעמיה, ז 46:7 *When the Torah was given to his people, the Gentiles trembled; kingdoms shook when he raised his voice; and when he gave the Torah to his people, the inhabitants of the earth melted. (EMC)* The rabbis wrote it was the giving of the Torah that caused the Gentiles to tremble and the kingdoms to shake. Why does the giving of the Torah to Israel have this effect? In *Isaiah 66*, the prophet Isaiah uses a metaphor saying, א כה אָמַר יְהוָה הַשָּׁמַיִם כִּסְאִי וְהָאָרֶץ הַדָּם רַגְלִי אֵי-זֶה בֵּית אֲשֶׁר תִּבְנֶנּוּ-לִי וְאֵי-זֶה מְקוֹם מְנוּחָתִי: ב וְאֵת-כָּל-אֲלֹהֵי יָדַי עָשִׂיתָ: יְהוָה וְיִהְיוּ כָל-אֲלֹהֵי נְאֻם-יְהוָה וְאֵל-זֶה אֲבִיט אֶל-עַנְי וְנִכְה-רוּחַ וְחָרַד עַל-דְּבָרַי: 66:1 *Thus says the Lord, ‘Heaven is My throne and the earth is My footstool. Where then is a house you could build for Me? And where is a place that I may rest? 66:2 ‘For My hand made all these things, Thus all these things came into being,’ declares the Lord. ‘But to this one I will look, To him who is humble and contrite of spirit, and who trembles at My word. (NASB)* Isaiah states that the Lord will look to him who is “*humble and contrite of spirit*” and

concludes saying, יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת עִמָּנוּ מִשָּׁגֶב-לָנוּ אֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב סֵלָה: 46:11 *The Lord of hosts is with us; The God of Jacob is our stronghold. Selah. (NASB)* The Aramaic Targum, יב מימרא דיהוה צבאות בסעדנא תקון, 46:12 *The word of the Lord Sabaoth is our help; the God of Jacob is a stronghold for us forever. (EMC)* The Septuagint states, κύριος τῶν δυνάμεων μεθ' ἡμῶν ἀντιλήμπτωρ ἡμῶν ὁ θεὸς Ἰακώβ 46:11 *The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our helper. (LXX)* This Psalm is directing our attention to the Lord God Almighty, our Father in Heaven for our help and our salvation. The Lord has accomplished this according to His word, in Yeshua the Messiah. He makes our hearts to be at peace, He shows great wonders in our lives by healing the broken hearted, and our physical bodies. Under what Condition is God our Refuge and Strength? Under the condition that we humble ourselves and seek His face because we are purely at the mercy of our Father in heaven. Praise the Lord for His mercy and for His Son Yeshua the Messiah! Let's Pray!

Heavenly Father,

We thank You for the consistency in Scripture regarding Your salvation that You have for each one of us. We glorify You and give You Praise because You have always kept Your promises! Truly You are worthy to be praised! Lord help us to take these truths and apply them to our lives, in that we are to rely upon You for our salvation. Empower us by Your Spirit to walk in Your ways and to follow Yeshua the Messiah. Help us to know Your ways in order to live spirit filled lives. Lord, we desire to live holy and righteous lives because You have separated us as holy unto Yourself. You have shown us how to do this by Your commandments and demonstrated this in Your Son Yeshua the Messiah. Help us to walk and abide in Christ as the Scriptures say we are supposed to do. Thank You Lord for sending Your son Yeshua that we may enter into the salvation You have provided. Thank you Lord for these writings so that we can grow in our faith and know who we are in the Messiah Yeshua. Help us to grow by walking in the spirit and applying these truths to our lives. We praise Your Holy Name and give You all of the honor, and the glory, and the praise forever and ever.

In Yeshua's (Jesus') Name we pray! Amen!

Be Blessed in Yeshua, Christ our Messiah!

הללויה לאדוננו מורנו ורבינו ישוע מלך המשיח לעולם ועד:
Hallelujah for our Lord, our Teacher, our Rabbi,
"Yeshua" King Messiah forever and ever

Notes