

Confidence in Times of Distress - Ron Stullenbarger -

Psalm 46:10 says in most translations, *"Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth!"* The NASB says, *"Cease striving and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth."*

"I'm out of here!" Many people feel like crying out this way at some point in life. When a demanding circumstance feels overwhelming, or when the pressure of the daily routine seems unbearable, a common reaction is the desire to escape. Whether the stress is related to a job, relationship, or other situations where it seemed too hard to handle, we want relief. So we decide we are walking out, moving on, heading for anywhere but where we are now.

God's Word has a powerful truth for us: The way to handle stressful situations is to cease fighting against them and instead be at rest. To the psalmist, this meant being still and knowing that God is truly God. Jesus promises peace in the midst of trials when we let go of troubles and entrust them to His care. (See Matthew 11:28-30; John 16:33.) So, while human instinct clamors for escape, God calls us to draw near to Him. Then we will find it easier to be still and truly know He is God.

In the context of Psalm 46:10, the voice of God rings out to all the inhabitants of the earth in assurance and supremacy, ***"Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth!"*** Every fear is stilled, every anxiety quieted. His people can relax. He is God! His cause is victorious. He is supreme among the nations, supreme over all the earth.

It is from verse 10 that Katharina von Schlegel, the author of the hymn *"Be Still, My Soul"* drew inspiration.

Be still, my soul; thy God doth undertake
To guide the future as He has the past.
Thy hope, thy confidence let nothing shake;
All now mysterious shall be bright at last.
Be still, my soul: the winds and waves still know
His voice who ruled them while He dwelt below.

No matter what may happen or how dark the hour may be, the believer can still say with confidence and fearlessness, ***"The LORD of hosts is with us!"*** (Psalm 46:11) If the One who directs the armies of heaven is on our side, who can be successful against us? *"If God is for us, who is against us?"* (Romans 8:31) If God is for us, then no one can be successful against us! If Omnipotence is working on our behalf, no lesser power can defeat His program.