

GOD OUR REFUGE & STRENGTH - SERMON 4



STANDING THE TEST OF TIME

God's Promise of Safety for Those Who Trust Him – Ps.46: 1-3; Prov.18: 10

There are wonderful promises of protection and safety in the Bible if we put our trust in God and run into His name in times of trouble or distress. Usually, the rich man sees his money or wealth as a strong city, high tower or mighty refuge or fortress into which he runs in times of trouble instead of the name of the Lord - **Prov.18: 11**. Some other people put their trust in other things also e.g. family, friends, education, job, the people you know, etc – **Ps.20: 7**.

However, none is dependable like the Lord! Putting our trust in any other apart from God is like building a house on the sand. When storm and flood come, such a house will fall (**Matt.7: 24-27**). In what are you putting your trust? Storm and flood are part of the troubles of life and will always expose our foundation and the basis of our confidence. Whereas, those who put their trust in the name of the Lord build their house on the Rock and will weather the storms of life and overcome their troubles, those who put their trust in men and material wealth build their house only on soft sand and their house will surely collapse in the end.

Why Does God Allow Troubles?

Have you ever wondered why God allow troubles in life at all? Why doesn't He just spare us all these troubles? Well, it is simply to test our faith and prove us to see what type of materials we are made of. And please, take note that the troubles and trials of life don't discriminate at all. They come to all alike whether wise or foolish, male or female, young or old, rich or poor, literate or illiterate, good or bad, godly and ungodly. In fact, the Bible even confirms clearly that the troubles and trials of a righteous or godly person will even be more than that of the wicked or ungodly in the world – **Ps.34: 19; Jn.16: 33; 2Tim.3: 12**.

Stormy Times Are Testing Times And Testing Times Are Sifting Times:

Usually, Satan doesn't show interest in worthless people. So, if he shows so much interest in you then, you must be of great value to God. Biblical examples to confirm this principle includes Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Job, Jesus, Peter, Paul, etc. So, be comforted with that understanding if you're going through any trouble or storm of life.

The truth is, when trouble or trial comes, it sifts us out as men. Initially, we may all look well and alike but when trouble comes, it separates and classifies us into different groups – first as believers and unbelievers, and then also into different kinds of believers depending on the type of materials we are made of – **2Tim.2: 20**. So, testing time as sifting time helps to expose our true nature before God. Whereas, an unbeliever or a pretending Christian in the church in times of troubles and trials will run away from God to take refuge in men, money and material wealth, a true believer or disciple of Jesus Christ will always run to God for cover as his one and only defense no matter what. A true child of God will not compromise because of fear of men or run to Satan for help because of fear of suffering – **Ps.121: 1-2; Matt.10: 28; Rom.8: 39**.

Storm or Trouble As A Major Sign of the End-time:

It is clear from Scripture that trouble and trial to sift believers is a major sign of the End-time – **Matt.25: 1-13; 2Tim.3: 1; 2Thess.2: 1-4; 2Pet.3: 3-12**.

Satan is on rampage and is raging everywhere in the world now (COVID-19) because he knows that his time before God's ultimate judgment and damnation is short. So, prepare for serious spiritual warfare and run to God for cover.

When storms and troubles come to us as believers, we must never lose our faith or confidence in God but learn to resist the devil firmly and put him to flight. Just as it is with the weather - some days are windy and stormy but it will not always be like that. In the same vein, every child of God will once in a while have his or her bad days with their own share of troubles but let us be assured that it will not always be like that. Whatever you may be passing through right now, just hold on to God and believe Him that clear days and bright weather will come again. So, in times of trouble and storm of life, simply run for cover in the name of the Lord till the troubles pass away. In due season, God will bring you healing, comfort and joy again.

Conclusion:

Where or whom do you run to when in trouble? Our allegiance and total loyalty must be to the Lord even to the point of death! It is only as we put all our trust in the Lord, our Great Refuge, Strong Tower and Mighty Fortress that we shall be safe in this life and in the hereafter.

It is better to lose all earthly wealth and comfort, and gain the LORD than to gain all earthly wealth and comfort and lose the LORD – Mk.8: 36.

"God is our Refuge and Strength, a very present Help in trouble." - Psalm 46: 1

"The name of the LORD is a Strong Tower, the righteous runs into it and is safe"
Proverbs 18: 10

But what about those who have no such Refuge, Tower or Fortress they can run to in times of trouble? Such people are vulnerable without any defense and Satan will surely make a mince meat of their lives – **1Pet.4: 18**.