

A Mighty Fortress Is Our God

Meditation #1 A Mighty Fortress Is Our God Who is Always with Us

As soon as the very first two people, Adam and Eve, disobeyed God's command and sinned by eating the fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, there has been conflict and death in our world. With their two sons, there was the very first bloody conflict among men. Bloody battle has raged ever since.

No matter who you are or where you live, conflict finds you. Trouble finds you. War breaks out. Families are separated as members of our armed forces are called into service or as people are in the wrong place at the wrong time while war wages. Death reaches out and takes people down to the grave. Sickness robs you of your health and well-being.

The people that you had surrounded yourself with, those pillars of strength, they're gone. The once solid ground of your life has given way. The mountains of your life have fallen into the heart of the sea. Dependability seems nowhere to be found. You who were once so strong now quake in fear. In all this trouble, you feel so alone.

When life crumbles and you feel alone and vulnerable, God wants you to know that you are never alone. Even when the mountains of your life fall into the heart of the sea, even when once solid people give way and break down and leave you, God comes through for you.

God is an ever-present help in trouble. That means that he is not a phone call away. No, he's right there with you when your life falls apart. Whether you go on to a literal battlefield or the battlefield of life, you do not have to wait for the cavalry to arrive when it comes to God. There's no delayed response time; He is right beside you. He makes all wars cease to the ends of the earth, breaking the bow, shattering the spear, burning the shields.

Our quaking with fear is stilled as we recall God's Word, his unbreakable promise, to us: The LORD Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress. Be still, and know that I am God. Our God will take us to heaven so that we are with him forever even as this world crumbles. A Mighty Fortress is our God who is always with us.

Psalm 46: *For the director of music. Of the Sons of Korah. According to alamo. A song.* ¹ God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. ² Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea, ³ though its waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging. ⁴ There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy place where the Most High dwells. ⁵ God is within her, she will not fall; God will help her at break of day. ⁶ Nations are in uproar, kingdoms fall; he lifts his voice, the earth melts. ⁷ The LORD Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress. ⁸ Come and see what the LORD has done, the desolations he has brought on the earth. ⁹ He makes wars cease to the ends of the earth. He breaks the bow and shatters the spear; he burns the shields with fire. ¹⁰ He says, "Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth." ¹¹ The LORD Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress.

We sing Hymn 201, stanza 2.

Meditation #2 A Mighty Fortress Is Our God Who Always Towers Over All

If you have a choice between defending the high ground or attacking it, sound military strategy says defend the high ground. You will have more range with your weapons and a clearer line of sight. Gravity will be your friend as the opposing army will tire themselves and move slowly uphill to attack you. You will have a greater range of communications. Holding the high ground will generally lead to victory.

In life we often feel dwarfed by our opponents. Some of you may have faced an enemy on the battlefield, and enemy with superior numbers on their terrain while they held the high ground. How could you win against them? In life as a civilian, there are times when I see forces bigger than me who hold the high ground. I see governments escalating conflict, drawing countries toward armed conflict with one another where nuclear weapons are displayed as a show of force. I see governments making policies and stances that go against God's Word. I feel like I'm in the minority, dwarfed by those who oppose my beliefs. It's easy to fear what will happen next as this world seems to spiral out of control by what people who are bigger than me decide to do.

When you are the underdog, the little guy, remember who your God is. He is the LORD Most High. There is no one bigger than him, no one who holds a ground higher than him. He is the King of all the earth over all the earth. No army can overwhelm him. No enemy can go toe-to-toe with him. Our God towers over all. He rules over all as the earth belongs to him.

Kings, leaders, countries, armies, none of them can overpower him. Our God is bigger than all, and he fights for us on our side. Most importantly, that means that even though devils all the world should fill all eager to devour us, we tremble not and we fear no ill because they cannot overpower our God. Our God has conquered Satan. Christ triumphed over him by the cross, crushed Satan's head with Jesus' sacrificial death; Satan was no match for him. Our God holds the field forever for our eternal salvation. A Mighty Fortress is our God who always towers over all.

Psalm 47: *For the director of music. Of the Sons of Korah. A psalm.* ¹ Clap your hands, all you nations; shout to God with cries of joy. ² For the LORD Most High is awesome, the great King over all the earth. ³ He subdued nations under us, peoples under our feet. ⁴ He chose our inheritance for us, the pride of Jacob, whom he loved. ⁵ God has ascended amid shouts of joy, the LORD amid the sounding of trumpets. ⁶ Sing praises to God, sing praises; sing praises to our King, sing praises. ⁷ For God is the King of all the earth; sing to him a psalm of praise. ⁸ God reigns over the nations; God is seated on his holy throne. ⁹ The nobles of the nations assemble as the people of the God of Abraham, for the kings of the earth belong to God; he is greatly exalted.

We sing Hymn 201, stanza 3.

Meditation #3 A Mighty Fortress Is Our God Who is Always Secure

There have been some cool and formidable forts made throughout history: Fort Knox, home of the U.S.'s largest gold reserves housed in America's most secure safe able to withstand atomic bombs along with layers upon layers of security; the Cheyenne Mountain Complex, a hallowed out mountain used as the home of NORAD with 25-ton blast doors embedded within 1,700 feet of granite; the fort at the Rock of Gibraltar, a sheer cliff face and difficult slope located at the southern tip of Europe; and others. Yet none of these forts are impenetrable. Sure, it might be extremely difficult to overtake, but, unless they are regularly maintained and constantly manned, those fortresses will fall victim to decay, erosion, and corruption. Every earthly fortress will eventually give out.

We know that we ourselves are subject to decay and deterioration. Our bodies eventually give out. We are reminded of this when our strength gives out doing a job, when the lack of sleep and exhaustion finally catches up to us and our legs give out. We are painfully reminded of this when our loved ones die, when we have lost friends or family in battle. We are not secure forever.

If we eventually give out, if we eventually deteriorate and decay, will our God? He is a Mighty Fortress who is always with me and towers over all, but will he one day fall like everything else in life? Will the one in whom I have placed my hope and my confidence fail me? Have I put my faith in the wrong object? Will my God crumble?

No. Our God is everlasting to everlasting – no beginning, no end. Because he is everlasting, his love is everlasting. His love is unending because he is unending. His protection of us and his forgiveness won for us will never fail. Whoever places their hope entirely on God will never be disappointed because there is no possibility that God will be corrupted or will ever decay or erode. This God is our God forever and ever. He will stand to the end of our lives, and to the end of the lives of the next generation and then forever. This is why we tell of him to the next generation so that they can have the same everlasting stronghold of a Savior from sin, death, and the devil that we have trusted in. A Mighty Fortress is our God who is always secure.

Psalm 48: *A song. A psalm of the Sons of Korah.* ¹ Great is the LORD, and most worthy of praise, in the city of our God, his holy mountain. ² Beautiful in its loftiness, the joy of the whole earth, like the heights of Zaphon is Mount Zion, the city of the Great King. ³ God is in her citadels; he has shown himself to be her fortress. ⁴ When the kings joined forces, when they advanced together, ⁵ they saw her and were astounded; they fled in terror. ⁶ Trembling seized them there, pain like that of a woman in labor. ⁷ You destroyed them like ships of Tarshish shattered by an east wind. ⁸ As we have heard, so we have seen in the city of the LORD Almighty, in the city of our God: God makes her secure forever. ⁹ Within your temple, O God, we meditate on your unending love. ¹⁰ Like your name, O God, your praise reaches to the ends of the earth; your right hand is filled with righteousness. ¹¹ Mount Zion rejoices, the villages of Judah are glad because of your judgments. ¹² Walk about Zion, go around her, count her towers, ¹³ consider well her ramparts, view her citadels, that you may tell of them to the next generation. ¹⁴ For this God is our God for ever and ever; he will be our guide even to the end.

We sing Hymn 201, stanza 4.