

Names of God from the Bible

35 – Refuge

Every name of God is an eternal Name. As I read the references again just now, prior to writing this devotional, my spirit was stirred by the Holy Spirit. I sensed, immediately, a thrill in my soul, a release of tension and a warm cloak of love. Indeed, I also felt a tear welling up in my eye. What a phenomenal privilege it is to know God as my refuge!

Reading: Psalm 46

“*God is our refuge*”, wrote the psalmist, and so did Moses as he blessed the tribe of Asher.

Moses knew what it was to be under severe pressure. The pressures associated with being an alien in a foreign land, the leader of an ungrateful, critical and grumbling mass of people, especially being the one humanly responsible for leading that multitude through a barren desert and into the Promised Land.

Moses knew what it was like to be adopted as a child by Pharaoh’s daughter. He had also experienced anger and frustration at his people being mistreated, guilt as a result of being exposed as a murderer and loneliness as a fugitive in exile. (No wonder we find God establishing the Cities of Refuge in the Promised Land.)

Through all of life’s experiences, however, Moses recognised something of tremendous importance – the fact that his God, Yahweh, had protected him, rescued and provided for him often miraculously.

When his entire ‘world’ seemed to be crashing down upon him, when the people he was sent to lead rebelled against him and when even his closest family, Aaron and Miriam, turned against him, Moses found God as his *refuge*. And what a *refuge*!

God, the Great I AM, who revealed Himself to Moses at the burning bush that ‘didn’t burn’, had proved time and time again to Moses that He was totally faithful to His servant and fully able to perform and complete His plan and promises.

The word *refuge* conjures up so many different pictures. A place of safety, where we can go to when we are under attack, maybe a place where we are hidden from the enemy. It also suggests a place of protection. We may not actually be hidden but God puts His hand over us to protect us from the enemy’s actions. It’s a place of shelter from the physical storms, as well as the mental, psychological and emotional storms of life and relationships.

I love the concept of a sanctuary since, to me, it speaks of peace, relaxation, refreshment and, above all, spiritual input and nourishment. That intimate place where we can meet with God and feel His mercy, love, forgiveness, grace, acceptance, approval and blessing.

The place where the perspective of my circumstances changes, where I begin to see things as God sees them and I begin to sense what God thinks of me, rather than what I or other people may think of me. A place where fear is replaced by joy and thanksgiving. A place where my vision and ambitions are re-focused and re-aligned with God’s plans for my life.

The psalmist sees God as a ‘*refuge*’ even if the entire natural order dissolves into chaos. Earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, tsunamis, tornadoes and hurricanes will never shake our

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"Refuge". Wars, fights and battles may rage as nations clash with nations, however, our *"Refuge"* is not only able to protect us, He is able to bring those wars to an end. How many instances have we seen, even in our life-time, where inexplicably wars have ceased, iron curtains broken down and peace restored.

Never forget that Jesus is our *'refuge'* from the wrath of God. God still reigns supreme and He will guide us safely to His haven of rest – His disciples' final *Refuge*.

However, the wonderful thing is that we can know His Presence (the reality of His *'Refuge'*) right now – every moment of every day of our lives – if we surrender our life to Him. It is not just a promise for the future; it is also for here and now.

What does that name mean for us today

No matter what we may face as an individual – challenges from wars, spiritual attacks, anti-Christian attitudes or laws, poverty, redundancy, natural disasters such as earthquakes, health issues, bereavement or broken relationships – we have a *'refuge'*. *"God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble."*

Prayer

Father, thank You so much that I never have to face any situation alone because You are my immediate and eternal *"Refuge"*. Amen.

Additional Readings

- Deuteronomy 33:24-29
- Psalm 91
- Hebrews 6:13-20

Questions

1. What aspect of the word *'refuge'* do you like the most and why?
2. Has God revealed Himself in this way to you? How and when?
3. How does Jesus fulfil that name?