

# A strength in time of trouble

A reflection on grief, based on words found in Psalm 46.

*First written for 'In Remembrance and Hope' an annual memorial service held at Bognor Regis Methodist Church in Autumn 2022.*

*Rev Dan Balsdon | October 2022 | read online at [www.revdanbalsdon.com](http://www.revdanbalsdon.com)*

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Grief.

A journey to travel.

Some of its turns are expected.

Predictable, foreseeable.

Other turns come from nowhere.

Like sudden turbulence on an aeroplane.

Emotion hitting me square in the chest like a ton of bricks.

Some days I'm ok.

Some days I say I'm ok.

Some days, I really am not ok.

But in an I'm ok world, it's hard to not be ok.

Some days I don't know what to do or where to go.

Fearing the next unexpected twist and turn.

The lonely mountains of emotion trembles.

The Ocean of my grief roars.

So when I hear the words of the Psalmist:

'God is a refuge and strength,  
a very present help in trouble'

I want to ask – then where is this strength?

How do I find this refuge in my ocean of emotion?

I go searching,

Seeking,

Trying to discover where in the world this present help and strength for my time of trouble is.

But no matter where I walk, or run,  
I'm still left asking where this strength and refuge is...

And then I hear...

'Be still, and know that I am God'.

And so, I pause.

I find stillness.

Not easy at first, amongst the noise of my ocean,  
And the looming mountains of my emotions.

But little by little,

The more I seek it, the more I find it.

Over time, stillness becomes easier.

And with that stillness,

Comes a realisation.

That I didn't need to go searching and seeking,  
Because God is a very present help in trouble.

I don't need to search at all,  
because God has already found me.

In pausing,

In seeking stillness,

I discover the truth that has always been true.

That God has been seeking me out,

Wanting me to discover the strength and refuge that was already there for me.

My grief hasn't gone away.

Some days I'm ok.

Some days I am not ok.

The ebb and flow of emotion continues.  
But always, I know God is God.

With me, whether I feel it or not.  
With us, whether we feel it or not.  
A life-raft of love on the midst of the ocean.  
A shelter of peace among trembling mountains.

‘God is a refuge and strength,  
a very present help in trouble’  
‘Be still, and know that I am God’.