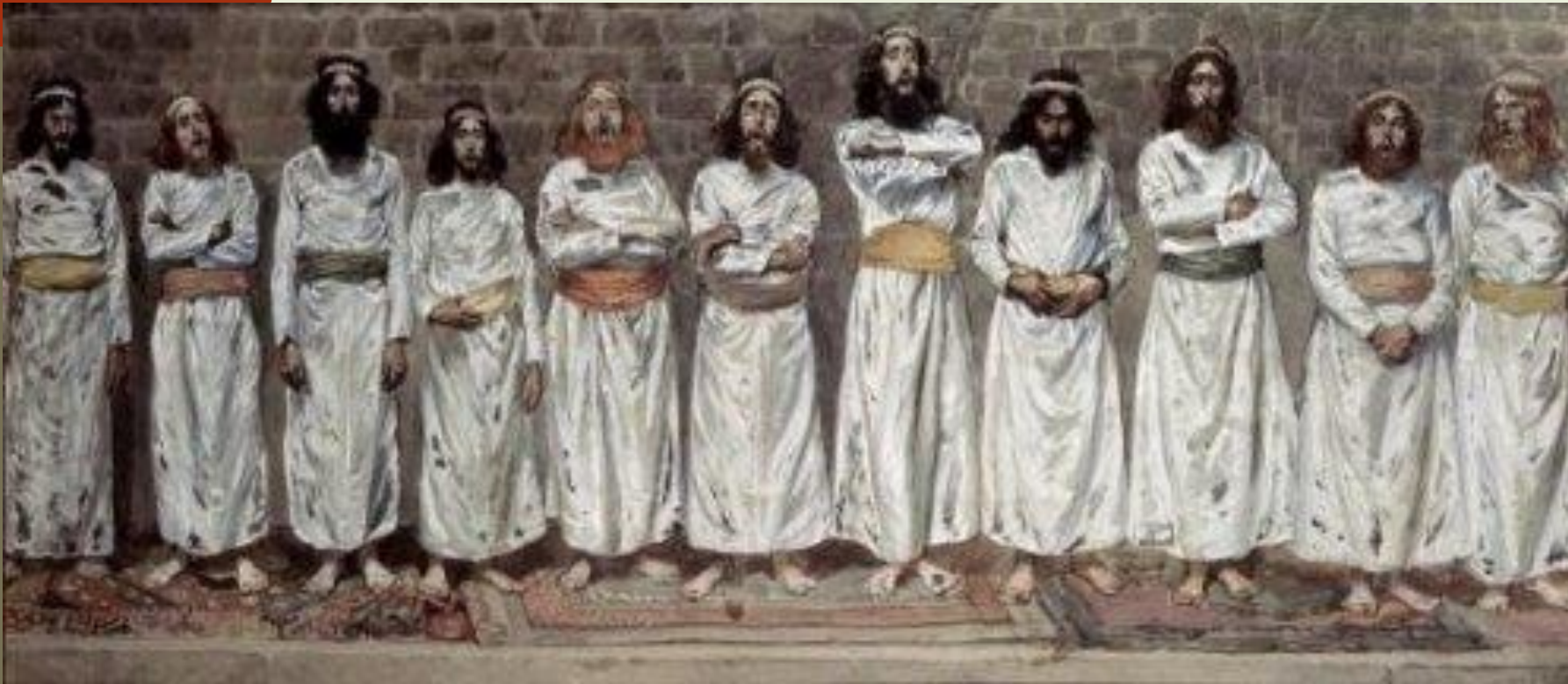


James Tissot "The Choristers". It is James Tissot's take on the "Sons of Korah"

**Series: Preparing For
Anything- Psalm 46**

Message:
"When I
Need
Refreshing!"
Psalm 46:4



As we move into the final months of this very troubling year there is a need to prepare ourselves for anything. Psalm 46 will be our guide. This psalm is one of 10 [possibly 11] psalms written by a group of Levites called the "Sons of Korah". Their ancient ancestor is mentioned in Numbers 16 as the Levitical leader of a revolt against Moses.

James Tissot "The Choristers". It is James Tissot's take on the "Sons of Korah"

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We all need someplace to go to get perspective on life. Water is one of those things that helps us get perspective, whether a river or the ocean. In Psalm 46:4, 2 different words for river are used one reflects on the flow of the water while the other reflects on the course of the water.

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Kootenai
River in
MT.



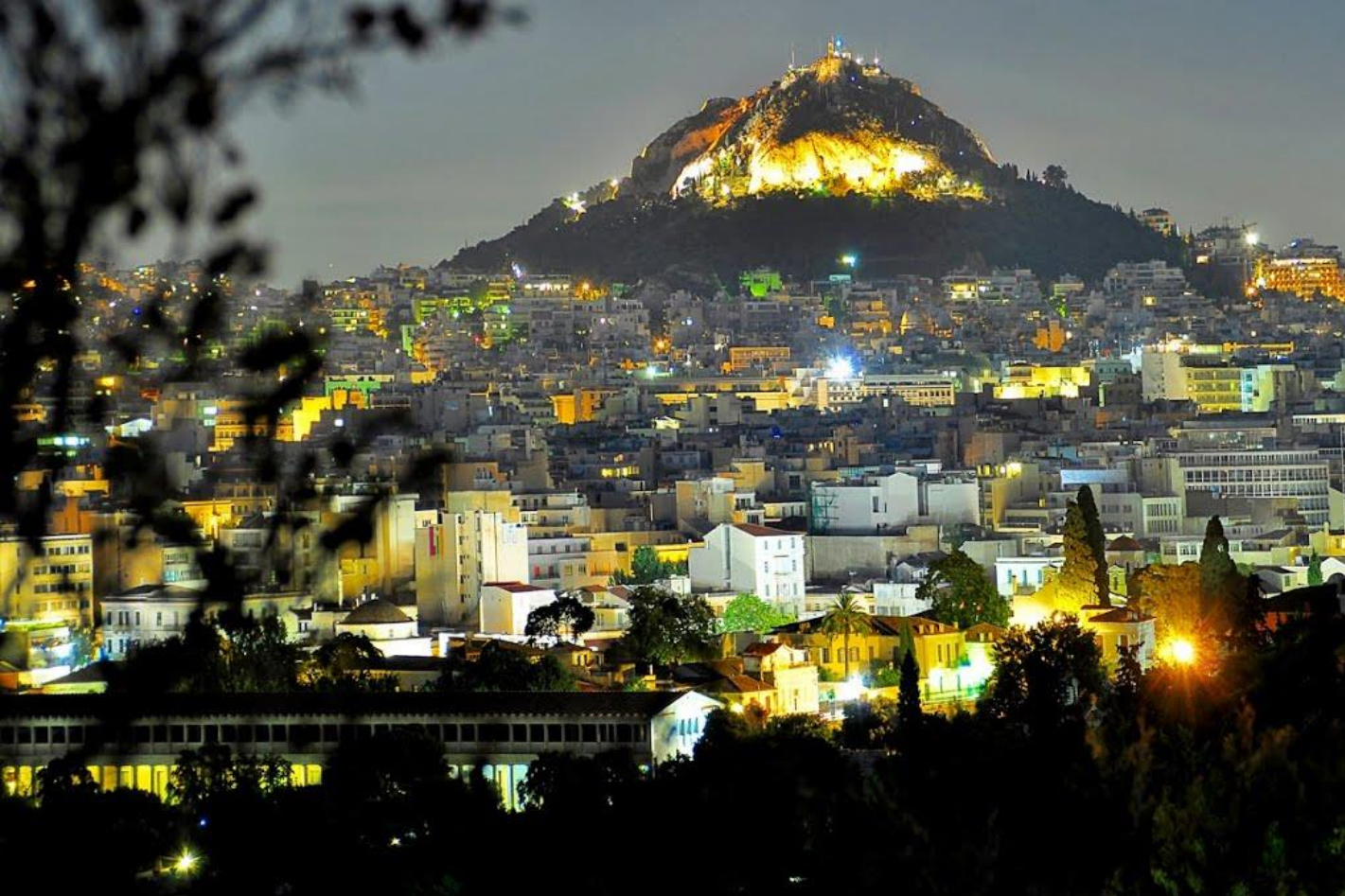
James Tissot "The Choristers". It is James Tissot's take on the "Sons of Korah"

**Series: Preparing For
Anything- Psalm 46**



Message:
"When I
Need
Refreshing!"
Psalm 46:4

4 *There is a river whose streams shall make
glad the city of God, The holy place of the
tabernacle of the Most High.*



Series: Preparing For Anything- Psalm 46

**Message: "When I
Need Refreshing!"**

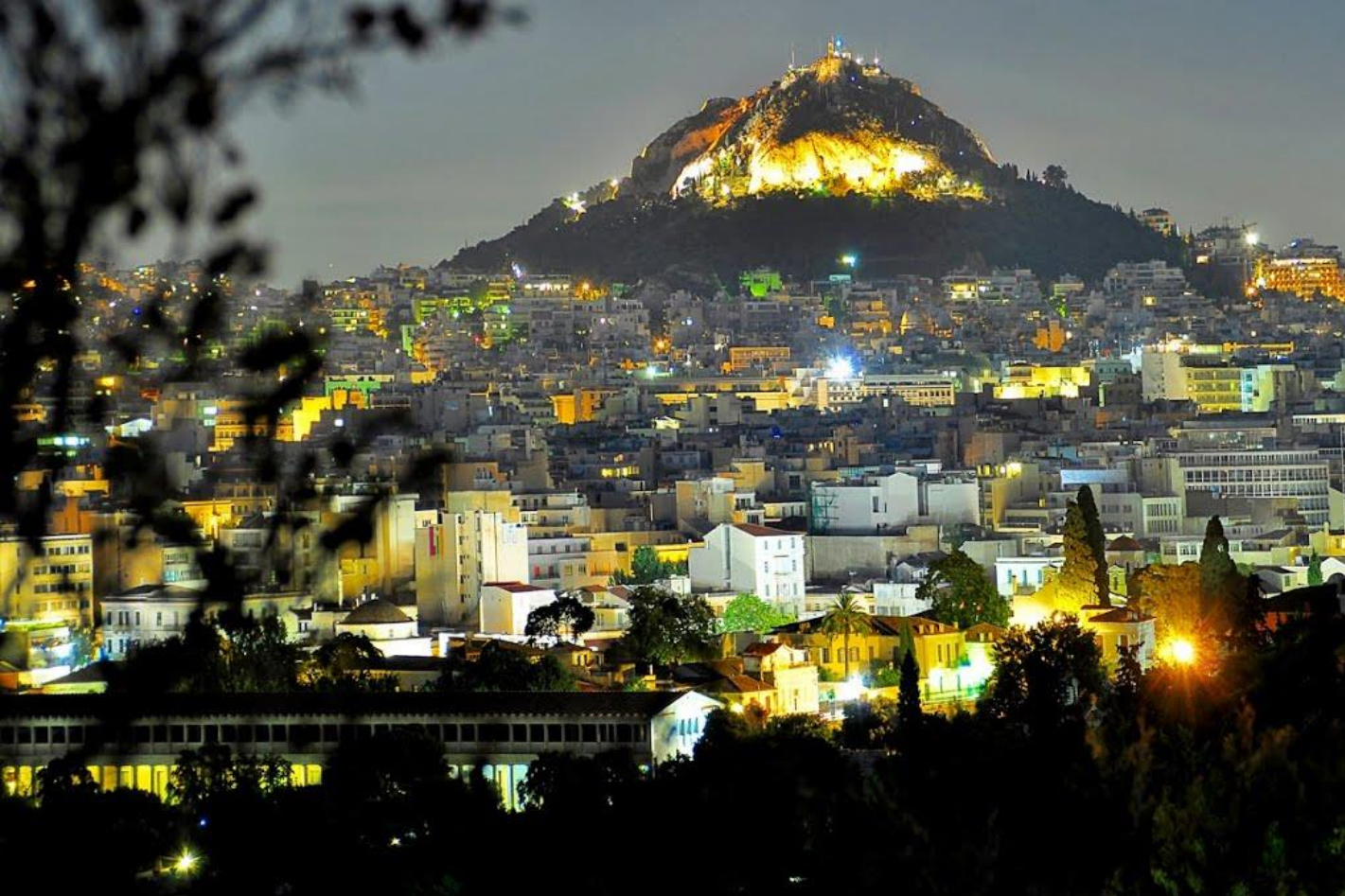
Psalm 46:4

City of Athens, Greece, a
city built on a hill.

*Jesus in his Sermon on the mount Matthew 5:15 calls us as Christians a
"City on a hill that can not be hidden".*

*Cities that wished to influence the world like Athens were set on a hill so
that they could be seen. Christ tells us that as his followers we are set on
a hill so that the world may see us and know what His kingdom is.*

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Message: "When I
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Psalm 46:4

City of Athens, Greece, a
city built on a hill.

Matthew 5:14-16

14 "You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. 16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

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John Winthrop [1587-1649]
Governor of Massachusetts Bay
Colony [1630-1649]

Series: Preparing For Anything- Psalm 46

Message: “When I Need Refreshing!” Psalm 46:4

John Winthrop, the future governor, of the soon to be established Massachusetts Bay colony on board the ship Arabella would challenge his fellow colonists with the concept of “A Model of Christian Charity”. He would popularize the idea of America as “A City Upon a Hill”. This was the foundation of the concept of American Exceptionalism. Ronald Reagan would reprise John Winthrop’s words by declaring in 1980 that Americans still desired to be that “shining city upon a hill”. In the late 1700s this message would be rediscovered and inspire the Revolutionary generation.

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John Winthrop [1587-1649]
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For Winthrop, America could be a place of justice and mercy only so long as Americans could look toward that real city on a hill spoken of by Christ as a model. One of the most difficult parts of Christian faith is this struggle against losing perspective by either trying to make this world heaven or worse making heaven this world. Refreshing is an opportunity to regain perspective. We lose perspective as we engage in the scuttle of life. John, himself would lose perspective at times through out his life. It is a hazard of taking our eyes off the city.



John Winthrop [1587-1649]
Governor of Massachusetts Bay
Colony [1630-1649]

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Hebrews 12:22-23

22 But you have come to Mount Zion
and to the city of the living God, the
heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable
company of angels,
23 to the general assembly and church
of the firstborn who are registered in
heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the
spirits of just men made perfect,...

Message: “When I Need Refreshing!” Psalm 46:4

In 1515 Thomas More was sent by Henry VIII as a member of a diplomatic negotiating team to the Netherlands to discuss peace terms with their French counterparts. It took several months of negotiations. While there the 37 year old man politician had a great deal of time to reflect on the politics of his day. He was what was known as a “humanist” at the time a close friend of the Dutch philosopher and writer Erasmus.

They both shared concerns about the corruption in politics the Roman Catholic church and society in general. Thomas More began to write a book while there. After it was finished he sent it to Erasmus to be edited and published. It was written in Latin but used a Greek play on words as its foundation.



Sir Thomas More [1478-1535]
Painting in 1527 by Hans Holbein, the Younger. Lord Chancellor, 1529-1532 – the most powerful office in England at the time.



Wood-cut engraving from the original 1516 publication of "Utopia" in Latin. It would not be published in English until 1551.

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Message: "When I Need Refreshing!" Psalm 46:4

In 1516 this unusual book was published. It captured the disillusionment felt by many in the world he lived in. The word "Utopia" comes from a compound of 2 words "no + land" or essentially "nowhere" in a strange way it sounds like another Greek word "Eutopia" which is another compound word meaning "good land" or "good place". The Satire is that More constructs the "perfect place" but it is clear that given human conditions it can not really exist. Much of the book is satire and some is wishful thinking. A great deal of it is scathing social commentary on national and social policies that clearly are nonsense.



Engraving from the original 1516 publication of "Utopia" in Latin. It would not be published in English until 1551.

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Thomas More would go on to be one of the most important men in England. He would, also, 19 years later choose death over dishonor by a king he loved but could no longer respect and a church he disliked but had come to respect. Henry VIII demanded he take an oath recognizing Henry as the Supreme spiritual authority. More refused.

Karl Marx would famously quip "Religion is the opiate of the people!" Certainly in 1515 when Thomas More began to write Utopia, he would likely have agreed with this observation. Erasmus, his friend, certainly did. Yet both of these men in their struggle with the forces surging at the dawn of the Reformation would come to see their faith as pointing to a reality far beyond the trappings and failings of the organization that represented that faith.


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Isaiah 8:11-17

11 For the LORD spoke thus to me with a strong hand, and instructed me that I should not walk in the way of this people, saying: 12 "Do not say, 'A conspiracy,' Concerning all that this people call a conspiracy, Nor be afraid of their threats, nor be troubled. 13 The LORD of hosts, Him you shall hallow; *Let Him be your fear, And let Him be your dread.* 14 He will be as a sanctuary, But a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense To both the houses of Israel, As a trap and a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.



Protestants looking on from the other side of the equation would struggle to make sense of the confused world that made up northern Europe at the dawn of the Reformation. Some would eschew politics and retreat into the ideal world in a quest for heaven on earth. Others would delve into the pragmatics of the culture to the point where their faith became non-existent. Mob action and autocratic response would fill the next century, where war upon war would sweep over Europe.



**Series: Preparing For Anything-
Psalm 46**

**Message: "When I
Need Refreshing!"**

Psalm 46:4

The Chicago River running through
Chicago is a 2 branch river with many
canals.

The Chicago River is one of the most critical rivers in the world. It sits atop of the saddle that separates the Great Lakes drainage into the St. Lawrence Seaway and the Mississippi drainage into the Gulf of Mexico. At times it has flowed into the Des Plaines River [Mississippi Tributary] and at others into Lake Michigan. In the 1830 it was discovered that its connection to the Des Plaines provided with a short portage access from the Great Lakes to the Mississippi. With the permanent connection by canal in the 1840's Chicago became a major city.

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Series: Preparing For Anything-
Psalm 46

Message: "When I
Need Refreshing!"

Psalm 46:4

The Chicago River running through
Chicago is a 2 branch river with many
canals.

This river became so polluted that during a drought in the early 1900's it threatened the drinking water of the city of Chicago that is drawn from Lake Michigan. An effort was made to "reverse" the flow of the River into the Des Plaines. It was successful. Now the river has been cleaned up. Without this river the city of Chicago would not exist.
Ezekiel 47:1-9

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Series: Preparing For Anything- Psalm 46

Message: "When I Need Refreshing!" Psalm 46:4

The Chicago River running through Chicago is a 2 branch river with many canals.

Ezekiel 47:1-9

1 Then he brought me back to the door of the temple; and there was water, flowing from under the threshold of the temple toward the east, for the front of the temple faced east; the water was flowing from under the right side of the temple, south of the altar. 2 He brought me out by way of the north gate, and led me around on the outside to the outer gateway that faces east; and there was water, running out on the right side. 3 And when the man went out to the east with the line in his hand, he measured one thousand cubits, and he brought me through the waters; the water came up to my ankles. 4 Again he measured one thousand and brought me through the waters; the water came up to my knees. Again he measured one thousand and brought me through; the water came up to my waist. 5 Again he measured one thousand, and it was a river that I could not cross; for the water was too deep, water in which one must swim, a river that could not be crossed.

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Series: Preparing For Anything- Psalm 46

Message: “When I Need Refreshing!” Psalm 46:4

The Chicago River running through Chicago is a 2 branch river with many canals.

Ezekiel 47:1-9

6 He said to me, “Son of man, have you seen *this*?” Then he brought me and returned me to the bank of the river. 7 When I returned, there, along the bank of the river, were very many trees on one side and the other.

8 Then he said to me: “This water flows toward the eastern region, goes down into the valley, and enters the sea. *When it* reaches the sea, *its* waters are healed. 9 “And it shall be *that* every living thing that moves, wherever the rivers go, will live. There will be a very great multitude of fish, because these waters go there; for they will be healed, and everything will live wherever the river goes.

This River represents the grace of God that flows from His throne.



Series: Preparing For Anything- Psalm 46

Message: "When I Need Refreshing!" **Psalm 46:4**

God gives us rest and refreshment in the midst of difficult circumstances.

Like most of us, Winthrop and More fell short of their ideals. Justice and mercy are unnecessary in a world without sin. The forbidden tree in the garden was that of knowing good and evil. When humanity knew evil then Justice became reality. Justice is the need to restore "rightness" to the world. But when everything is bent, rightness destroys things as much as it corrects them. That is where grace provides "mercy". Grace is that water flowing from beneath the threshold of the Temple in Ezekiel's vision in chapter 47. It grows quickly to becomes a river that heals everything in its path and provides an environment where healing can grow.

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Series: Preparing For Anything- Psalm 46

Message: "When I Need Refreshing!" **Psalm 46:4**

God gives us rest and refreshment in the midst of difficult circumstances.

This is the image John picks up in Revelation 22. When he speaks of a river flowing from the throne of God in the New Jerusalem.