

ANGELINE LEONG, ACTS CENTRE

# A MIGHTY FORTRESS IS OUR GOD

*“Be still, and know that I am God, I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth!”  
Psalm 46:10*

**WHEN COVID-19 HIT THE WORLD**, fear and anxiety were high, spurring very irrational human behaviour such as panic buying, unkind racist slurs and actions. The word that I got from the Lord was, ‘Slowdown’. It was a slowing down of everything from politics, economic activities to families and individuals. It was as if God was putting a hard stop to the world’s frenetic pace of life, and doing a reset for everyone by slowing us all down so that we can take time to breathe and reflect upon ourselves. It’s also a time to go back to the basics such as taking time to get to know people again, nurture kindness and rebuild personal relationships, starting with our family.

In this unprecedented global crisis, this verse comforts me greatly. That in a time of chaos, we are told to be still and know that God is sovereign and in control. Because our God is an all-powerful and all-present God, He is Lord over all creation and nature; over all nations and human affairs. If you read the rest of Psalm 46, you will read just that.

## **UNDERSTANDING THAT GOD IS SOVEREIGN OVER ALL THE WORLD MEANS THAT WE CAN REST ASSURED GOD KNOWS WHAT HE IS DOING; AND HE IS WORKING HIS PURPOSES OUT IN MANY WAYS AND MULTIPLE LEVELS.**

For example, Covid-19 has stopped the protests in Hong Kong which had seemed an impasse; exposed the secret cult in South Korea and Singapore; and the skies have cleared over China since factory productions have decreased activity. The best of humanity has emerged with many people coming together to support others who have been afflicted - delivering groceries to their homes and even placing hand sanitisers in HDB lifts. People are praying more now than before and it has resulted in creative ways of doing church Services.

I believe that even if we do get afflicted, God is still sovereign and in control! This is a hard truth to accept especially for those who are tested positive for Covid-19. These questions roll on: ‘why me?’, ‘where is God in all of these?’, ‘if God is in control, why am I suffering?’

Martin Luther drew inspiration from this Psalm when he wrote the music and the words for this well-loved hymn, ‘A Mighty Fortress is Our God’ when he was going through one of the most difficult periods in his life: he was beset by very ill health, many organs failing that forced him to stop preaching. The infamous black plague had entered Germany at that time, killing many people, yet he and his wife, who was pregnant with their second child, were tending to the sick in his house-converted-hospital. As if things could not be worse, his elder one-year-old son, Hans, suddenly came down ill. It was at this time that he wrote the hymn as a thunderous proclamation: A mighty fortress is our God, a bulwark never failing.

### **PRAYER**

*Dear Heavenly Father, help me to put my trust in you. Our God who is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Give me your peace, not as the world gives, nor is it the absence of war, but your peace that surpasses all human understanding, in my heart that I may stand firm in the face of trials and troubles, fear and anxiety.*

*In Jesus’ name, Amen.*