

**BEING READY**  
**JAMIE MCNAB**  
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If you look around ... it is fairly obvious that we live in a very uncertain world. What is going to happen next? Will the US and North Korea go to war? Will China join in? If there is such a war ... will there be mass casualties and economic shocks worldwide ... affecting banks ... pension funds ... stocks and shares ... corporate profits ... unemployment? Might your life or mine look very different in a week's time?

If not North Korea ... what about the possible chaos in the Middle East? Might Iran launch a missile attack on Saudi Arabia ... I think they want to. Might we see the Persian Gulf go into meltdown ... with knock on effects on oil and the world economy? The collapse of the dollar ... mass unemployment in the Western World ... the collapse of major banks?

There are plenty other areas where big problems could occur ... immigration in Europe is causing major problems ... some have speculated that if it gets so bad ... civil war may break out in some countries ... terrorism hasn't gone away ... might there be a major attack ... even an assassination?

US debt has soared from \$10.6 trillion when Mr Obama came to office just over 8 years ago ... and has nearly doubled to \$20 trillion. Is this meaningless ... could there be a massive correction ... affecting us in a major way ... and a collapsing dollar affecting much of the world?

Or ... it could be something entirely different ... that will turn the world that you and I know ... upside down!

And the answer is we don't know what the next 3 months ... 12 months ... 3 years ... will bring. The world might look very different 6 months from today.

It could be that end-time events are getting underway ... the birth pangs leading up to the Tribulation ... or just the world going through the consequence of its own foolish decisions ... reaping what it's sown.

If turmoil and trouble erupt any time soon ... and we won't escape ... our personal lives are massively affected ... economies ... law and order ... food supplies ... are we ready? Are we prepared? There are a number of people today called "preppers" ... who put by food/drink/oil/weaponry ... preparing for a Doomsday scenario.

Where should our hope be? Should we have confidence that we can come through? For us at the moment ... whilst it's still quiet ... it is good to review what our attitude needs to be.

Better to trust God ... than man.

### **Psalms 118:5-6 (NKJV)**

**5 I called on the Lord in distress;**

**The Lord answered me and set me in a broad place.**

**6 The Lord is on my side;**

**I will not fear.**

**What can man do to me?**

We can call on Jehovah God ... and He will answer us. What can man do to me when God is on my side?

### **Psalms 118:8-9 (NKJV)**

**8 It is better to trust in the Lord**

**Than to put confidence in man.**

**9 It is better to trust in the Lord**

**Than to put confidence in princes.** *(Or politicians or world leaders or Prime Ministers and Presidents)*

**GOD'S WORD TRANSLATION: "During times of trouble I called on the Lord. The Lord answered me, and set me free from all of them."**

When it's chaos around us ... what do we do?

### **Psalms 46:1-3 (NKJV)**

**1 God is our refuge and strength,**

**A very present help in trouble.**

**2 Therefore we will not fear,**

Even though the earth be removed,

And though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea;

3 Though its waters roar and be troubled,  
Though the mountains shake with its swelling.

This is the very sort of attitude we should have. I WILL NOT FEAR!  
Make the choice.

It may be that corporations are collapsing ... banks ... governments or countries. The pillars of society and present systems collapsing. What if there's turmoil? Are we ready to face a very different environment?  
God is a very present help in time of need.

**Psalms 46:7 (NKJV)**

**7 *The Lord of hosts is with us;***  
**The God of Jacob is our refuge.**

We can't rely on people. We need to rely on God.

**Psalms 32:6-7 (NKJV)**

**6 *For this cause everyone who is godly shall pray to You***  
***In a time when You may be found;***

Surely in a flood of great waters  
They shall not come near him.

**7 *You are my hiding place;***  
**You shall preserve me from trouble;**

You shall surround me with songs of deliverance.

Almighty God ... you are my hiding place. I'm putting my confidence in You.

**Psalms 32:8-11 (NKJV)**

**8 *I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go;***

I will guide you with My eye.

9 Do not be like the horse or like the mule,

Which have no understanding,

Which must be harnessed with bit and bridle,

Else they will not come near you.

10 Many sorrows shall be to the wicked;

But **he who trusts in the Lord, mercy shall surround him.**

**11 *Be glad in the Lord and rejoice, you righteous;***

**And shout for joy, all you upright in heart!**

We should be teachable ... not stubborn ... like a mule. When things get bad around us ... it will be a sign that we are very near to the end. Soon ... the Lord Jesus will be returning. We should look to God. We should not panic.

**Psalms 112:1-3 (NKJV)**

**1 Praise the Lord!**

**Blessed is the man who fears the Lord,** (we can often replace the words "fears the Lord" ... with "Hear and Obey"!)  
**Who delights greatly in His commandments.**

2 His descendants will be mighty on earth;  
The generation of the upright will be blessed.

**3 Wealth and riches will be in his house,**  
**And his righteousness endures forever.**

If you compare us to the rest of the 7 billion people on the earth ... we have wealth and riches.

**Psalms 112:7-8 (NKJV)**

**7 He will not be afraid of evil tidings;**

**His heart is steadfast, trusting in the Lord.**

**8 His heart is established;**

**He will not be afraid,**

Until he sees his desire upon his enemies.

**Psalms 112:7 (NET)**

**7 He does not fear bad news.**

**He is confident; he trusts in the Lord.**

These are general principles that should apply in our lives. In all the various troubles that we go through in life ... but ... especially helpful in times of major crisis ... when the whole world around us is reeling to and fro in chaos. Where will our eyes be focused? The government? Ourselves? To whom do we look? To El Shaddai?

**Proverbs 3:21-26 (NKJV)**

21 My son, let them not depart from your eyes—

Keep sound wisdom and discretion;

22 So they will be life to your soul

And grace to your neck.

23 Then you will walk safely in your way,  
And your foot will not stumble.

24 **When you lie down, you will not be afraid;**  
**Yes, you will lie down and your sleep will be sweet.**

25 **Do not be afraid of sudden terror,**  
**Nor of trouble from the wicked when it comes;**

26 **For the Lord will be your confidence,**  
And will keep your foot from being caught.

If ... when ... things get really bad ... there's only one being we can really depend on. It won't be our congressman ... our MPs ... Presidents or Prime Ministers.

**Jeremiah 17:5-6 (NKJV)**

5 **Thus says the Lord:**

**“Cursed is the man who trusts in man**  
**And makes flesh his strength,**  
**Whose heart departs from the Lord.**

6 For he shall be like a shrub in the desert,  
And shall not see when good comes,  
But shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness,  
In a salt land which is not inhabited.

**Jeremiah 17:7-9 (NKJV)**

7 **“Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord,**  
**And whose hope is the Lord.**

8 **For he shall be like a tree planted by the waters,**  
**Which spreads out its roots by the river,**  
**And will not fear when heat comes;**

But its leaf will be green,  
**And will not be anxious** in the year of drought,  
Nor will cease from yielding fruit.

9 **“The heart is deceitful above all things,**  
**And desperately wicked;**  
**Who can know it?**

Maybe we've got plenty of assets ... a home ... bank account ... pension funds ... investments in secure funds?

### **1 Timothy 6:17 (NKJV)**

17 **Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God**, who gives us richly all things to enjoy.

If the economy around us collapses ... will we panic? Where is our confidence? Banking system? Federal Government? Bank of England?

God is not affected by our economies ... or wars and fighting ... or terrorist attacks. His hands are not shortened. There is no rampant inflation in heaven!

In the next few verses ... Jesus is telling us where our heart should be.

### **Matthew 6:19-21 (NKJV)**

19 **“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal;**

20 **but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven**, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. **(Not subject to worldly difficulties)**

21 **For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.**

The Bank of Heaven is a much better location.

### **Matthew 6:24-33 (NKJV)**

24 **“No one can serve two masters;** for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other.

**You cannot serve God and mammon. (Material wealth)**

25 “Therefore I say to you, **do not worry about your life**, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing?

26 Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?

27 Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature?

28 “So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin;

29 and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

30 Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?

31 “**Therefore do not worry**, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’

32 For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.

33 But **seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.**

You cannot serve God and mammon. Mammon is risky. Unreliable.

The conclusion: Don’t worry. Don’t fret. Most of us don’t in our normal lives ... but what about when there is chaos all around us? We need to have the mentality that it is not going to be the end of us. God is a responsible Father. He can be relied upon.

When things are nice and comfortable here is a psalm that we like to read ... but we need to remember it in times of trouble and need.

**Psalms 23:1 (NKJV)**

1 ***The Lord is my shepherd;***  
***I shall not want.***

Most of us live relatively comfortable lives. We can rely on ourselves. But ... it might not always be that way. So it is good to know that we have a Shepherd to rely on. A good shepherd makes provision.

**Psalms 23:2-3 (NKJV)**

2 ***He makes me to lie down in green pastures;***  
***He leads me beside the still waters.***  
3 ***He restores my soul;***  
***He leads me in the paths of righteousness***  
***For His name’s sake.***

Green pastures ... and still waters. Fully fed and looked after.

**Psalms 23:4 (NKJV)**

4 ***Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,***  
***I will fear no evil; (why not?)***

### **For You are with me;**

Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me. (***Confidence is in the Great Shepherd***)

Fear no danger. Why? Because God is with us!

The whole world might be in chaos around us ... difficult times facing everyone. Many might be fearful ... anxious ... not knowing where to turn.

But ... before we get there ... we should be familiar with our Good Shepherd ... and know He can look after us ... in all manner of different ways.

We don't have to know "how". We don't need the details in advance. We just need the trust.

God had a variety of ways to meet the needs of His people in the past. In the Old Testament we see God preserving Ancient Israel in the wilderness after the Exodus.

Millions of people ... in the wilderness ... God fed them with manna ... water coming from rocks ... a cloud to shield them by day ... and a fire to warm and give light at night. For 40 years! God looked after His people for decades.

But ... let's look at some New Testament examples:

### **Matthew 14:13-21 (NKJV)**

13 When Jesus heard it, He departed from there by boat to a deserted place by Himself. But when the multitudes heard it, they followed Him on foot from the cities.

14 And **when Jesus went out He saw a great multitude; and He was moved with compassion for them, and healed their sick.**

15 **When it was evening, His disciples came to Him, saying, "This is a deserted place, and the hour is already late. Send the multitudes away, that they may go into the villages and buy themselves food."**

16 **But Jesus said to them, "They do not need to go away. You give them something to eat."**

17 And they said to Him, **"We have here only five loaves and two fish."**

18 He said, "Bring them here to Me."

19 Then He commanded the multitudes to sit down on the grass. And **He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, He blessed and broke and gave the loaves to the disciples; and the disciples gave to the multitudes.**

20 **So they all ate and were filled, and they took up twelve baskets full of the fragments that remained.**

21 Now **those who had eaten were about five thousand men, besides women and children.**

Another deserted place/wilderness. But no problem to Jesus! Some bread and fish ... miraculously multiplied. Just a nice story? Or an example that God is not limited to traditional methods of meeting needs?

And again ... in case we didn't get the message:

#### **Matthew 15:29-31 (NKJV)**

29 Jesus departed from there, skirted the Sea of Galilee, and went up on the mountain and sat down there.

30 Then **great multitudes came to Him, having with them the lame, blind, mute, maimed, and many others; and they laid them down at Jesus' feet, and He healed them.**

31 So the multitude marvelled when they saw the mute speaking, the maimed made whole, the lame walking, and the blind seeing; and they glorified the God of Israel.

#### **Matthew 15:32-38 (NKJV)**

32 Now **Jesus called His disciples to Himself and said, "I have compassion on the multitude, because they have now continued with Me three days and have nothing to eat. And I do not want to send them away hungry, lest they faint on the way."**

33 Then His disciples said to Him, "Where could we get enough bread in the wilderness to fill such a great multitude?"

34 **Jesus said to them, "How many loaves do you have?"**

And **they said, "Seven, and a few little fish."**

35 So He commanded the multitude to sit down on the ground.

36 And **He took the seven loaves and the fish and gave thanks, broke them and gave them to His disciples; and the disciples gave to the multitude.**

37 **So they all ate and were filled, and they took up seven large baskets full of the fragments that were left.**

38 **Now those who ate were four thousand men, besides women and children.**

It makes no difference to God whether food manufacturers have gone... suppliers ... banks ... are available or not. He may use existing facilities ... or He may not. He's good at improvising ... and doesn't have to do things the way we might expect. God is not limited.

**Luke 5:1-3 (NKJV)**

1 So it was, as the multitude pressed about Him to hear the word of God, that He stood by the Lake of Gennesaret,

2 and saw two boats standing by the lake; but the fishermen had gone from them and were washing their nets.

3 **Then He got into one of the boats, which was Simon's, and asked him to put out a little from the land. And He sat down and taught the multitudes from the boat.**

**Luke 5:4-10 (NKJV)**

4 **When He had stopped speaking, He said to Simon, "Launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch."**

5 **But Simon answered and said to Him, "Master, we have toiled all night and caught nothing; nevertheless at Your word I will let down the net."** (That is a good example for us ... "nevertheless at Your word" ... I will move)

6 **And when they had done this, they caught a great number of fish, and their net was breaking. (Worth plenty of money)**

7 So they signalled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink.

8 When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!"

9 **For he and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish which they had taken;**

10 and so also were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon."

These guys were fishermen ... this was their business. That was their trade. They had spent all night ... but ... no catch ... and no income ... even though they had worked hard.

Jesus wasn't just "showing off". There were several lessons here for Peter ... but one is ... that Jesus is meeting their needs. In a sense ... paying for the hire of the boat ... but with great abundance. Not just food for themselves ... but a generous financial blessing.

So ... we are not entirely dependant on our own efforts ... there may not seem to be any fish "out there" ... but God can find them.

### **Matthew 17:24-27 (NKJV)**

24 **When they had come to Capernaum, those who received the temple tax came to Peter and said, "Does your Teacher not pay the temple tax?"**

25 **He said, "Yes."**

And **when he had come into the house, Jesus anticipated him, saying, "What do you think, Simon? From whom do the kings of the earth take customs or taxes, from their sons or from strangers?"**

26 **Peter said to Him, "From strangers."**

**Jesus said to him, "Then the sons are free.**

27 **Nevertheless, lest we offend them, go to the sea, cast in a hook, and take the fish that comes up first. And when you have opened its mouth, you will find a piece of money; take that and give it to them for Me and you."**

Unusual? Judas was treasurer ... so presumably Jesus could have asked Judas to settle these taxes?

But a good illustration to Peter ... and for us ... that God can find many ways of looking after our needs. Sometimes totally outside of the normal system. God is not limited to what makes sense to us.

It is not really necessary for us to try to figure things out entirely on our own ... or agonise how we might survive or get by in difficult and traumatic times ... the dollar collapses and our money is worthless ... economic ruin ... breakdown in law and order. We would have to rely on our Good Shepherd.

GOD HAS A WAY. And we read His promises earlier.

### **Psalms 78:5-11 (NKJV)**

5 For He established a testimony in Jacob,  
And appointed a law in Israel,  
Which He commanded our fathers,  
That they should make them known to their children;  
6 That the generation to come might know them,  
The children who would be born,  
That they may arise and declare them to their children,  
7 **That they may set their hope in God,**  
**And not forget the works of God,**  
**But keep His commandments;**  
8 **And may not be like their fathers,**  
**A stubborn and rebellious generation,**  
**A generation that did not set its heart aright,**  
**And whose spirit was not faithful to God.**

**Psalms 78:40-42 (NKJV)**

40 **How often they provoked Him in the wilderness,**  
**And grieved Him in the desert!**  
41 **Yes, again and again they tempted God,**  
**And limited the Holy One of Israel.**  
42 They did not remember His power:  
The day when He redeemed them from the enemy,

Apart from general opposition and rebellion ... in their minds ... they had boundaries ... limits ... as to what God would be able to do.

The limits weren't with God. There was no problem to God. It was in their minds ... they couldn't "see it" ... couldn't figure out intellectually how God could accomplish things (even though they'd already had plenty of examples). The problem was in their puny minds. God had no problem!

If we say in serious problems/calamities ... "well there's only so much God can do at this time because of ... the overall situation etc etc ..." we're in danger of limiting God. God has a million ways of looking after us.

**Psalms 34:1 (NKJV)**

1 **I will bless the Lord at all times;**  
**His praise shall continually be in my mouth.**

**Psalms 34:8-10 (NKJV)**

8 **Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good;**

**Blessed is the man who trusts in Him!**

9 **Oh, fear the Lord, you His saints!**

**There is no want to those who fear Him.**

10 The young lions lack and suffer hunger;

But ***those who seek the Lord shall not lack any good thing.***

No lack ... to those who fear Him.

**Philippians 4:6-8 (NKJV)**

6 **Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God;**

7 **and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.**

8 **Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—**meditate on these things.****

We should be able to be at peace even if there's trouble and tribulation and chaos ... all around us.

And one day ... maybe soon ... there will be.

So. It is a good idea to dwell on God's power and willingness to use it to look after His people. He's done that forever. He can provide ways for us that we can't even imagine. God has a million ways of looking after us.

**Isaiah 26:3-4 (NKJV)**

3 **You will keep him in perfect peace, (*shalom shalom*)**

**Whose mind is stayed on You,**

**Because he trusts in You.**

4 **Trust in the Lord forever,**

**For in Yah, the Lord, is everlasting strength.**

**Isaiah 26:3 (NLT)**

**3 You will keep in perfect peace  
all who trust in you,  
all whose thoughts are fixed on you!**

This isn't going to be automatic. It takes some effort ... and practice ... to look to God ... and fix our minds steadfastly on Him. It is a good time to practice now ... while things are fairly quiet ... before the time of real trouble comes.

Somewhere along the line ... difficult times are coming and we should take a little time to make sure we are spiritually prepped for them.