

WHY TAKE REFUGE IN JEHOVAH

Note to the speaker:

Show that true and lasting refuge must be spiritual. Help all to appreciate ways we can increase our reliance on Jehovah. Present the material with warmth and conviction

PEOPLE WORLDWIDE ARE SEEKING REFUGE (5 min.)

Hundreds of millions suffer because of poverty, famine, unemployment, racial and ethnic hatreds, civil and tribal warfare

Millions become refugees in other countries (Use latest verified statistics available; *g96* 8/22 3-4)

In every nation, people seek escape from fear, sickness, family problems, emotional distress, the onslaught of crime, and a sense of hopelessness (*g98* 2/22 5; *g98* 6/8 3-5)

Fear of death moves millions to seek refuge in a multitude of contradictory beliefs

Whether conscious of it or not, all mankind is seeking refuge

However, all worldly promises of refuge lead to disappointment (Pr 14:12; *w88* 4/15 12)

Where can people go? What kind of refuge do they need?

TRUE REFUGE MUST FIRST BE SPIRITUAL (15 min.)

World focuses on problems affecting humankind; does not recognize real underlying cause

Life and genuine happiness linked inextricably to God and to obedience to his laws (Ec 12:13)

Man was created dependent on God and with spiritual needs

God alone gives meaning to life (Jer 10:23, 24; *g80* 5/22 24)

First human couple willfully turned their backs on Jehovah, abandoned their relationship with him, and rejected him as their refuge (Ge 3:17-19)

Result was ejection from Eden and estrangement from true God

Consequences to humankind are all the woes men seek to escape, such as death, war, crime, famine, emotional and physical imperfection, and suffering (Job 14:1, 2, 4; Ro 5:12)

Some who profess to be Christian are lukewarm in their godly devotion (Re 3:15-17; *re* 67-8)

By failing to satisfy their spiritual needs, they are not taking refuge in Jehovah

We need to examine our priorities

Is our spirituality as well as our relationship with Jehovah in first place?

Are we making Jehovah our refuge?

UNFAILING REFUGE CAN BE FOUND ONLY IN JEHOVAH (20 min.)

Jehovah's name is a strong tower and a refuge, and to 'run into' it for protection requires effort and action (Pr 18:10)

Jehovah's provisions for refuge are inseparably linked to his name, which calls to mind his qualities and purposes (*w93* 11/1 5)

If Jehovah is to be our place of refuge, we must seek his righteousness and live by it (Ps 15:1, 2; Mt 6:33)

Jehovah opens door to refuge through ransom sacrifice of his Son

It can cleanse us of sin and provide way to enter close relationship with God (1Jo 2:1, 2, 4, 5)

Based on Jesus' ransom, we can seek refuge through prayer (Ps 65:2; 66:19)

Whether under outright demon attack, physical affliction, or emotional distress, we can call on God, pour out our hearts to him (Ps 62:8; *w92* 4/15 4-6)

Not just emotional effect, for Jehovah really listens and can provide relief in any situation (Jon 2:2)

Answer may not be what we anticipate, but Jehovah will provide us with relief and calmness of heart if we persevere in prayer (Php 4:6, 7; Jas 1:5, 6)

Jehovah's spirit-directed organization provides refuge

How grateful we are for the straightforward *Watchtower* and *Awake!* articles that give Scriptural counsel to protect us from falling victim to imperfect flesh, demons, and ever-changing worldly wisdom! (Col 2:8)

Jehovah's organization helps us to evaluate counsel from Bible properly

The Watchtower has appropriately stated: "Worldly counselors and psychologists can never hope to approach the wisdom and understanding that Jehovah displays. 'His understanding is beyond recounting.' (Psalm 147:5) Rather than lean on the wisdom of prominent men of the world or on our own uninformed emotions, let us look to Jehovah, his Word, and the elders in the Christian congregation for mature advice." (*w93* 12/15 13)

Worldly counselors may be able to help in some circumstances, whereas Jehovah is preeminent as our helper and refuge in all situations

Elders in Christian congregation should be a source of comfort and refuge (Isa 32:1, 2; 1Th 5:14; *w94* 1/15 19)

Congregation meetings provide refreshing refuge (Heb 10:23-25)

(May briefly relate expressions of appreciation for meetings by young, elderly, or disabled publishers who attend regularly and participate actively)

Words and music in songbook and on *Kingdom Melodies* soothe and encourage

Example of this is song number 46 (Col 3:16; *w89* 8/15 32)

Christian ministry brings joy and keeps our minds and hearts focused on truths of God's Word and hope for the future

Frees captives, helps them to take refuge in good news of Kingdom (Isa 61:1; Mt 24:14)

KEEP ON TAKING REFUGE IN JEHOVAH (5 min.)

All places of worldly refuge will soon come to nothing (Re 6:15-17; *re* 112)

Only true refuge that guarantees life is Jehovah God

Continue to take in knowledge of Jehovah, apply Bible principles, and maintain a fine personal relationship with him (Ps 57:1)

Jehovah invites all mankind to take advantage of provisions for refuge

Exercise faith in ransom, stay close to God's visible organization

Be determined to continue taking spiritual refuge in Jehovah, for this leads to eternal life on Paradise earth (Ps 37:34, 37-40)

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read or commented on)