

Definition: the state or quality of being free from agitation or strong emotion. The state or condition of being free from disturbance or violent activity. Latin cauma, "heat of the day", the "resting place in the heat of the day"

1. Ask the group to describe things that affect their calm.
2. Is there a time you exhibited calm during a trying time?
3. Do we know of others who always seem calm under pressure?

Fire Pit Discussion:

1. While I was driving in a remote area, the right front wheel of my car hit a chunk of concrete. The force of the impact flattened the tire and bent the wheel's rim. The car was not drivable, and I could not get a cell-phone signal to call for help. Feeling helpless and uncertain, I thought of the Israelites in the wilderness. God provided food and water for them when none was available. Could I count on God to provide the help I needed? I recalled the verse quoted above as well as Psalm 121:2: "My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth."

When I prayed to God for help, I found myself calming down and thinking more clearly. I flagged down a delivery truck and used the driver's phone. Help came, and I thanked God.

2. References:
 - Psalm 46:1 God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.
 - Mark 6:50 Jesus said, "Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid."
 - Luke 21:28 When these things begin to take place, stand up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.
3. News of chaos in communities around the world tempts me to live in fear. Threats of violent attacks, natural disasters, war, disease, famine, and financial crises alarm me. When I have faced one fear another takes its place. I wonder how can I protect myself? How can I overcome my fears?
When these concerns start to overwhelm me, I think of Jesus' words in today's quoted scripture. I am comforted as I turn from the chaos and look to Jesus — my redemption — who calms my fears.
We may struggle with concerns about our family, health, or finances. We may live in an area with daily violence due to war or crime. Disease and natural disasters pose a constant threat. When we experience any of these things, we can remember the promise of redemption. We can look first to Jesus as a source of comfort, hope, and joy in the midst of chaos.