

God: Our Protector and Refuge

Psalms 61-62

In these Psalms, we see David expressing His confidence in God's protection and provision. David also acknowledges that God is the single place of refuge we can run to in times of oppression and seek protection from opposition.

There and Then

Outline:

An outline for Psalms 61-62 is available on the [Downloads](#) page in the *Outlines / Old Testament* folder.

People:

God, David

Location:

End of the Earth. Tower of Strength, Rock, Stronghold, Refuge

Context:

These aren't ascribed to any particular event, simply that they were written by David, to be given to the choir director.

Key Words:

Old Testament, Wisdom, Poetry, Psalms, God, Refuge, Rock, Salvation, Forever, Heart, Lovingkindness, Hope

Key Verse(s):

Psalms 61:8 NASB So I will sing praise to Your name forever, That I may pay my vows day by day.

Psalms 62:8 NASB Trust in Him at all times, O people; Pour out your heart before Him; God is a refuge for us. Selah.

Cross References¹:

61:2 - From the end

Psalms 42:6 O my God, my soul is in despair within me; Therefore I remember You from the land of the Jordan And the peaks of Hermon, from Mount Mizar.

Psalms 139:9-10 If I take the wings of the dawn, If I dwell in the remotest part of the sea, **10** Even there Your hand will lead me, And Your right hand will lay hold of me.

Deuteronomy 4:27-29 "The LORD will scatter you among the peoples, and you will be left few in number among the nations where the LORD drives you. **28** "There you will serve gods, the work of man's hands, wood and stone, which neither see nor hear nor eat nor smell. **29** "But from there you will seek the LORD your God, and you will find *Him* if you search for Him with all your heart and all your soul.

¹ (Smith 579-580) on Psalms 61-62.

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Jonah 2:3-4 "For You had cast me into the deep, Into the heart of the seas, And the current engulfed me. All Your breakers and billows passed over me. **4** "So I said, 'I have been expelled from Your sight. Nevertheless I will look again toward Your holy temple.'

61:5 - heritage

Psalms 16:5-6 The LORD is the portion of my inheritance and my cup; You support my lot. **6** The lines have fallen to me in pleasant places; Indeed, my heritage is beautiful to me.

Psalms 115:13 He will bless those who fear the LORD, The small together with the great.

Psalms 119:111 I have inherited Your testimonies forever, For they are the joy of my heart.

Isaiah 54:17 "No weapon that is formed against you will prosper; And every tongue that accuses you in judgment you will condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, And their vindication is from Me," declares the LORD.

Malachi 3:16-18 Then those who feared the LORD spoke to one another, and the LORD gave attention and heard *it*, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for those who fear the LORD and who esteem His name. **17** "They will be Mine," says the LORD of hosts, "on the day that I prepare *My* own possession, and I will spare them as a man spares his own son who serves him." **18** So you will again distinguish between the righteous and the wicked, between one who serves God and one who does not serve Him.

Acts 10:34-35 Opening his mouth, Peter said: "I most certainly understand *now* that God is not one to show partiality, **35** but in every nation the man who fears Him and does what is right is welcome to Him.

62:7 - On God

Isaiah 45:25 "In the LORD all the offspring of Israel Will be justified and will glory."

Jeremiah 3:23 "Surely, the hills are a deception, A tumult *on* the mountains. Surely in the LORD our God Is the salvation of Israel.

Jeremiah 9:23-24 Thus says the LORD, "Let not a wise man boast of his wisdom, and let not the mighty man boast of his might, let not a rich man boast of his riches; **24** but let him who boasts boast of this, that he understands and knows Me, that I am the LORD who exercises lovingkindness, justice and righteousness on earth; for I delight in these things," declares the LORD.

1 Corinthians 1:29-31 so that no man may boast before God. **30** But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption, **31** so that, just as it is written, "LET HIM WHO BOASTS, BOAST IN THE LORD."

Galatians 6:14 But may it never be that I would boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.

62:10 - Do not trust

Isaiah 28:14-15 Therefore, hear the word of the LORD, O scoffers, Who rule this people who are in Jerusalem, **15** Because you have said, "We have made a covenant with death, And with Sheol we have made a pact. The overwhelming scourge will not reach us when it passes by, For we have made falsehood our refuge and we have concealed ourselves with deception."

Isaiah 30:12-14 Therefore thus says the Holy One of Israel, "Since you have rejected this word

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And have put your trust in oppression and guile, and have relied on them, **13** Therefore this iniquity will be to you Like a breach about to fall, A bulge in a high wall, Whose collapse comes suddenly in an instant, **14** Whose collapse is like the smashing of a potter's jar, So ruthlessly shattered That a sherd will not be found among its pieces To take fire from a hearth Or to scoop water from a cistern."

Isaiah 47:10 "You felt secure in your wickedness and said, 'No one sees me,' Your wisdom and your knowledge, they have deluded you; For you have said in your heart, 'I am, and there is no one besides me.'

Isaiah 59:4 No one sues righteously and no one pleads honestly. They trust in confusion and speak lies; They conceive mischief and bring forth iniquity.

62:12 - For you recompense

Jeremiah 17:10 "I, the LORD, search the heart, I test the mind, Even to give to each man according to his ways, According to the results of his deeds.

Ezekiel 7:27 'The king will mourn, the prince will be clothed with horror, and the hands of the people of the land will tremble. According to their conduct I will deal with them, and by their judgments I will judge them. And they will know that I am the LORD.'

Ezekiel 18:30-32 "Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, each according to his conduct," declares the Lord GOD. "Repent and turn away from all your transgressions, so that iniquity may not become a stumbling block to you. **31** "Cast away from you all your transgressions which you have committed and make yourselves a new heart and a new spirit! For why will you die, O house of Israel? **32** "For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone who dies," declares the Lord GOD. "Therefore, repent and live."

Matthew 16:24-27 Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me. **25** "For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. **26** "For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? **27** "For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and WILL THEN REPAY EVERY MAN ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS.

1 Corinthians 3:7-9 So then neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but God who causes the growth. **8** Now he who plants and he who waters are one; but each will receive his own reward according to his own labor. **9** For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, God's building.

Ephesians 6:7-8 With good will render service, as to the Lord, and not to men, **8** knowing that whatever good thing each one does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether slave or free.

Colossians 3:23-25 Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men, **24** knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve. **25** For he who does wrong will receive the consequences of the wrong which he has done, and that without partiality.

Difficulties:

Questions:

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1.

Notes & Commentaries:

James Swanson²

Psalm 61

61:1-2 - David begins by crying out to God to hear his prayer as if it were from the most remote place on the earth, in which he is asking for God's guidance to His presence. When you consider this in relation to how Jesus taught His disciples to pray, beginning with “**Our Father who is in heaven, Hallowed be Your name,**” it seems like Jesus was teaching His disciples to follow a pattern already established in the Psalms, appealing to God, who is far above all others.

61:3-4 - David then gives a very abbreviated history of God's protection and provision in the past.

Selah - This is believed to be a time of reflection or some sort of musical interlude (no one really knows). How fitting it is that David calls for a time of reflection after proclaiming the greatness of God and His provision.

61:5 - David thanks God for his answered prayers and the promised inheritance among the faithful.

61:6-7 - David also thanks God for His protection and the length of his life given to him by God's lovingkindness.

61:8 - David closes the psalm by renewing his commitment to worship God forever and honor his faith in God all his days.

Psalm 62

62:1-2 - David opens the psalm with an expression of dependance on God to provide shelter, protection, and provision, and the confidence David has in God's faithfulness.

62:3-4 - David expresses his frustration with those who would seek his harm and plot everyday against him, taking delight in their treacherous deeds.

62:5-7 - David then reaffirms his dependance on God.

62:8 - David then calls for all God's people to follow his lead in trusting solely in God and urges others to pour out their hearts before Him who is able to provide.

Selah - a time of reflection

62:9-10 - David then speaks of the impartiality of God when dealing with men, who use riches, influence, or position to tip the scales of earthly judges in their favor, but not so with God. Only God can be trusted to completely impartial in His judgments.

62:11-12 - David closes the psalm with a description of God's repeated self-declaration of His might and His willingness to forgive and display His lovingkindness toward men.

Lovingkindness or chesed—[see Topical Study on the Downloads page]

2 Personal thoughts and reflections on Psalms 61-62.

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H2617³ - חֶסֶד, *hesed*: A masculine noun indicating kindness, lovingkindness, mercy, goodness, faithfulness, love, acts of kindness. This aspect of God is one of several important features of His character: truth; faithfulness; mercy; steadfastness; justice; righteousness; goodness.

Treasury of David⁴

61:1-4

"From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee"—To be absent from the place of divine worship was a sore sorrow to saints in the olden times ... Yet even they knew right well that no place is unsuitable for prayer. There may be an end of the earth, but there must not be an end to devotion.

"lead me to the rock that is higher than I"—How infinitely higher than we are is the salvation of God. We are low and grovelling, but it towers like some tall cliff far above us. This is its glory, and is our delight when we have once climbed into the rock, and Claimed an interest in it; but while we are as yet trembling seekers, the glory and sublimity of salvation appal us, and we feel that we are too unworthy even to be partakers of it; hence we are led to cry for grace upon grace, and to see how dependent we are for everything, not only for the Saviour, but for the power to believe on him.

61:5-8

"Thou hast given me the heritage of those that fear thy name."—We are made heirs, joint-heirs with all the saints, partakers of the same portion. With this we ought to be delighted. If we suffer, it is the heritage of the saints; if we are persecuted, are in poverty, or in temptation, all this is contained in the title-deeds of the heritage of the chosen. Those we are to sup with we may well be content to dine with. We have the same inheritance as the First-born himself; what better is conceivable? Saints are described as fearing the name of God; they are reverent worshippers; they stand in awe of the Lord's authority; they are afraid of offending him, they feel their own nothingness in the sight of the Infinite One. To share with such men, to be treated by God with the same favour as he metes out to them, is matter for endless thanksgiving. All the privileges of all the saints are also the privilege of each one.

"So will I sing praise unto thy name for ever."—Because my prayer is answered, my song shall be perpetual; because Jesus for ever sits at thy right hand, it shall be acceptable; because I am preserved in him, it shall be grateful.

"That I may daily perform my vows."—To God who adds days to our days we will devote all our days. ... God daily performs his promises, let us daily perform our vows: he keeps his covenant let us not forget ours. Blessed be the name of the Lord from this time forth, even for evermore.

62:1-4

"My soul waiteth upon God."—My inmost self draws near in reverent obedience to God. I am no hypocrite or mere posture maker. To wait upon God, and for God, is the habitual position of faith; to wait on him truly is sincerity; to wait on him only is spiritual chastity.

"From him cometh my salvation."—The good man will, therefore, in patience possess his soul till deliverance comes: faith can hear the footsteps of coming salvation because she has learned to be silent. Our salvation in no measure or degree comes to us from any inferior

3 (Zhodiates, Baker, and Carpenter)

4 (Spurgeon) on Psalms 61-62.

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source; let us, therefore, look alone to the true fountain, and avoid the detestable crime of ascribing to the creature what belongs alone to the Creator. If to wait on God be worship, to wait on the creature is idolatry; if to wait on God alone be true faith, to associate an arm of flesh with him is audacious unbelief.

“How long”— ... The passage is thought to be more correctly rendered as follows: - “How long will ye press on one man, that ye may crush him in a body, like a toppling wall, a sinking fence?” We have, however, kept to our own version as yielding a good and profitable meaning. Both senses may blend in our meditations; for if David’s enemies battered him as though they could throw him down like a bulging wall, he, on the other hand, foresaw that they themselves would by retributive justice be overthrown like an *old*, crumbling, leaning, yielding fence.

“Selah.”—Here pause, and consider with astonishment the futile rancour of unholy men, and the perfect security of such as rest themselves upon the Lord.

62:5-8

“My soul, wait thou only upon God.”—When we have already practised a virtue, it is yet needful that we bind ourselves to a continuance in it. The soul is apt to be dragged away from its anchorage, or is readily tempted to add a second confidence to the one sole and sure ground of reliance; we must, therefore, stir ourselves up to maintain the holy position which we were at first able to assume. Be still silent, O my soul! submit thyself completely, trust immovably, wait patiently. Let none of thy enemies’ imaginings, consultings, flatteries, or maledictions cause thee to break the King’s peace.

“I shall not be moved”— ... not even in the least degree. See how his confidence grows. In the [Psa 62:2](#) an adverb qualified his quiet; here, however, it is absolute; he altogether defies the rage of his adversaries, he will not stir an inch, nor be made to fear even in the smallest degree. A living faith grows; experience develops the spiritual muscles of the saint, and gives a manly force which our religious childhood has not yet reached.

“In God is my salvation and my glory.”—Observe how the Psalmist brands his own initials upon every name which he rejoicingly gives to his God - *my* expectation, *my* rock, *my* salvation, *my* glory, *my* strength, *my* refuge; he is not content to know that the Lord is all these things; he acts faith towards him, and lays claim to him under every character. ... If our experience has not yet enabled us to realise the Lord under any of these consoling titles, we must seek grace that we may yet be partakers of their sweetness.

62:9-12

“To be laid in the balance, they are altogether lighter than vanity.”—Take a true estimate of them; judge them neither by quantity nor by appearance, but by weight, and they will no longer deceive you. Calmly deliberate, quietly ponder, and your verdict will be that which inspiration here records. Vainer than vanity itself are all human confidences: the great and the mean, alike, are unworthy of our trust.

“God hath spoken once.”—So immutable is God that he need not speak twice, as though he had changed; so infallible, that one utterance suffices, for he cannot err; so omnipotent, that his solitary word achieves all his designs.

“That power belongeth unto God.”—He is the source of it, and in him it actually abides. This one voice of God we ought always to hear, so as to be preserved from putting our trust in creatures in whom there can be no power, since all power is in God. What reason for faith is here! It can never be unwise to rest upon the almighty arm. Out of all troubles he can release

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us, under all burdens sustain us, while men must fail us at the last, and may deceive us even now. May our souls hear the thunder of Jehovah's voice as he claims all power, and henceforth may we wait only upon God!

“Also unto thee, O Lord, belongeth mercy.”—This tender attribute sweetens the grand thought of his power: the divine strength will not crush us, but will be used for our good; God is so full of mercy that it belongs to him, as if all the mercy in the universe came from God, and still was claimed by him as his possession. His mercy, like his power, endureth for ever, and is ever present in him, ready to be revealed.

“For thou renderest to every man according to his work,”—This looks rather like justice than mercy; but if we understand it to mean that God graciously rewards the poor, imperfect works of his people, we see in it a clear display of mercy.

Here and Now

Answer the questions below as you reflect on your own life and this study⁵: *my LOG vs others SPECK*

S – Are there *sins* to avoid or confess?

- Failure to turn to God in prayer no matter where I am—I can never go to far

P – Are there *promises* from God to claim?

-

E – Are there *examples* to follow?

Positive

- David's determination to praise God no matter what his circumstances

Negative

- Men who use “whatever means necessary” to gain an advantage over others

C – Are there *commands* to obey?

-

K – How can this passage increase my *knowledge* about God / Jesus Christ / Holy Spirit?

- Only God can provide salvation
- He is not influenced by wealth or position but judges impartially and fairly
- God offers lovingkindness to all who would seek Him

Other Application Questions

Are there principles to guide?

Are there warnings to heed?

Are there attitudes to adopt?

Are there actions to take?

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⁵ *(The Navigators)* [with additions] & Matthew 7:1-5.

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