

Tuesday, July 26, 2022 ▫ Read Psalm 61

Questions from the Scripture text: Into whose hands was this Psalm committed (superscript)? Who wrote it? What is its first request (v1a)? What is its second (v1b)? From where is the psalmist doing what (v2a)? How does his heart feel (v2b)? What does he ask God to do when this happens (v2c)? What two things has God been for him (v3)? Where does he hope to abide (v4a)? For how long? In what shelter will the Psalmist take refuge (v4b)? Who has heard what (v5a)? What has God given him (v5b)? To whom does this heritage belong? What will God do for him as king (v6a)? For how long (v6b)? How long will he abide where (v7a)? What two things does he ask God to prepare (literally "count out") for him (v7b)? What would this covenanted love and faithfulness do for him? What will the psalmist do (v8a)? For how long? For what purpose (v8b)?

How does having an overwhelmed heart lead to overwhelming praise? Psalm 61 looks forward to the opening portion of morning public worship on the coming Lord's Day. In these eight verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **God Himself helps our hearts find refuge in Him, so that we will both realize the permanently great security we have in Him and therefore commit to permanent praise of Him.**

Present predicament. The first line in v2 suggests that the circumstance of this Psalm was one of the many times that David was on the run, or perhaps in the midst of a difficult military campaign like with Psalm 60. But the occasion of the Psalm has more to do with his heart: he is overwhelmed (feels like fainting). When have you felt like this, dear believer? Be comforted that not only did David and the Lord Jesus (Who is prophesied by this Psalm) experience the same, but one of the reasons that they did is so that the Holy Spirit could give you this to pray and to sing. The Lord knows both your circumstances and your faintness, and He makes provision for you.

Personal (and permanent) preservation. Ultimately, that provision is Himself. The shelter is not a place but a Person. Not only is the Lord Himself the rock/refuge/tower/tent/hideout (v2c-4), but He Himself leads us there (v2c)! Many a believer has had this experience—not being able to see any light or hope, but then the Holy Spirit Himself brings to mind the Lord Whom you have known from His Word and in your life. Now if God Himself is helping you find God Himself as your help, how long will that last? Forever!

By referring to himself as "the king" in v6a, David alerts us to the fact that the hope and heritage of this Psalm belong by right to Christ. Certainly, the Lord Jesus had much occasion to cry out to God, including the greatest occasion ever. And it is He who conquered death in His resurrection and intercedes for us now by the power of His indestructible life (v6a-7a, cf. Heb 2:14, 7:16). When God is your shelter, you will abide there forever (v7a). And when it is in the forever-King that you have shelter, it will be forever.

Permanent praise. v5a, 8b frame in the second half of the Psalm with the idea of vows. Already, the psalmist has realized how permanent his preservation will be since it is God Himself. So, he turns his attention from what he needs from God to his response to God, and he commits to praise that corresponds to the Lord's preserving of him.

The "inheritance" in v5 is being counted out (the literal word, translated "prepare" in our version) in v7b. What is that inheritance? The mercy (*kessed*, covenant love) and truth (*emmet*, faithfulness) that is keeping him even now. Every day, forever, he will be praising God's Name for these (v8a-b).

And since this is already a day in which he has them, he will praise God's Name for them now. In the space of just eight verses, the Holy Spirit has brought him (and us!) from an overwhelmed heart to overwhelming praise.

When has your heart been overwhelmed? Who can help you to your shelter then? To what shelter does He lead you? What do you find there? For how long? How do you respond? For how long?

Sample prayer: O God, lead us to Yourself as our Rock. Make us to know that our safety is not in a place but in a Person. Open our eyes to know You and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. For, this is eternal life. Count out for us the inheritance of Your covenanted love and faithfulness. And, provoke our hearts to respond with committed and everlasting praise, for we ask it through Christ, AMEN!

Suggested songs: ARP61A "O God, Hear My Cry" or TPH61B "O Hear My Urgent Cry"

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(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

Psalm 61. These are the words of God to the chief musician on a stringed instrument. A Psalm of David Here. My cry. O. God attend to my prayer. From the end of the earth. I will cry to you when my heart is overwhelmed lead me to the rock.

That is higher than I for. You have been a shelter for me a strong tower from the enemy. I will abide in your tabernacle forever. I will trust in the shelter of your wings for you. O. God have heard my vows, you've given me the heritage of those who fear your name.

You will prolong the king's life as years. As many generations He shall abide before God forever. All prepare mercy and truth which may preserve him. So I will sing praise to your name forever that I made daily. Perform. My vows So far the reading of God's inspired and inherent word.

So David's in trouble which trouble? We don't know because he says from the end of the earth, I will cry to you which just means he's on the run. And he spent most of the time between killing Goliath and becoming king on the run from Saul and among the flustons.

And then after he became king, he was Sometimes on the run because he was going to war with his enemies. You know, that wouldn't be so much as a refugee. But in the midst of war and the heat of battle, you may have your heart overwhelmed. Like he talks about in verse 2 and if he's a long way from home, wherever the battle happens to be as you saw in 60, remember, he fought against Mesopotamian.

Syria of Zoba and was going to eat them in the immediately preceding Psalm. So that's another possibility or another possibility is when he was on the run from Absalom and in the insurrection and the treason of Absalom. So it doesn't actually give us the particular occasion, but what occasions him more than his location as the condition of his heart from the end of the Earth.

I'll cry to you when my heart is overwhelmed. The Apostle, John tells us that God is stronger than our hearts. That seems to be obvious but a man has ever since the fall looked to himself for strength, which is stupid and foolish. But now, we live in a humanistic culture in which, we believe really, in man, at least a society does Man's sincerity man's desire man's ability to overcome man's perseverance.

All these ideas about the human spirit, but that's not reality. It's not the teaching of the Bible and one of the reasons, God brings someone like David into so many difficult circumstances, so that he will know that he needs something greater than his own heart. So, he says, when my heart is overwhelmed, he cries out to God.

And what is he crying out to God. Lead me to the rock. That is higher than I. I need someone better stronger safer, then then myself, even the Lord Jesus had his heart overwhelmed, but it never turned his heart back to God, because his heart was never turned away from God in his humanity, but he experienced agony suffering, the prospect of and then the experience of horrible pain on the cross something from which rightly has humanity shrunk and desired only because it was the will of his father.

And he says, if it is possible, as far as, you know, if it is possible, let this cup pass for me. Nevertheless not my will. But thine is saying, the only reason that I would want to go to what I'm going to do. There's nothing pleasant in at all, except the obedience of the Father, the will of the Father, the glory of the Father and obedience to the Father, the will of the Father and the glory of the Father.

And that, of course, was reason enough for Jesus, but he experienced overwhelming situations in his humanity. He took part in our frailty and we are absolute fools. If we are going to deny our frailty when God the Son added humanity to himself and experienced it in our place and indeed this Psalmist were especially going to find out when we get to verse 6 and 7 is first and foremost for Christ and only secondarily for David, but that's the present.

Predicament. Well, how what's the solution? The solution is not a different place. It's a person. It might sound like a place when you say lead me to the rock. That is higher than I. But then you very quickly, find out in verse 3 that this rock is not a place.

It's a person for you, have been a shelter for me a strong tower from the enemy. I will abide in your tabernacle tabernacle forever. I will stay or dwell. Maybe you've heard people around here when they, Well, I guess you guys don't get out very much. But when someone asks, where someone else lives, you know, where I grew up in Michigan, you would ask where they lived.

A lot of people around here. Say, where do you stay. And that's closer to that dwelling. Abiding word. That is that's being translated abide here in verse 4. And the idea that God is his home, God's tent is his own, I will trust and the specific word for trust.

There is one that especially means to take refuge in the shelter of your wings. So God himself is the refuge which is one of the reasons why you are going to have situations in your life where you feel like you need a way out or a place to go and one won't immediately present itself.

And when you cry out to God, one of the purposes that he has for, for bringing you through something like that is so that you will find refuge in him. Even without the circumstance itself being changed. Now we know that all difficult circumstances for believers are temporary because the way things end for the believer is no sorrow, no suffering, no sin, no enemies, no pain.

Only the Blessedness in body and soul of God himself. And every good thing with him forever, in a perfect and sinless, new heavens and new earth. So, every difficult circumstance for a believer is ultimately temporary light. And momentary said, one of the men who experienced the more than the vast majority ever will in this life.

But one of God's purposes often in your difficulties, is to find Him as your refuge, which means you are going to pray and you're going to ask for the circumstance to end or for a good resolution to it. And that won't happen right away because he hasn't yet accomplished, the purpose of communicating to you how he himself is your safety, and your hope, and your security believers, have their share and often more than their share in all of the public trials and calamities in this world.

But for the believer even in the midst of it, it is being sanctified to him and the Lord is doing him good by it. And the Lord is directing you to himself by the trouble. I grew up hearing from some people that when the tribulation it's just a longboard for trouble.

When the, when the trouble type comes believers, won't be in that God loves them too much. He wonder if, you know, the whole rest of the Bible is there for them. Because God often gives us trouble in love and carries us through trouble and love. And so, even in the midst of your trouble, You are having it sanctified to you, to turn you to the Lord.

And of course, when you come out of the trouble, the Lord consoles, you and richly rewards. You even more. The unbeliever doesn't have that at all. The unbelievers troubles are the best we'll ever get for him. He thinks he has trouble. Now, just just wait until what he is.

And what he has done is fully exposed before the one against his glory. He has sinned. And his glory would be fully revealed. Okay. So there's a president predicament present trouble and there's this personal preservation which leads us to permanent praise. Because If God is our shelter then that's going to last forever.

And so versus 5 through verse 5. Through verse 8 are kind of set off as the second half of the Psalm. Not only by the state law which they're so far to the right on the pages of my salt or that this homes in my copy. That I was reading from I think I forgot to read this.

A law wasn't in my field of vision but we should read this a law even though we don't know exactly what it means. Not only our versus five and five through eight set off by the say law. But they're also bookended at the beginning of verse 5 for you.

Oh God have heard my vows and the end of verse 8 that I made daily perform my vows. So what are these vows? And the vow is to praise him. So I will sing praise to your name forever that I made daily perform. My vows and the reason he's going to praise forever is because God has his shelter forever.

If God is your shelter, if God is your pleasure, or if God is your award, then there's an imbalance because God is infinite and we are finite in order to have him as our shelter. We must have him as shelter forever in order to have him as our reward, we must have him as reward forever in order to have him as our pleasure.

We must have him as our pleasure forever and says you have, given me the heritage, the reward, the inheritance of those who fear your name, you will prolong the king's life, okay? So far, could be David lived. A fairly long life especially for like, a warring king. It's a hazardous occupation, his years as many generations.

Hmm, he shall abide before. God forever. Well, that ultimately ends up being true of David, right? And of everyone who fears the Lord and as God is our inheritance, and God is our shelter, and God is our refuge. It's true, little abide with him forever. We just got done proving that theologically because God is infinite and we are finite, but this is especially about a different king, isn't it?

David is singing about the king that was promised from his line in second. Samuel 7 who would rule forever and ever, and who is the king, who rules forever and ever. Sophia God is Jesus is He's the god man son of God with power by the resurrection of the dead.

But according to the flesh, he's also the Sun of David and David's forever, shelter and forever dwelling, place and forever, inheritance and forever. Praise comes by faith in Jesus Christ, the Sun who was promised the Redeemer king, who was promised to come from him and for us as well, all of these forever blessings and benefits that we have from God.

Our Christ's my right? And they become hours in Him. He they we come into the right of them through faith. And we come into the possession of them in the last day at the resurrection, in, in particular. And so, so we have all of these. These benefits verse 7.

The translation prepare is not quite as helpful because it's using a word that means to count out and it's connected to the word heritage. In verse 5, I think in the way the word picture is used here. It's God. Counting out the inheritance. Here you are. Here's your inheritance.

And what does the inheritance? It's hesitant emit Translated here, mercy in truth but it's it's God's covenanted love and his enduring faithfulness as I said and his Emmett and the picture at the end of first seven is God counting it out and how long will it take to count out The covenanted love of God?

And how much of it each one who is in Christ is due as his his inheritance, How long will it take to count out the enduring? You can even hear the word enduring faithfulness of God himself. That is that belongs to one? Who is who is in Christ, indeed, we will enjoy the character of God, his covenant, and love, and his enduring faithfulness.

We will endure enjoy forever. And this is what we vow to do. Then David circumstances haven't changed in the midst of this psalm, but he has found that God is as primary circumstance. And so the Psalm begins crying out because his heart is overwhelmed, but ends with him making and paying or beginning to pay will pay the vow forever, right?

If you about to praise forever then the payment never never gets finished making a vowel and beginning to pay the vow to praise. God's name. Forever. Many a believer has had the Paul and Silas in the Philippian jail experience which yeah, they were singing Psalms in the jail, right?

I don't know how long they got the same. Psalms before the, the angel earthquake breakout thing. But maybe. Yeah, they got to 61 or went out of order included 61, but praise God. That's been the experience of many believers in the Bible and many believers for thousands of years since the Bible.

And when the Lord brings you through something, don't think that your life is going to be easy. If you do then you haven't been paying attention to your Bible either. And the Lord brings you through something that overwhelms your heart look to him to bring you quickly to the point where you are vowing to praise because you have found out that he's just your refuge even in the midst of it.

Let's pray.

Our father, how we thank you for your great mercy to us that you have given us. This Psalm in your word that you've given us your whole word and that you've given us to worship you together, and to spend some time dwelling upon and thinking about applying to our lives.

And this particular part of it O Lord make us to know you as our permanent dwelling place as our permanent shelter as our permanent inheritance and stir up our hearts to give you praise. That is as permanent it is as enduring. There's all of the benefits that you have made ours in Christ because you have made yourself ours in Christ.

O, Lord, forgive us. When the rubbish of created things starts to have any sort of comparison to your eternal weight of glory in possessing you and enjoying you glorifying you thank you for all the good that you have added to us but make our delight and joy and safety and identity to be entirely and you O God.

We ask it in Jesus name. Amen.