

Psalm 62: A Song of Trust

Setting of the Psalm

As in Psalm 103, the superscription does not contextualize the poem for us and, so, I read it as a limitless expression pain and confidence by David that is timeless and enduring. David was facing some undisclosed turmoil and turns to God as His refuge.

It is addressed to Jeduthun (Ethan), a Levitical musician who served in divine worship (I Chron. 16:41-42). Thus, the poem was to be set a musical score to be sung with the accompaniment of “trumpets and cymbals.”

Theme of the Psalm

As such, the poem is part of the worship expressing confidence in the Lord for His protective mercies and strength. This Psalm, it is believed, was, in part, the inspiration for Augustus Toplady’s widely sung “Rock of Ages,” composed in 1763.” The poem is an expression of David’s trust, but also is instructive for us. When “enemies” assault us, we are to rest in God!

Key Words in the Psalm

From cataloguing the words in the psalm, it seems right to conclude that turning to the Lord in our troubles is not at all foolish because of His character and commitments to His children, even when the times are confusing.

Descriptions of God:

“Fortress:” v. 6

“Hope:” v. 5

“Love:” v. 12

“Mighty rock:” v. 7

“Power:” v. 11

“Refuge:” vv. 7, 8

“Rock:” v. 2, 6, 7

“Reward:” v. 12

“Salvation (here meaning temporal deliverance):” vv. 1, 2, 6, 7

Descriptions of our duty to God:

“Pour out your hearts:” v. 8

“Rest:” vv. 1, 5

“Trust:” v. 8

Descriptions of what we should not do:”

Think that people always act in our best interest, v. 4

Think that people are incapable of being double-tongued and act in their best interest over ours, v.4

Think that status in life and trustworthiness are synonyms v. 9

Think that status and credibility go hand-in-hand, v. 9

Think that difficult times relieves us of doing what is right, justifying doing what is otherwise wrong, v. 10

Structure of the Psalm

The psalm’s literary structure explains the artistry, the chiasmic framing, of the author, as well as his focus. Sometimes called an “inverted parallelism,” it is composed of themes that are repeated with the point of emphasis between the inversions.

In the Hebrew of the poem, the word “only,” “surely,” or “truly” begins six of the twelve verses. Faith alone is true that rests in God alone! This the psalm has been frequently designated as the “Only Psalm.”

Within a chiasm, the center is the point that is emphasized, the focus.

Confidence in the Lord, vv. 1-2

Weakness of Humanity, vv. 3-4

Deliverance in the Lord, vv. 5-7

Trust the Lord, not People, vv. 8-10

Confidence in the Lord, vv. 11-12

Survey of the Psalms

As stated above, the Psalm is an exclamation of praise, as well as instruction, to the people of God to be encouraged by God’s mercies as David had been that God is faithful to deliver His people.

I. David’s confidence in the Lord, vv. 1-2

A. The exclusiveness of David’s trust, v. 1

The word “rest” means “calmness” and “peace (the phrase is repeated in v. 5 which is the central testimony of David in the Psalm). The Hebrew is more literally translated, “Only in God is my soul silence.” Trust, repose, tranquility is only as sure as the object of trust (he later says that trust in mankind for deliverance is problematic because the character of mankind is far inferior to the Lord’s (vv. 4, 9-10). One has appropriately stated, “Waiting is nothing else but hope and trust lengthened.” Luther said it this way,

*Bear and forbear, and silent be,
Tell to no man thy misery;
Yield not in trouble to dismay,
God can deliver any day.*

B. The basis of David's trust, v. 2a

How can any of us wait in silence, when we want to scream in frustration, when our world seems to be falling apart, when our hopes fade? Panic, unsettledness, fear comes when our focus is placed on the potential consequences of our troubles (we think like this: "Because this is happening, far worse is likely to happen").

Why could David express calmness? Simply put, he knew the character of His God. He uses two metaphors to express it.

"Rock" means that which is stable and secure.

"Fortress" means the place of safety from harm. We are safe behind thick and walls massive towers. It means impregnable!

"Salvation," both here and in v. 1, means temporal deliverance.

C. The fruit of David's trust, v. 2b

Just as a warrior is protected by fortifications, so is David's confidence in the Lord. "I will never be shaken."

II. David's difficult circumstance, vv. 3-4

While the particular threat from which David was delivered is uncertain, it involved the duplicity of those he knew (and they knew him). Was it the treachery of Absalom and the cursing violence of Shimei, the Benjaminite who sought vengeance, blaming David for Saul's demise (II Sam. 16:7-8)? Was it the

betrayal of the people of Keilah whom David rescued from the Philistines (I Sam. 23: 1-14)?

A. The threat, vv. 3-4a

Whatever the event may have been, David was seen as weak and vulnerable like something ready to collapse.

B. The subterfuge, v. 4b

This was clearly the case of the people of Keilah, who capitulated to Saul, Shimei seeking revenge, or Absalom's rebellion. Lies and duplicity characterized the actions of all three. They delighted in error (Keilah's was ingratitude and fear; Shimei's was revenge; Absalom's was arrogance and rebellion).

III. David's Grand Affirmation, vv. 5-7

A. The source of rest, v. 5

This is the literary center of the poem; it is a repetition of v. 1.

B. The ground of rest, v. 6

This verse is a repetition of v. 2; again, it marks his emphasis. Instead of "my salvation comes from Him," David uses the phrase "my hope comes from the Lord." The terms are synonyms; both come from the Lord. My deliverance, salvation, is the same as hope; it is assured!

C. The cause of rest, v. 7

David again affirms that the Lord was his source of safety and security (rock), deliverance (salvation), and refuge (fortress). The word "refuge" literally means "shelter from danger."

IV. David's instruction to God's people, vv. 8-10

The audience shifts from David's personal testimony ("my," v. 1, 2 [2x], 5 [2x], 6, 7 [4x], "I," v. 2, 6) to instruction ("you," v.8; "your," v. 8, 10 [2x]) of God's people.

A. Focus on the Lord, v. 8

1. The command, v. 8a-b

The commands are two: “trust” and “pour out.” The first term means “to reply upon” or “to cast upon” and the second means to pray. *Here is our clue in these days: trust and petition the Lord for your concerns!! This is for David, the people, and for us. We are not to be merely passive when it hurts; we are to cry out to God!*

2. The reason, v. 8c

What a thought: “God is *our* refuge,” our shelter.

B. The peril of turning to man, v. 9

This verse parallels vv. 3-4; both instances concern human frailty and deceptive ways. Mankind will disappoint, but God never will (His character is righteous and, consequently, all His actions are in conformity to His personhood. God defines ethics by His character). It is simply foolish to trust in humans without caution and evidence; none of us are above prejudice, blindness, and cruelty.

“Lowborn...highborn” refers to status in society.

Accomplishment, even respect by others, does not deliver anyone from their fallen, blighted capacities. *We have all been stabbed on the back, so to speak!*

“Breath...lies” suggest temporalities and inconsistency. *Here today and gone tomorrow,*” so to speak.

“Weighed” suggests emptiness, weightless-ness, that which passes without significance. “Breath” is found twice in this verse.

C. The folly of self-created schemes, v. 10

David turns from the action of others in times of crisis to the tendency of the troubled to devise their own ways of escape.

We are as problematic as our problematic friends. Our troubles are accentuated from without and within.

1. The command, v. 10a-b

The instruction here is captured in the parallel terms, “extortion” and “stolen goods.” We steal when we take what is not our right to possess (i.e., selfish hording, selfish demands). *Difficulties are no excuse for doing what is wrong to protect ourselves. Yet, we legitimize actions by invoking extreme circumstances and personal rights.*

2. The warning, v. 10c

While extortion may have temporal benefit, it is a false ground for security. Ill-gotten gain leaves behind a trouble conscience. *“Be sure your sins will find you out!”*

V. David’s final words, vv. 11-12

In the first of the two lessons, David speaks of God (“God has spoken and I have heard”); in the second, he speaks of what he learned through the experience

A. Trust God to deliver, vv. 11-12a

God taught David two great lessons through his trouble (the first lesson has two components): first, God is sovereign; all power belongs to God. Even in times of turmoil; control has not been taken from the Lord *and* all of God’s actions toward us are a fruit of His love for us which will never fail.

B. Trust I, God's justice, v. 12b

The second lesson is that God is not unmindful of our struggles. God knows. Rest in Him, awaiting His timing, and we will be rewarded when He delivers us (and He will). My mind takes me to the lyrics of "In His Time (author unknown)." Therein is our rest!

In His time, In His Time
He makes all things beautiful in His time.
Lord please show me every day
As You're teaching me Your way
That You do just what You say
In Your time.

In Your time, In Your Time
You make all things beautiful in Your time.
Lord my life to You I bring
May each song I have to sing
Be to you a lovely thing
In Your time.