



## The Art of Waiting - Psalm 62

This is another one of David's epic psalms, i.e., a worship song. The lyrics were given to Jeduthun who was one of Israel's three chief musicians or choir leaders (1 Chr 16:41-42, 25:1-3, 6; 2 Chr 5:12). Three psalms were given to Jeduthun in total (Ps 39; 62; 77).

While the historical background to this psalm is not known, verse 4 tells us it was written during a time of great stress, pain, and opposition in David's life. David mentions deceit and treachery – his enemies had been disguising as his friends, *'They bless with their mouth, but inwardly they curse. Selah.'*

### 1. Looking to God Alone (v1-2)

- (a) This psalm opens with an emphasis on surrender. The keyword and the first word is אַח (ach), which means truly, only, alone, etc. *'My soul silently waits for God...I shall not be greatly moved.'* In Hebrew text, the word 'only/alone' occurs 5 times in v1-6, then again in v9. It is an emphasis, underlining, and contrast by repetition.
- (b) It is not a psalm of activity, but quietness. This psalm is about 'the art of waiting.' To wait is a hard thing to do for most people. Nobody wants to wait for somebody to turn up. Waiting is the job of less important people who must wait for those more important than they. We want God to just turn up without us having to wait for Him. When you are betrayed, offended, and in pain, that is the most difficult time to be silently waiting. Betrayal produces in our soul an intense desire for immediate vindication. It is in this context David says, *'Truly my soul silently waits for God...'* (v1)
- (c) Why does God keep David waiting?  
'This is why God keeps you waiting. All that is of self and nature must be silent; one voice after another cease to boast; one light after another be put out; until the soul is shut up to God alone.' (F.B. Meyer)
- (d) Here is something unique about this psalm. It is a petition-less psalm. David is in great pain and in need of God's answer and vindication. But strangely he does not petition God to do anything. This psalm simply ends with David pinning all his expectations and hopes on God and God alone.

### 2. In Betrayal and Pain (v3-4)

This provides the context of the psalm and what David is feeling inside. *'How long will you attack a man (i.e., attack David)? You shall be slain, all of you (plural), like a leaning wall or tottering fence.'* Who is the leaning wall and tottering fence? It looks like it is David. But in fact, it is David's enemies who are about to collapse all of a sudden.

David's pain of betrayal is heightened by the fact that his betrayers are liars, i.e., two-faced hypocrites. *'They bless with their mouth, but they curse inwardly. Selah.'* Selah means 'pause for a moment to think about it.'

### 3. Pin All Your Hopes on God Alone (v5-7)

David tells his soul to stay focused on God. He doesn't want to be overwhelmed by focusing on his enemies who were actively against him. So, David speaks to himself, *'My soul, wait silently for God alone...'* He unpacks what this little word 'alone' means to him: *'For my expectation is from Him (not the men I trusted and who betrayed me). He only is my rock and my salvation. He is my defence.'*

This was the key to David's confidence - 'to truly learn to pin all our hopes and expectations on God who is totally reliable, rather than on unreliable men.' 'They trust not God at all who trust him not alone.' (John Trapp)

In verse 2, David confesses, *'I shall not be greatly moved.'* In verse 6 he says, *'I shall not be moved.'*

- (a) David made a decision - he will wait for God alone. And in the process of waiting, David moved all his hopes and expectation from people and the systems around him to God alone. David refused to trust anything or anyone else, just God alone.
- (b) David spoke to his discouraged self and made a personal confession of faith in God

#### 4. Sevenfold Confession of David

- (i) God is my hope or expectation (v5).
- (ii) God is my rock or stability (v2, 6, 7).
- (iii) God is my salvation or deliverance (v1, 2, 6-7).
- (iv) God is my glory (v7).
- (v) God is my strength (v11).
- (vi) God is my refuge (v7-8).
- (vii) God alone is the source of steadfast love and mercy for me (v12).

David is not content to simply know theologically that the Lord is all these things. He actively releases his faith by laying claim to who God is to him. God is 'MY' ... This is the core and the centre of David's faith – he has an intensely personal relationship with God. David's faith stood out from among many Israelites of his day who also believed in Yahweh. David continually connected his daily challenges and needs to God in a personal way through prayer. And indeed, God became truly all these things to David in the hour of his need and weakness.

#### 5. Healing Flows to Others (v8)

- (a) David's attention now turns to help other people after he has found the new strength in God. He turns around to proclaim to anyone in great need or pain, *'Trust in Him at all times, you people. Pour out your heart before Him. God is a refuge for us.'* (v7) Selah - pause to think and personalise this truth like David.
- (b) David is saying, 'This works for me. This will work for you also.' What worked for David? *'Pour out your heart before Him.'* The Hebrew word 'שָׁפַךְ' (shaphak) describes the pouring out of the blood of the sacrifice at the base of the altar. It also describes the promise of the outpouring of the Spirit in the last days. What a powerful picture of prayer!
- (c) David goes on to say, *'God is a refuge for US.'* God is the best insurance policy we can have without money, to live in the last days. David confesses, *'And my refuge, is in God.'* (v7) There is great interest and uptake of nuclear bunkers among the ultra-rich people today. But God alone is the true refuge for all those who trust in Him.

#### 6. Men are Just a Breath (v9-10)

- (a) David reinforces the same thought in a negative form. Why should you not put your trust in men? There is no substance and reliability in human beings that are worthy of putting our trust. The Hebrew word is repeated three times here: הֶבֶל (hevel, v9-10) means 'vanity', 'breath' or 'vainly hope', 'vapour' (NSAB, JPS, KJV). Some Arabic Bible translates it as 'shadow.' We find it so easy to trust in the human strength of people we can see, rather than in God whom we cannot see. David says that we have nothing to gain from men, and we have nothing to fear from men. Men, though they may seem powerful, are nothing but a 'breath, vapour, vanity, shadow, and a lie, etc.' The name Abel has the same root word. He only lived a very brief life on earth.

*Jer 17:7-8, 'Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD, and whose hope is the LORD. For he shall be like a tree planted by the waters, which spreads out its roots by the river, and will not fear when heat comes; but its leaf will be green, and will not be anxious in the year of drought, nor will cease from yielding fruit.'*

- (b) The rich and powerful people may have clout around them, but it is a lie and a vanity. If God does not build your house, you have nothing! Unless a man receives from the Lord, he can have nothing permanently. David has seen men advance through the ranks quickly by using evil means. But it was for such a brief moment – just like a breath. It was empty. The unshakable security for God's people is in continual trust in God alone.
- (c) *'If God blesses you and your riches increase, do not set your heart on them.'* Taking your eyes off of God and putting them on His blessings will be a sure way down. Learn to set your heart on God alone at all times.

David started in life as a poor shepherd boy from nowhere, despised by even his family. Then he was promoted to the king's court, only to become a fugitive of Israel for 15 years until eventually, he became the king of Israel. David had been both down and out, as well as up and mighty. From having nothing to having everything. And he found it was utterly foolish to trust in the earthly riches that pass away. When is it easier to trust God? When you have very little? Or when you have much? We'd better learn to trust God when we have little.

## **7. To God belongs Power, Mercy and Justice (v11-12)**

Out of the time of 'waiting on God' something happened to David, which altered his outlook on life. David heard God clearly. *'God has spoken once, twice I have heard this.'* God's voice thundered (reverberated) through David's soul:

- (i) *'Power belongs to God.'* God holds our future, no one else. That is why we can forgive others when they fail us and betray us. No man can truly give us anything. No man can truly take away anything. God alone is to be feared and obeyed. How freeing it is!
- (ii) *'Also, to You, O LORD belongs mercy.'* The wonderful Hebrew word 'חֶסֶד' means covenantal faithfulness and love.

*'This is faithful saying: For if we died with Him, we shall also live with Him. If we endure, we shall also reign with Him. If we deny Him, He also will deny us. If we are faithless, He remains faithful: He cannot deny Himself.'* (2 Tim 2:11-13).

- (iii) *'For You render to each one according to his work.'* C.f. *'And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work.'* (Rev 22:12 C.f. Romans 2:6).

Our God is the God of power, love, and justice.

## **8. What happens to us during the time of waiting?**

*Is 64:4 - 'For since the beginning of the world men have not heard or perceived by the ear, nor has the eye seen any God besides You, who acts on behalf of the one who waits for Him.'*

- (i) Waiting tests and refines our faith and character, producing meekness and brokenness. Abraham waited 25 years for the promised son Moses waited 40 years in the wilderness to deliver Israel (Num 12:3). David waited 15 years in the wilderness to become Israel's king, Saul had no waiting period.

It was the years of waiting for God that produced the meekness and the brokenness in them. Our wrestling is not with men, but with God Himself.

- (ii) Is 40:28-31 contrasts men's weakness against divine power. Youth represents natural human strength, but it is not enough. When we wait for the Lord, we renew our strength. We exchange our human weakness with God's divine strength. When we come to the end of ourselves, then God's strength can manifest in us.

There are three pictures of strength - mounting up, running and walking. Which is the most challenging? It is walking - the daily plodding.

- (iii) Apostle Paul's testimony in 2 Cor 12:7-10 was *'...My power is made perfect in your weakness...'*

Have you realised that it is the place of your weakness that God's strength can be made manifest?