

PSALMS

Chapter 62

For God alone my soul waits in silence; from him comes my salvation. ²He alone is my rock and my salvation, my fortress; I shall not be greatly shaken. ³How long will all of you attack a man to batter him, like a leaning wall, a tottering fence? ⁴They only plan to thrust him down from his high position. They take pleasure in falsehood. They bless with their mouths, but inwardly they curse. *Selah* ⁵For God alone, O my soul, wait in silence, for my hope is from him. ⁶He only is my rock and my salvation, my fortress; I shall not be shaken. ⁷On God rests my salvation and my glory; my mighty rock, my refuge is God. ⁸Trust in him at all times, O people; pour out your heart before him; God is a refuge for us. *Selah* ⁹Those of low estate are but a breath; those of high estate are a delusion; in the balances they go up; they are together lighter than a breath. ¹⁰Put no trust in extortion; set no vain hopes on robbery; if riches increase, set not your heart on them. ¹¹Once God has spoken; twice have I heard this: that power belongs to God, ¹²and that to you, O Lord, belongs steadfast love. For you will render to a man according to his work.

Ps 62 The psalmist commits himself to God when threatened by the assaults of conspirators who wish to dethrone him. The author surely was a king and, if it was David, the circumstances could well have been the efforts of the family of Saul to topple him. Verse 3 suggests a time of weakness and may indicate advanced age. Implicitly the psalm is an appeal to God to uphold him. No psalm surpasses it in its expression of simple trust in God (see Ps 31 and introduction to Ps 61). The psalm is composed of three parts: vv. 1–4, 5–8, 9–12. The middle stanza (vv. 5–8), which begins by echoing vv. 1–2, constitutes the central expression of trust and hope. The whole is framed by a confession of tranquil resting in God (vv. 1–2) and the reason for such trust (vv. 11–12). The remaining verses (vv. 3–4, 9–10) speak of those who threaten. (CSB)

Hymn of peace and confidence in God, who alone provides security and hope. David does not identify the historical context, but the wisdom embodied in the psalm and the hint of weakness in v 3 suggest a time late in David's life (cf 2Sm 23:1–7). *choirmaster*. See p 993. *Jeduthun*. Either the name of a musician (or his family; cf 1Ch 25:1; Ps 39 intro) or a tune associated with him (cf 77:1). (TLSB)

Format: Vv 1–2, only God brings salvation; vv 3–4, enemy plan; vv 5–7, on God rests salvation; v 8, appeal to trust God; vv 9–10, life is unsure; vv 11–12, power and love belong to God. (TLSB)

This psalm is the first of a series of seven “psalms” in the strict sense of the term. “For Jeduthum” might better be translated “according to the style of Jedthum,” the temple musician. (PBC)

This psalm piles one figurative description of God on another to give a rich list of God's attributes. (A Commentary on the Psalms - Ross)

62:1–4 Confidence in God in the face of conspiracy. (CSB)

62:1 *My soul* – In this verse refers to the psalmist's entire being. (CSB)

waits in silence – Lit. “is silence,” i.e., is in repose. (CSB)

Calm attitude produced by confidence and peace in the Lord. (TLSB)

Because he turned wholeheartedly unto his God in total submission he found that peace and quiet in the inmost soul were still possible. (Leupold)

my salvation – Means the salvation of me. He is convinced that God will deliver him, and so states that his salvation, here is a deliverance from his enemies, comes from God. (A Commentary on the Psalms - Ross)

62:2 *my rock...fortress* – The picture of God as a rock of protection connects this psalm with the preceding one. Since God is David's fortress, it is futile for his enemies to try to overthrow him, even though he himself is as weak as a tottering wall. (PBC)

Translates two terms: Hbr *sela'*, "rock" or "cliff face"; Hbr *tsur*, "massive rock" or "boulder." Psalms use the terms interchangeably for a place of refuge or hiding. The Lord is "the Rock of my salvation" (89:26). (TLSB p. 843)

62:2, 6 *shaken* – Disturb my well-being, unsettle my security. (CSB)

Assaults may be made upon him; they may cause him some disquietude; but he will not shaken, that he knows with supreme confidence. Faith's battles are never finished, nor does struggle depart from our life. (Leupold)

62:3 Question to the assailants: Will you never give up? (CSB)

The enemies are cowardly bullies who boldly attack the weak. They are envious of their superiors and eager to attack those in lofty positions. They are the opposite of the godly who strengthen the weak and rejoice with those who have been richly blessed. Though the enemies practice hypocrisy, their schemes will not succeed. (PBC)

leaning wall ... tottering fence – A metaphor for David's fragile condition: either (1) a confession that he has no strength in himself, or (2) an acknowledgment that he is in a weakened condition—or, perhaps, (3) a reflection on how his enemies perceive him, a "pushover." (CSB)

Stone walls and fences are weakened by the passing seasons; so, too, are rulers. (TLSB)

62:4 *high position* – Throne. (CSB)

The rich and powerful suffer the same fate as the weak and vulnerable. If anything, by virtue of their high position the powerful attract even more enemies than do common people. (TLSB)

falsehood... curse – Many ancient Near Eastern peoples thought that by pronouncing curses on someone they could bring down the power of the gods (or other mysterious powers) on that person. They had a large conventional stock of such curses. (CSB)

Enemies speak well of their victims to their face while seeking their destruction. (TLSB)

bles – For example, "Long live the king" (1Sa 10:24; 2Sa 16:16; see also 1Ki 1:25, 34, 39). (CSB)

Calling down misfortune on another by magical incantations or other supernatural means (cf 10:7; curses, lies, and threats were used as weapons by the enemy). (TLSB – Note from 59:12)

Selah – Hebrew; untranslatable. Mainly in the first two books of Psalms. Probably refers to the accompaniment of the harps during the psalm. (TLSB p. 993)

This often occurs in the middle of a psalm and which apparently signals an interlude. “The Sela indicates that one must be still and quickly think through the words of the psalm; for they demand a quiet and restful soul, which can grasp and hold to that which the Holy Spirit there presents and offers” (Luther). (Psalms – The Prayer Book of the Bible – Dietrich Bonhoeffer p. 23)

Selah may be a musical notation. It could also be a point where a pause is desirable for the singer or reader of the psalm in order that the statement last made or the thought as a whole just developed may be reflected upon before the next turn of the thought appears. (Leupold)

62:5–8 Trust in God: an exhortation to himself (v. 5) and to the people (v. 8). (CSB)

He warns against two undependable sources of help. Don’t trust in people as your ultimate source of help. They are too short-lived and fickle to be a dependable help. Riches are undependable and fleeting, whether they are gained by honest or dishonest means. (PBC)

62:5 *wait in silence* – faith encouraging faith (see 27:13–14; 42:5, 11; 43:5). (CSB)

Psalmist addresses his soul, based on vv 1–2. (TLSB)

Whereas in the first section complete resignation to God’s will was asserted, in this section it is prayed for. (Leupold)

62:6 *rock...fortress...salvation* – Once again he is sure that he will not be moved in his faith. He might become agitated or impatient, and so calms himself in his contemplation of the nature of God. (A Commentary on the Psalms - Ross)

62:7 *glory* – David’s honor and reputation rest in God’s powerful hands just as his life and throne do. (TLSB)

62:8 Exhortation to God’s people (see 31:23–24). (CSB)

A man like David could not help but feel that each new spiritual experience put him under obligation to share as much of it as he could with his people, especially the godly among men. (Leupold)

pour out your hearts. In earnest prayer (see La 2:19). (CSB)

Author calls upon God’s people to pray openly and honestly, turning to God for help in every need. St Francis of Assisi: “Do not therefore keep back anything for yourselves that He may receive you entirely who gives Himself up entirely to you” (WSFA 115). (TLSB)

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Note 4:7 CSB – In Biblical language the center of the human spirit, from which spring emotions, thought, motivations, courage and action—“the wellspring of life” (Pr 4:23).

62:9–12 Frail, misguided man; mighty, trustworthy God. (CSB)

62:9–10 Man, as a threat, is nothing – Who is not God and so constitutes no ultimate threat. (CSB)

62:9 *Low estate ... high estate* – Persons of every condition. (CSB)

Lit, “sons of man ... sons of [a noble] man.” Whether from the lower or upper classes, poor or rich, unknown or famous, our time on earth is fleeting. What the world thinks is important is a waste of time. (TLSB)

in balances – If accurately measured, the priorities and values of the world are worthless. Ancient scales had two pans balanced against each other (Jb 31:6). (TLSB)

breath ... delusion – People appear to be much more than a puff of wind, especially the rich and powerful. (CSB)

62:10 A warning to those (including those conspiring against him) who trust in their own devices to get what they want (by fair means or foul) rather than trusting in God to sustain them—a virtual summary of Ps 49. (CSB)

Material goods, acquired legally or illegally, must pass away. “You can’t take it with you.” (TLSB)

62:11–12 The climax: recollection of God’s reassuring word to his people. (CSB)

power ... steadfast love – Able to do all that he has promised; committed to his people’s salvation and blessedness. (CSB)

God has the power to condemn or to save, and, because He loves us, He wants to save us. (TLSB)

David concludes with a meditation on two attributes of God of God which are a comfort to believers. God is almighty, but he uses this power to protect his people, not to crush them. God is loving and faithful, and he has the power to fulfill his loving promises for his people. These two characteristics combined give God’s people peace and comfort in every circumstance. (PBC)

62:11 *Once... twice* – For their many sins, especially the one named. (CSB)

Vivid way of emphasizing the certainty of the statement that follows. (TLSB)

I heard – Throughout David’s life, God spoke to him and through him by the Holy Spirit (cf 2Sm 23:2). (TLSB)

62:12 *Surely*.† Ultimately every person will experience God’s justice. (CSB)

according to his work – Lit. “the fruit of his deeds.” (CSB)

Those who trust in him will find that he will repay them, no matter what happened in this life. (A Commentary on the Psalms - Ross)

Ps 62 Wealth deceives people by promising happiness. In the end, wealth, power, and fame turn out to be lies because they do not deliver what they seem to promise. Even when our lives fall apart, our center and foundation hold firm: Nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord (Rm 8:38–39). • “The Church’s one foundation Is Jesus Christ, her Lord; She is His new creation By water and the Word. From heav’n He came and sought her To be His holy bride; With His own blood He bought her, And for her life He died.” Amen. (*LSB* 644:1) (TLSB)