

Afar Off Upon the Sea

Psalms 61:1 – 66:20

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~ Our Spiritual Safari camel train arrives at yet another wonderful oasis on the burning sands of the desert of Psalms; and this one is also comprised of a cluster of short Psalms that belong together in a group. Our last report were all Michtam Psalms; but this new series contains beautifully arranged pleadings of a Godly man expressing his steadfast confidence in the Lord. The Lord Jesus Christ makes appearance after appearance in these six Psalms; and Jesus will bring a help for us here as nowhere else in the Bible!

As we have stressed again and again, these Psalms are a prophetic vision David had in the experiences of his own immediate life; experiences that concern the Godly remnant of the nation Israel during the Great Tribulation period. If we can keep that thought before us, we can reason from truth to experience; and not the other way around. Doing so will also make these Psalms so much more real and interesting to our hearts as the pages of Scripture literally come alive....

LXII ~ (To the chief Musician upon Neginah, A Psalm of David)

1 Hear my cry, O God; attend unto my prayer.

2 From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I.

3 For thou hast been a shelter for me, and a strong tower from the enemy.

4 I will abide in thy tabernacle for ever: I will trust in the covert of thy wings. Selah.

5 For thou, O God, hast heard my vows: thou hast given me the heritage of those that fear thy name.

6 Thou wilt prolong the king's life: and his years as many generations.

Psalms 61:1 – 66:20

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7 He shall abide before God for ever: O prepare mercy and truth, which may preserve him.

8 So will I sing praise unto thy name for ever, that I may daily perform my vows.

~ Psalm sixty-one is a prayer of David as his heart cries out in a genuine and real way. This Psalm was played on a stringed instrument – maybe a guitar – and the message has mourning inextricably intertwined. Most modern prayer meetings have a very bad stereotype attached to them of being as dead as a cemetery stone and uninteresting as a dog chasing its tail. Most modern prayers seem to be nothing but a grocery list of things we want and expect God to go do for us. If God will go run our errands, then we won't have to account for our works; meaning we won't have to pay for anything. That is the second problem in prayer today. The first problem is unconfessed sins.

Now, I believe in mechanics and organization of prayers; but, even so, prayer has to come from deep within the heart. We just don't usually hear those types of prayers anymore. We need more of a feeling of addressing God our Father from the ends of the earth. Obviously, David felt as if he was *way* down in that kind of bad place in this Psalm – way down, far away, and over the hills from the Lord. This is a very real attempt by David to draw near to the Lord in prayer.

Most of you readers know I am totally and completely opposed to the contemporary viewpoint of Jesus. I don't care for the plays, books or movies that drag God into a ridiculously shallow plot — because Jesus isn't some sort of Hollywood superstar! That's just not the picture the Word of God presents. The God of Hollywood is just another man like me. I need a Rock who is higher than myself. In the Word of God, Jesus is the Rock that is higher than mankind. That's the only Rock on which a legitimate church can be built today, too, by the way. The movies portraying God as some sort of a spiritual concierge in an absurdly imagined hotel of perfection is, well, it's absolutely contrary to the Scriptures, my friends. God is a strong tower – not hired help.

David made vows and promises to the Lord — because the Lord was so good to Him. Do you ever make promises to God? I've made more promises to God than I have delivered; I know that — but we seem to go to God continually asking for stuff — so, do you ever promise anything in return? David did! Well, those promises will take us closer to God; but not by bringing Him down to our level. No, those promises will lift up the Lord Jesus Christ, and cause us to recognize our rightful position in servitude. That's when Christ draws all men unto Himself.

Isaiah found himself falling at His feet as dead! I know most people think they are going to run up and hug Jesus and pat Him on the back for being so sweet and loving — but I have news for them: they're going to bow down before Him on all four limbs with their face to the ground. That's what's real, my friends; and that's the position we get in as we draw closer and closer to God. Make your vows and sing praises to Him — and then bow down to Him in a sincere, educated, and Spirit-filled Bible study — and He will then help you fulfill your promises....

✠✠✠ ~ (To the chief Musician, to Jeduthun, A Psalm of David)

1 Truly my soul waiteth upon God: from him cometh my salvation.

2 He only is my rock and my salvation; he is my defence; I shall not be greatly moved.

3 How long will ye imagine mischief against a man? ye shall be slain all of you: as a bowing wall shall ye be, and as a tottering fence.

4 They only consult to cast him down from his excellency: they delight in lies: they bless with their mouth, but they curse inwardly. Selah.

5 My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from him.

6 He only is my rock and my salvation: he is my defence; I shall not be moved.

7 In God is my salvation and my glory: the rock of my strength, and my refuge, is in God.

8 Trust in him at all times; ye people, pour out your heart before him: God is a refuge for us. Selah.

9 Surely men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lie: to be laid in the balance, they are altogether lighter than vanity.

10 Trust not in oppression, and become not vain in robbery: if riches increase, set not your heart upon them.

11 God hath spoken once; twice have I heard this; that power belongeth unto God.

12 Also unto thee, O Lord, belongeth mercy: for thou renderest to every man according to his work.

~ Here is another simple Psalm of faith; revealing confidence in God that resembles a child's faith in his parents. Just as Psalm thirty-nine was, this is to the chief musician Jeduthun. Psalm sixty-two is a very personal Psalm; and there is a book by Dr. J Vernon McGee entitled "*The Only Psalm*" – all about this one! I suggest you get a copy of it if you can. Naturally, there are one hundred forty-nine Psalms beside this one; but the way the word "*only*" is used in this Psalm is significant. "*Only*" appears again and again and again! The first word "*truly*" is really another "*only*;" and the first verse is better translated as "*my soul waiteth only upon God and only upon His salvation.*" Then, "*only*" also occurs in verse nine; as "*surely*" should be translated "*only.*"

There are deeply profound lessons to be learned if we will bother to pray for wisdom, judgment and discernment — and then read this Psalm again, slowly and carefully. This Psalm presents faith in God nobly asserted and victoriously triumphant, as nowhere else in Scripture. This Psalm is as forcible in its conception and language as it is remarkable for the cheerfulness and piety it breathes. David calls God his Rock, his Salvation, his Defense, his Expectation and his Refuge! The personal pronouns "*my*"

and “I” are used sixteen times in just five of the verses of this Psalm. That makes it as personal and possessive as it can be, my friends. In verse two and six, David repeats that God is his Rock, his salvation and his defense. If God is our Defense, then what enemy would be stupid enough to pursue us? If God is our Salvation, then what temptation could ever move us, and what melancholy could ever deject us? If God is David’s Rock and our Rock, what storm could ever shake us?

See, friends, if those types of things are your problem, only God can deliver you. If Satan is battering you with an onslaught of fiery arrows, only God is an adequate shield! If the world is shaking you with perplexities, then you can lay hold on the truth of the Word of God, because the Rock of the Word of God is inerrant, never moves, never changes — and never even trembles. All of that is simply stated in this short little Psalm as David pours out his heart empty.

There are so many people today who are wound tighter than a funeral drum in a prayer meeting and church service; they feel pressure in their prayers to say the right words and the right thing. Of course, public prayer is alright – don’t get me wrong – but let me suggest that you get alone somewhere quiet, turn off the telephone, and turn off the television, and kneel down before God, and take the lid off of those canned prayers. There is a time to put on the armor of God; and there is a time to take the armor off, too. It would do a lot of us good to just let ourself go naked into the presence of the Lord. He will provide a garment for you to cover up with. It’s literally the best tonic we can pour ourself; because we are pouring ourself out....

***LXDDD** ~ (A Psalm of David, when he was in the wilderness of Judah)*

1 O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is;

2 To see thy power and thy glory, so as I have seen thee in the sanctuary.

3 Because thy lovingkindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee.

4 Thus will I bless thee while I live: I will lift up my hands in thy name.

5 My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips:

6 When I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night watches.

7 Because thou hast been my help, therefore in the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice.

8 My soul followeth hard after thee: thy right hand upholdeth me.

9 But those that seek my soul, to destroy it, shall go into the lower parts of the earth.

10 They shall fall by the sword: they shall be a portion for foxes.

11 But the king shall rejoice in God; every one that sweareth by him shall glory: but the mouth of them that speak lies shall be stopped.

~ We're not going into too much detail in Psalm sixty-three; but it is an ointment to cleanse the spiritual wound and heal the soul. This is water to re-hydrate a thirsty spirit. It is a relative Psalm for the contemporary church, too. Someone has said not a day should pass without public singing of this Psalm in church. Tradition says this Psalm was sung by the early church every time they gathered. It would make a great way to begin a morning service, because only a real and genuine faith that knows for certain there is an eternally True and Living God can speak like this! Frankly, this Psalm transcends human thinking and understanding of God as our Creator, Redeemer and our Father in Heaven. When David was hiding from Saul in the wilderness of Engedi, he learned exactly what it meant to get thirsty. That area around the Dead Sea is some of the driest land in the world. Are you thirsty for God, or has He become a burden to you? For David, fellowship with God was better than a gourmet dinner....

℣. 20 ~ (To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David)

1 Hear my voice, O God, in my prayer: preserve my life from fear of the enemy.

2 Hide me from the secret counsel of the wicked; from the insurrection of the workers of iniquity:

3 Who whet their tongue like a sword, and bend their bows to shoot their arrows, even bitter words:

4 That they may shoot in secret at the perfect: suddenly do they shoot at him, and fear not.

5 They encourage themselves in an evil matter: they commune of laying snares privily; they say, Who shall see them?

6 They search out iniquities; they accomplish a diligent search: both the inward thought of every one of them, and the heart, is deep.

7 But God shall shoot at them with an arrow; suddenly shall they be wounded.

8 So they shall make their own tongue to fall upon themselves: all that see them shall flee away.

9 And all men shall fear, and shall declare the work of God; for they shall wisely consider of his doing.

10 The righteous shall be glad in the LORD, and shall trust in him; and all the upright in heart shall glory.

~ Psalm sixty-four cannot be placed in the history of David's life precisely; but it does belong in this cluster; and it is another prophetic Psalm that looks forward to the future for the Godly remnant of the nation Israel during the Great Tribulation period. Maybe you have noticed that Israel has a whole bunch of Psalms for *that day*; well, they're going to need every one of them. Of course, it is also a fine Psalm for you and me today. Do you

want God to hear you in your prayers? Do you want God to observe your life? Unfortunately, there are some so-called Christians that don't really want God to be watching them all the time. They only want God to see them at certain times. How tragic that really is.

Well, I want God to hide me from my enemy. Prayer is the only refuge David had – and prayer is the only refuge Andrew C. Hunt has. That's also the only refuge you have, friends. Prayer will be the only refuge the Godly remnant of the nation Israel has *in that day* of Great Tribulation. I look around the world today, and we have no hope in politics, science or education. If any of those things were the answer, then we wouldn't have any problems. All of those institutions have utterly failed mankind. We're going to have to start looking up now – looking for our Blessed Hope the Lord Jesus Christ – our redeemer and our salvation. Christ is our only hope; maybe He is trying to get you to look for Him a little more closely....

LXXV ~ (To the chief Musician, A Psalm and Song of David)

1 Praise waiteth for thee, O God, in Sion: and unto thee shall the vow be performed.

2 O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come.

3 Iniquities prevail against me: as for our transgressions, thou shalt purge them away.

4 Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts: we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple.

5 By terrible things in righteousness wilt thou answer us, O God of our salvation; who art the confidence of all the ends of the earth, and of them that are afar off upon the sea:

6 Which by his strength setteth fast the mountains; being girded with power:

7 Which stilleth the noise of the seas, the noise of their waves, and the tumult of the people.

8 They also that dwell in the uttermost parts are afraid at thy tokens: thou makest the outgoings of the morning and evening to rejoice.

9 Thou visitest the earth, and waterest it: thou greatly enrichest it with the river of God, which is full of water: thou preparest them corn, when thou hast so provided for it.

10 Thou waterest the ridges thereof abundantly: thou settlest the furrows thereof: thou makest it soft with showers: thou blessest the springing thereof.

11 Thou crownest the year with thy goodness; and thy paths drop fatness.

12 They drop upon the pastures of the wilderness: and the little hills rejoice on every side.

13 The pastures are clothed with flocks; the valleys also are covered over with corn; they shout for joy, they also sing.

~ Psalm sixty-five is a *restoration* Psalm; and in Acts chapter three verse twenty-one, we read, “.... whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.” Now, that doesn’t mean everyone is ultimately going to go to Heaven, as some people have so misguidedly interpreted it to mean. It means the restitution of all things that are to be there. Paul said, “.... I have suffered the loss of all things.” Well, Paul didn’t own everything in the world; he suffered the loss of those things he had to lose! The “*restitution*” means those things spoken of by the prophets – and they only spoke of *ONE* thing – those who love the Lord Jesus and the Word of God. *THOSE* are the things that will receive restitution and restoration.

By the way, Zion in verse one does *NOT* mean the Heavenly Zion, either, friends. No, Zion is a geographical place here on earth; and we’re not talking about Zion, Utah or Zion, Oklahoma – we’re talking about Mount

Zion, Israel. If you take an airplane to Jerusalem, and then start driving, you'll see signs with arrows all over the place that point the way to one particular Mount Zion. If you go up there, you won't be going to Heaven that day, I can promise you that. It is, actually, a difficult trip to make. Again, we're examining the redeemed Godly remnant of the nation Israel during the Great Tribulation period in this Psalm. Selah....

LXVI ~ (To the chief Musician, A Song or Psalm)

1 Make a joyful noise unto God, all ye lands:

2 Sing forth the honour of his name: make his praise glorious.

3 Say unto God, How terrible art thou in thy works! through the greatness of thy power shall thine enemies submit themselves unto thee.

4 All the earth shall worship thee, and shall sing unto thee; they shall sing to thy name. Selah.

5 Come and see the works of God: he is terrible in his doing toward the children of men.

6 He turned the sea into dry land: they went through the flood on foot: there did we rejoice in him.

7 He ruleth by his power for ever; his eyes behold the nations: let not the rebellious exalt themselves. Selah.

8 O bless our God, ye people, and make the voice of his praise to be heard:

9 Which holdeth our soul in life, and suffereth not our feet to be moved.

10 For thou, O God, hast proved us: thou hast tried us, as silver is tried.

11 Thou broughtest us into the net; thou laidst affliction upon our loins.

12 Thou hast caused men to ride over our heads; we went through fire and through water: but thou broughtest us out into a wealthy place.

13 I will go into thy house with burnt offerings: I will pay thee my vows,

14 Which my lips have uttered, and my mouth hath spoken, when I was in trouble.

15 I will offer unto thee burnt sacrifices of fatlings, with the incense of rams; I will offer bullocks with goats. Selah.

16 Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul.

17 I cried unto him with my mouth, and he was extolled with my tongue.

18 If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me:

19 But verily God hath heard me; he hath attended to the voice of my prayer.

20 Blessed be God, which hath not turned away my prayer, nor his mercy from me.

~ Alright, our Spiritual Safari concludes this leg of our expedition through the Book of Psalms, and through the entire Word of God, with a Psalm that we have no historical background for; nor can we definitively ascribe authorship to. There have been many guesses about the origin of this Psalm – but our safari doesn't guess at the Bible. What we do know is that it is a wonderful Psalm of praise and worship unto God Almighty! We're still looking forward to that future day when the Godly remnant of the nation Israel will be in trial and tribulations. This speaks of the day when they will be restored to the land in fulfillment of prophecy. Ezekiel said, "... *Israel will offer sacrifices in that day.*" Those sacrifices will look *BACK* on the return of their Messiah – the Lord Jesus Christ – the Lamb that taketh away the sin of the world. The cross is central to the Word of God; irrespective of which way we consider it; either by looking forward from the ancient

tabernacle animal sacrifices — or looking back from the perspective of proclaiming the Gospels. Scripture is about **the Lord Jesus Christ** Who paid the penalty for our sins – and nothing else. Let’s consider Him today — and forevermore ~

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