

# YOU CAN TELL EVERYBODY THIS IS YOUR SONG

PSALM 62    APRIL 5, 2020

Elton John wrote *Candle In The Wind* for Lady Diana. Dave Grohl wrote *My Hero* for Kurt Cobain. McCartney penned *Hey Jude* for John Lennon's little boy, Julian, to comfort him in the wake of his parents' separation.<sup>1</sup> Don McLean was "absolutely amazed" to discover that *Killing Me Softly With His Song* was originally written about him. *Killing Me Softly* has resonated with a number of artists since it was first recorded. It even won *The Fugees* a Grammy 25 years later in 1997.<sup>2</sup>

Of course, not all songs written with a specific person in mind are the kind you would want written about you. Carly Simon's classic *You're So Vain* has generated a lot of speculation, but who would want that song to be dedicated to them? Taylor Swift became famous for writing scathing lyrics with particular people in mind. There are webpages dedicated to helping you know which song is directed at who. From her freshman year boyfriend to international superstar John Mayer.<sup>3</sup>

Did you know that, in the book of Psalms, there are 3 songs specifically dedicated to someone? Many of the Psalms give us information about who wrote it, what instrument it was intended for and what occasion inspired the writing. But there are 3 which were written with a particular person in mind. And, all 3 are written with the *same* person in mind: a man named Jeduthun.

He's not a particularly famous Bible character, which makes it all the more significant that the *only* Psalms dedicated and directed to a specific individual are sent to him.

We learn in First Chronicles 16 that he was a member of King David's grand administration. He was one of three Levites given charge over the worship in the Tabernacle and, ultimately, the Temple. He and his sons were to be the Gatekeepers in the Lord's house. He was charged with giving thanks and praise to the Lord, with prophesying with harps and stringed instruments, and with training others to continue the work. He was free from other duties and was to be employed in his spiritual work day and night.<sup>4</sup>

What an amazing job description! And what a time to have been alive and walking with God. Watching David, the great king, establish his throne and to see the blessing of God in the nation of Israel. To have been in the presence of the Ark and the Shekinah.

So what are the 3 songs dedicated to such an interesting man? They are Psalm 39, Psalm 62 and Psalm 77. One is a funeral song about the vanity of life. One is about enduring opposition and attacks in your life, and that life, by the way is only a vapor. And one is about what we do when the day of trouble comes and our souls refuse to be comforted. Yikes!

But you see, Jeduthun also lived through the turbulent years when David hadn't been enthroned over all Israel. He lived through the scandal of Bathsheba, the shock of Absalom's rebellion, and, perhaps, the desperate horror of the plague which struck down 70,000 people after David took his ungodly census. We don't know much about Jeduthun as an individual, what he thought, his personal story, but we know that 3 songs were given to him for his comfort and to be used in his spiritual duties.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hey\\_Jude#Inspiration\\_and\\_writing](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hey_Jude#Inspiration_and_writing)

<sup>2</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Killing\\_Me\\_Softly\\_with\\_His\\_Song](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Killing_Me_Softly_with_His_Song)

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.spin.com/featured/taylor-swift-songs-explanation-guide/>

<sup>4</sup> 1 Corinthians 9:33

He was to not only treasure these songs, but to teach them to the choir, who would then deliver them to all Israel for use in worship. Ultimately, these songs have been saved for us, that we might sing them in our own lives.

We're told the Lord gives us songs to sing. Job 35:10: God gives us songs in the night. Psalm 40:3: [The Lord] has put a new song in our mouths. In Revelation 14, the 144,000 are taught a special song only they can learn. God gives us songs and plays a melody through our lives. This morning we get to see one that declares that God *is* our refuge, no matter what, no matter when, and that's a song we all need to hear, especially in times like this.

Verse one says:

**Psalm 62:1-2 - <sup>1</sup> I am at rest in God alone; my salvation comes from Him. <sup>2</sup> He alone is my rock and my salvation, my stronghold; I will never be shaken.**

David did something obvious in the Hebrew that is lost to us reading in English. The word we see as “alone” or “only” is the same in Hebrew and is used 6 times and each time it is used, it's purposefully put at the beginning of the line. *Only* in God my soul finds rise. *Only* He is my Rock. *Only* in Him find rest, my soul. In fact, for a long time this Psalm was referred to as “the *only* Psalm.”<sup>5</sup>

Here in verses 1 and 2, David is reminding his friend of what is absolutely true. We don't know the specific timing of when this song was sent to Jeduthun, but whether it was a time of triumph or tragedy, the truth remained the same. And David's desire was for Jeduthun to internalize this song and lead the nation in singing it together.

To rest here doesn't mean to slumber, but to wait in calm quietness before the Lord. Our faith is meant to be defined by peace and joyfulness and restful repose as we contemplate the great strength of our God and the access He has given us to His saving power. God alone and God only. He is the One subject of our worship. He is the One original cause of all life. He is the One Ruler over heaven and earth. David, the peerless king, the giant slayer, declares with clear certainty that there is *one* place where we can find the help for our deepest needs and that is in God alone.

It's important for us to note that this “rest” is not just an optional upgrade for some people. It's not like getting granite countertops. We are *commanded* to enter into this rest. Psalm 37:7 says: “Be still in the presence of the Lord, and wait patiently for him to act.” In fact, the translators of the Septuagint render the opening of the song this way: “*Will not my soul be obedient to God?*”

We should and we must because He is our salvation. Our “yeshuah” is the word there. We recognize our Lord written right there on the page for us. He *is* our salvation.

Jesus, our salvation, is also called here our ‘rock.’ This image not only conveys strength and security, but brings us back to the wilderness wanderings, where a great rock followed after the congregation of Israel to supply them with abundant, overflowing, life-saving water. And that Rock was Christ.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Herbert Lockyer *Psalms: A Devotional Commentary*

<sup>6</sup> 1 Corinthians 10:4

David's declaration that he and Jeduthun and all of us by extension would "never be shaken" in verse 2 should be explained. It's not that we will never experience turbulence in life, that's obviously not true. But David could say with confidence that we will never be shaken too greatly, caused to topple and fall. This was being said by a man whose life was *often* hanging in the balance. Whether running from Saul or Absalom, crossing swords with fierce enemies, or enduring plots from within his own palace, David was, from one perspective, never far from death. And yet, he knew he was safe in his Savior. His statement sounds almost too good to be true. But the man speaking to us is worth listening to. Of course, he was writing under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. But, in addition to that, this was a man who knew what it was to be spiritually at rest. He knew what it was to lay his life on the altar of heaven. He knew health. He knew danger. He knew success. He knew glory. He knew defeat. He knew desperation. He knew how to fortify and how to flee. Most of all, he knew *God*. And this man, with all his power and resources and courage, was content to forego all of it, instead clinging to a patient, passionate trust in his Lord.

But the quiet is then interrupted by verse 3.

**Psalm 62:3-4 - <sup>3</sup>How long will you threaten a man? Will all of you attack as if he were a leaning wall or a tottering stone fence? <sup>4</sup>They only plan to bring him down from his high position. They take pleasure in lying; they bless with their mouths, but they curse inwardly.**

It's a good thing David's God is a God of strength and security, because when he looked at his own life, he saw a rotten fence about to be knocked down by killers and enemies, some of whom had pretended to be his friends.

David, for all his strength, was feeling pretty weak. He compared himself to a stone wall, about to crumble. Until recently, I had a fence like that. Any time we got a little bit of a breeze, another picket would fall over. If I tried to put it back, it would just split apart. David's situation was tenuous, but there are several important takeaways here. The first is that, at least in this Psalm, David wasn't too worried about it. Notice that there isn't actually a request to God anywhere in this song. In fact, David doesn't even refer to himself in this section. He is speaking almost abstractly. Second, we are reminded that we have an adversary, the Devil. And his goal is to destroy you. To destroy your peace and your witness. To try to sift you away from closeness to God. He wants to bring you down from the high position that God has placed you in. But that reminds us of the third thing: And that's that the Lord *has* placed us in a high position, that many might see what He has done for us and find salvation themselves. God is the Lifter of our heads and His desire is to set us on our feet that we might stand firm in Him. Even in the face of trial or adversity. Perhaps we will be under assault for the rest of our days until we are brought home to heaven. But thanks be to God we can be sure of our hope and our help in Christ Jesus, our Rock.

This song, which started with such a dramatic crescendo of assurance, has suddenly turned to a dark and minor key. On the one hand, David saw himself as firmly fortified in his stronghold, but on the other we see the troubles surrounding him and closing in, about to deal that final blow which will put him down once and for all. In that situation, what is a person to do?

**Psalm 62:5-7 - <sup>5</sup>Rest in God alone, my soul, for my hope comes from Him. <sup>6</sup>He alone is my rock and my salvation, my stronghold; I will not be shaken. <sup>7</sup>My salvation and glory depend on God, my strong rock. My refuge is in God.**

David *repeats* what he said before, but this time it's in the form of a sermon to himself. The first time, he boasted in the Lord's greatness. Now, as he faces the valley of the shadow of death, he preaches to his own heart what he already knows to be true. And, knowing what he knows to be true, he tells his soul to obey.

Our souls need preaching like our bodies need nutrition. One meal won't do it. Our hearts must be continually reminded of what is true about our God and His plan for our lives. David was showing Jeduthun how to cast his lifeline onto the Rock and secure his life there. And we can *expect* God to fulfill His promises to us. We can *expect* God to be our Shield and our Provider. He, who knows everything we need, will be the source of our supply. When and how the Lord will work is a mystery, but God's word promises again and again that He *will* help us. He *will* be with us. He *will* not leave us or forsake us.

And it's great news that our salvation and our glory do not depend on *movable* things like human governments or economic markets, but on the unchangeable nature and power of God, our Father.

**Psalm 62:8 - <sup>8</sup> Trust in Him at all times, you people; pour out your hearts before Him. God is our refuge.**

What David has discovered to be true he wants to share with others. He invites his friends and his nation and *any* hearer throughout history to *join* him on the Rock. And, as we join David in the stronghold, we find that it's not some impersonal citadel. This refuge is a *Person*, to whom we can pour out our hearts. What a lovely invitation. You know, financial security is an important issue to most people. Those who are able spend a lot of time and resources to store up for retirement. You may open your bank account to your IRA, but you don't open up your heart to it. The fine folks at Fidelity aren't set up to hear about your inner hurts, your fears, your deepest needs. But the Lord is. And He does not want us to be shy about pouring out our hearts to Him. Cast all your cares upon the Lord, for He cares for you! Give your burdens to the Lord and He will take care of you! Come to Jesus, all who are weary and carry heavy burdens and He will *give* you rest.

The God of the Bible was not just a Father and Friend to *David*, but to Jeduthun and to all Israel and to each of us who have been saved by His grace. Because of that, we can trust in Him at all times. Choosing to be confident in Him and believe that all He has said is true.

Trust in Him at all times, *you people*. The president got in a little trouble in the media recently for saying, "you people" to a reporter. But this message, from heaven, through David, to Jeduthun and us, says, "You people." Who are you? You children of God, remember He is our Father. You flock of sheep, remember the Lord is our Shepherd. You members of the Lord's army, remember He is our Commander. You citizens of heaven, remember Christ is our King. You Bride of Christ, remember He is our Bridegroom. And remember that you are a people. Meaning we are not in this life alone. We walk with others together on this road of faith, bearing one another's burdens and building each other up, especially in times of difficulty. If you're weak or afraid or confused, don't be afraid to pour out your heart to the Lover of your souls.

**Psalm 62:9-10 - <sup>9</sup> Men are only a vapor; exalted men, an illusion. Weighed in the scales, they go up; together they are less than a vapor. <sup>10</sup> Place no trust in oppression, or false hope in robbery. If wealth increases, pay no attention to it.**

David's desire was not only to comfort believers, but to send an urgent caution to unbelievers - those very enemies who were seeking to destroy him. He reminds everyone that life is short. It's just a puff of smoke and then is gone. In the end, it doesn't matter how much wealth or earthly power a person has and I can prove it: Who was the King of Spain in 1830? His name was Ferdinand VII. They called him "Ferdinand the Desired." But, to us, he's not even a memory. He is forgotten. His kingdom is gone.

Our lives, when weighed on the scales of heaven, are just a wisp of vapor. May they be a puff of incense which honors God and pleases Him. A life lived in worship and sacrifice. If not, if a person will *not* lay hold of the salvation offered by God and find refuge in Jesus Christ, they will be like Belshazzar in the book of Daniel. Written on the wall that night was the message that he had been weighed and measured and found wanting. And that very night he was judged, condemned for his refusal to repent and turn to God.

For believers today, David gives another sobering instruction: We are not to set the watch of our lives by the status of our bank accounts. It's hard not to fall into this pattern of thinking. We see the news "The economy is up! So things must be good!" But that's not how God assesses our lives. In fact, we're warned that the lure of wealth can crowd out the production of spiritual fruit. We're told that too much attention to these material things leads to some wandering from the faith.<sup>7</sup> Rather, the New Testament gives us the proper perspective on wealth in 1 Timothy 6:

**1 Timothy 6:17-18 - <sup>17</sup> Teach those who are rich in this world not to be proud and not to trust in their money, which is so unreliable. Their trust should be in God, who richly gives us all we need for our enjoyment. <sup>18</sup> Tell them to use their money to do good. They should be rich in good works and generous to those in need, always being ready to share with others.**

Our song closes in verses 11 and 12.

**Psalm 62:11-12 - <sup>11</sup> God has spoken once; I have heard this twice: strength belongs to God, <sup>12</sup> and faithful love belongs to You, Lord. For You repay each according to his works.**

Commentators point out the wonderful beauty of God being both full of strength and full of mercy. If He had not mercy, we would all be doomed. If He had not strength, we could not be saved. But He is, indeed, the God of limitless power *and* unfailing love. And this God will repay the people of the earth. Sinner, if you have not been born again, you will be paid for what you have done. And the wages for your sin is death. You who are saved, you who work in our Lord's service, you will be richly rewarded.

For nearly 150 years, God's Church has been singing that wonderful refrain from *Blessed Assurance*: "This is my story, this is my song." That great hymn is all about finding rest in God alone and trusting in His strength to save.

You can tell everybody that Psalm 62 is your song. Like *Blessed Assurance* it is full of hope and truth. As David encouraged Jeduthun, we should sing it to ourselves, especially in times of strain or when we're feeling weak. Our lives can be like musicals, where everyone is going along normally, but then something happens and everybody begins singing. It seems so normal to the people on the screen. "How do you solve a problem like Maria?" "Be prepared!" "Everything is Awesome!"

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<sup>7</sup> 1 Timothy 6:10

God only and God alone, our refuge and fortress. Our ever-present help in time of trouble. It's amazing to see David's calm confidence, and it's good for us to see it because it proves to us that such a state of spiritual rest *is* possible. But we are also reminded that he didn't *always* feel this way. This is the same songwriter who felt as though God had abandoned him in Psalm 22. The same songwriter who said in Psalm 142 that he was crying in anguish to the Lord, weak in spirit, pleading for mercy.

David was no stranger to danger. He knew what it was to be afraid, to be pressed in upon. To be close to a breaking point. But, the man after God's own heart gave *this* song as a gift to his friend. And God has given it as a gift to us, that we might remember and sing of His unending love, His boundless strength and that He has made Himself a refuge to us where we can find rest, hope, help and all that we need.