

YOU'VE GOT YOUR HEAD IN THE SAVIOR

PSALM 62:1-4 MARCH 14, 2018

We've all heard (and maybe even used) the phrase, "they've got their heads in the sand." It's a saying for when someone is "unwilling to recognize or acknowledge a problem or situation."¹ They see the danger, but refuse to confront the issue, instead they do what ostriches do: put their heads in the ground and blindly hope for the best.

Just one problem with this saying: Ostriches *don't* bury their heads in the sand! It's a myth. The laws of physics should tip us off. After all, if ostriches *did* in fact bury their heads in the sand they would not be able to breathe. So, where did this idea come from? National Geographic writes: Ostriches "do dig holes in the dirt to use as nests for their eggs. Several times a day a bird puts her head in the hole and turns the eggs. So it [can] look like the birds are burying their heads in the sand!"²

The pundits and strategists of the day probably would've accused King David of burying his head in the sand during the period of time when he wrote Psalm 62. His government was vulnerable. He was under vicious attack from members of his own administration. From the human perspective his whole kingdom was close to toppling if even the smallest amount of additional pressure was applied.

In the face of these circumstances, David's reaction was stillness and silence. There's no hint of the anxiety or depression or desperation that characterized Psalm 39. No, in this second song dedicated to Jeduthun, David's demeanor is calmness, certainty and security, even though his enemies had breached the castle walls and were swarming the throne.

This is a great Psalm to take to bed or to battle. It trumpets out the absolute sufficiency of God, whose power is without limit and whose mercy is available today for those who believe.

The song breaks apart into 3 stanzas, broken up by that term *Selah*, which invites us to stop and consider what was just said in the verses before. We'll take a look at the first stanza this evening, in verses 1 through 4, seeing a **certainty** and a **choice**.

First, in verses 1 and 2, we see the **certainty**: That the Savior is coming to save.

Psalm 62:1 - To the Chief Musician. To Jeduthun. A Psalm of David. ¹Truly my soul silently waits for God; From Him comes my salvation.

Commentators will often call this *The Only Psalm*, not because they can't count, but because David uses a poetic device here that we aren't quite able to notice in the English translation. He begins verses 1, 2, 4, 5, 6 and 9 with the exact same Hebrew word in order to *emphasize* and set the tone³ for the song. It's the word 'ak.' When you bring it into English, this word's sense and location get adjusted from sentence to sentence. So, when we read 'truly', 'alone', 'surely', and 'only' three times, they're all the same word. And David is using this word prominently, again and again, in order to convey some absolute certainties.

¹ <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/head-in-the-sand>

² <https://kids.nationalgeographic.com/explore/nature/animal-myths-busted/>

³ Derek Kidner *Psalms 1-72*

The first certainty is the quiet resolve of his heart to trust in God. “Truly my soul silently waits for God.” Last time we heard David talk about what he was *sure* of it was a big downer. Back in Psalm 39 all he was sure of was the vanity of life and how we’re all just a puff of smoke. Here his thoughts are much cheerier as he talks about the security we find when we rest in God alone.

David is no longer welling up with an overflow of frustrations like in the first song dedicated to Jeduthun. Here, he’s able to rest just quietly in the presence of God. And that made me stop and think because David had a *lot* to say. He’s one of history’s most remarkable people. He’s an expert warrior, a legendary poet and musician, a spiritual giant, incredible manager and leader, a premiere administrator. He could’ve written best-sellers in all these different fields. And yet, we find in the Psalms that he made it a point to be quiet before the Lord. In this text and Psalm 131 are good examples.

It’s an important reminder for us because we live in a time and culture that is constantly inundated with notifications and broadcasts and streams and every form of distraction. It’s best illustrated by all the news channels where you have 4 people all in boxes on a screen and everybody’s talking at the same time. No one is listening, no one can hear. That’s our world.

But if it was good and needful for *David* to be still and quiet his heart before God, it’s good and needful for us as well. We remember that Jesus said to His disciples in Mark 6 (NIV) “Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest.”

David goes on and says, “From Him comes my salvation.” He is absolutely certain that God is coming to rescue and that *the Lord* is the source of our salvation. It’s *from* Him. It’s not that God verifies our efforts and pays us for what we’ve earned. It’s not like getting your parking validated. Salvation is a gift of grace. And David is certain of God’s salvation, which empowers him to enjoy a soul undaunted by circumstances. He can sit in silence, waiting for God, despite what’s going on in the palace around Him, because He is in right relationship with the Lord and he knows that God loves him and cares for the details of his life and will not abandon him.

For us it begs the question: What are we waiting for? “Well, I’m waiting for that check. Or I’m waiting for that call. Or I’m waiting for that reversal.” Those things may be part of God’s will for our lives, but David would preach this to us tonight: Wait for the Savior rather than the circumstances. Rest in His salvation.

What is His salvation? David tells us in verse 2:

Psalm 62:2 - ²He only *is* my rock and my salvation; *He is* my defense; I shall not be greatly moved.

God Himself *is* the salvation we need. He reveals Himself to mankind and invites us to come away with Him and be forever safe in His love. God isn’t the kind of hero that just swoops in for a moment and then takes off as soon as the bad guy is knocked out. He’s Boaz, not Batman. He is the Rock that we are to fasten ourselves to and build our lives upon. Jesus talked about this as well.

Now, if we were reading all the Psalms in order, we would see a great connection between this verse and the previous Psalm, where David wrote this:

Psalm 61:2 - ²From the end of the earth I will cry to You, When my heart is overwhelmed; Lead me to the rock that is higher than I.

So there we see him praying in a time of distress. His demeanor in Psalm 61 is more like it was back in our last set of studies in Psalm 39, and here's his request: "Lord, lead me to the rock." And now, in 62 we see David safe and secure on that very Rock, the Lord *Himself*. And because of it, David says that he will not be greatly moved. That term means shaken or swayed or caused to stagger. When we take refuge in the salvation of Jesus Christ, He is sufficient to secure us. Jude says "all glory to God, who is able to keep you from falling."

So, in verses 1 and 2 we see the **certainty** of David. He gives a report on the security of God and his resolve to *wait* on the Lord,

Now in verses 3 and 4, David will give a reprimand of the iniquity of the wicked men around him.

Psalm 62:3 - ³How long will you attack a man? You shall be slain, all of you, Like a leaning wall and a tottering fence.

The wording here is a little awkward. When David uses the illustrations of a leaning wall and tottering fence he is referring to *himself*, not his attackers. It seems that he really was vulnerable and these men sensed their opportunity and launched an extended attack against the king.

Here David gives a prophecy to these men: You're going to die. You shall be slain, *all of you*. It's a reminder that, in the end, no one will escape the judgment of God. We can either be judged at the cross where the verdict is mercy or we will be judged at His Great White Throne where the only verdict is guilty and the only outcome is the second death.

He asks them outright: "How long are you going to keep this up?" If verse 1 begged the question of what Christians are waiting for, verse 3 begs the question to unbelievers: How long are you going to war with God? To reject Jesus Christ is to rage against the God who loves you and who doesn't want you to perish. How long will you fight against Him, especially with your eternal life is on the line?

Psalm 62:4 - ⁴They only consult to cast *him* down from his high position; They delight in lies; They bless with their mouth, But they curse inwardly.

So here we learn that the attackers are, in fact, people close to the king, who give him lip service in the palace while plotting to overthrow him. They were like the Pharisees in the Gospels, who would say things like "Good Teacher" when they were in the presence of the King of kings, but all the while were conspiring to murder Him.

David says that they were cursing him inwardly. To curse here suggests they were invoking divine harm on David. Ironically, the same God who they were hoping would attack David with them was the very one protecting him from them! He was David's defense. And rather than *assist* them in their wicked endeavor, He was going to *slay* them for their wickedness.

Remember, David had previously asked the Lord to lead him to the Rock that is higher. Now, in this song, we see David pictured as high up on the Rock, safe and secure. These enemies are working

hard to try to pull him down but what they didn't realize is that to get to David, they'd have to go through Jehovah! And it wasn't going to work. The outcome would be their own deaths.

But not if they, like David, surrendered to God and fell on His mercy. We'll see God's grace and compassion talked about in coming weeks. If verses 1 and 2 present a **certainty**, verses 3 and 4 present for us a **choice**. The choice is simple: *Saved* or *slain*. A person can be secure on the Rock or they can be slain *by* the Rock. We're told in Matthew 21 when the Rock, the Chief Cornerstone falls on someone, they are crushed and ground into powder. *Or*, we can anchor ourselves in Him, build our lives on His foundation and with His provision, and we will never be shaken.

There's a 58-story building in San Francisco called the Millennium Tower, meant to be a symbol of luxury and success. It offers the most expensive one bedroom dwelling in the city. Joe Montana has a residence there. Just two little problems: It's leaning and sinking! The building was constructed "on unstable mud-fill" and "to cut costs, the Millennium did not drill piles to bedrock", rather just 80 feet into "dense sand".⁴ At this point, there's not really anything that can be done other than 'Band-Aid' measures that do not solve the underlying flaw.

No one wants to live in a building like that. And God doesn't want our lives to be like that. David's experience is one that is available to all of God's people. He has led us to the Rock that is higher than ourselves, higher than the problems of this life. One that is strong and secure. That Rock is Christ and when we cleave to Him we can know His sufficient salvation, so great a salvation and trust that He will defend us, even when we're at our weakest moments.

Perhaps you don't *feel* that security in your heart. You're a Christian, but you lack the assurance David demonstrates here. You're more like David in Psalm 39 than David in Psalm 62. That's alright. The Lord understands. But if that's the case, what should we do?

I began by talking about the ostrich and how it *doesn't* put its head in the ground when it's afraid. Here's what the ostrich *does* do in those dangerous situations: (According to the San Diego Zoo) "When an ostrich senses danger and cannot run away, it flops to the ground and remains still, with its head and neck flat on the ground in front of it."⁵

That's a good picture for our souls. David said in Psalm 131: "I have calmed and quieted my soul." He made a choice there and here in our text to wait for the Lord. To fall down and be still and rely on his Savior. If you feel a lack of certainty or security or assurance, pray that prayer we find in the Gospels: "Lord I believe, help my unbelief!" And choose to exercise your faith in your Savior. He is a great and mighty Rock. He will not fail you. We're not putting our heads in the sand, we're putting them in the Savior and believing He is who He says He is and that He will do what He's promised to do.

⁴ <https://sf.curbed.com/2016/8/1/12341914/millennium-tower-sinking>

⁵ <http://animals.sandiegozoo.org/animals/ostrich>