

## Day 342 - FRIDAY: January 19th

Psalms 58, 61 & 62

### Psalms 58:1-11 NKJV

To the Chief Musician. Set to "Do Not Destroy." a Michtam of David. Do you indeed speak righteousness, you silent ones? Do you judge uprightly, you sons of men? No, in heart you work wickedness; You weigh out the violence of your hands in the earth. The wicked are estranged from the womb; They go astray as soon as they are born, speaking lies. Their poison is like the poison of a serpent; They are like the deaf cobra that stops its ear, Which will not heed the voice of charmers, Charming ever so skillfully. Break their teeth in their mouth, O God! Break out the fangs of the young lions, O LORD! Let them flow away as waters which run continually; When he bends his bow, Let his arrows be as if cut in pieces. Let them be like a snail which melts away as it goes, Like a stillborn child of a woman, that they may not see the sun. Before your pots can feel the burning thorns, He shall take them away as with a whirlwind, As in His living and burning wrath. The righteous shall rejoice when he sees the vengeance; He shall wash his feet in the blood of the wicked, So that men will say, "Surely there is a reward for the righteous; Surely He is God who judges in the earth."

### Psalms 61:1-8 NKJV

To the Chief Musician. On A Stringed Instrument. A Psalm of David. Hear my cry, O God; Attend to my prayer. From

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. For You have been a shelter for me, A strong tower from the enemy. I will abide in Your tabernacle forever; I will trust in the shelter of Your wings. Selah For You, O God, have heard my vows; You have given me the heritage of those who fear Your name. You will prolong the king's life, His years as many generations. He shall abide before God forever. Oh, prepare mercy and truth, which may preserve him! So I will sing praise to Your name forever, That I may daily perform my vows.

### Psalms 62:1-12 NKJV

To the Chief Musician. To Jeduthun. A Psalm of David. Truly my soul silently waits for God; From Him comes my salvation. He only is my rock and my salvation; He is my defense; I shall not be greatly moved. How long will you attack a man? You shall be slain, all of you, Like a leaning wall and a tottering fence. They only consult to cast him down from his high position; They delight in lies; They bless with their mouth, But they curse inwardly. Selah My soul, wait silently for God alone, For my expectation is from Him. He only is my rock and my salvation; He is my defense; I shall not be moved. In God is my salvation and my glory; The rock of my strength, And my refuge, is in God. Trust in Him at all times, you people; Pour out your heart before Him; God is a refuge for us. Selah Surely men of low degree are a vapor, Men of high degree are a lie; If they are weighed on the scales, They are altogether lighter than vapor. Do not trust in oppression, Nor vainly

hope in robbery; If riches increase, Do not set your heart on them. God has spoken once, Twice I have heard this: That power belongs to God. Also to You, O Lord, belongs mercy; For You render to each one according to his work.

### **Daily Deep Dive:**

Psalm 58:

The UCG reading program states: "Psalm 58, the third *miktam* of David out of five in a row, addresses human misrule and injustice. He may have written this before he was king-while on the run from Saul, as in the preceding psalm and the one that follows. However, even while king, David could not completely control every judge under his authority and certainly not the rulers of enemy lands outside his empire.

In verse 1, the NKJV calls the offenders "silent ones," a valid translation, because they remain silent when it comes to saying what needs to be said and rendering appropriate judgment. Verse 2 appears to say that those being addressed commit evil and violence themselves. Yet it may mean that by failing in justice, they promote these things in society.

The beginning of verse 3 says, "The wicked are estranged from the womb..." This is an odd turn of phrase in English but is clearly explained by the next line, an example of Hebrew poetry's repetition: "...they go astray as soon as they are born"-that is, they are drawn away from God early in life.

In positions of judgment and leadership, the wicked are dangerous--compared to a cobra that can't be mesmerized by a snake charmer (verses 4-5). David further compares them to ravenous lions and urgently calls on God to break their fangs-that is, their power to hurt people (verse 6). He also asks that they be swept away as running water and that their "arrows," or means of dealing out destruction,

be rendered useless (verse 7). In verse 8, when David asks that *they* melt away like a snail and that *they* are not brought to term like a stillborn child, it is not clear if he means the wicked themselves or their arrows of verse 8. Either way, the point is to neutralize the grave threat they pose.

In verse 9, the added italicized words "*the burning*" before "thorns" gives the correct sense here, as is made clear by other verses: "Twigs from wild thornbushes were used as fuel for quick heat (see Psalm 118:12; Ecclesiastes 7:6)" (*Zondervan NIV Study Bible*, note on Psalm 58:9). The meaning of the verse is that God's judgment will come suddenly on the wicked.

In its note on verse 10, *The Expositor's Bible Commentary* states: "The joy of the righteous comes to full expression when they see evidences of God's justice. It is not so much the case that they are bloodthirsty [as might appear here at first glance] but rather that they delight in justice. The reign of terror must come to an end! Isaiah portrays the Lord as the Divine Warrior coming with red garments, stained by the blood of his enemies (Isaiah 63:1-6). Here the godly join in the victory march, as they too have been granted victory. The imagery of feet in blood portrays the victory (cf. Isaiah 63:1-6; Revelation 14:19-20; Revelation 19:13-14), rather than the gruesome picture of people relishing the death of the wicked. The godly share together with the Lord in his triumph over evil." The injustice of human misrule will at last be overturned and righted when God brings His true and righteous judgment (Psalm 58:11). The message will be clear: righteousness pays; wickedness doesn't." [END]

Psalm 61:

The UCG reading program states: "Psalms 61-64, all psalms of David according to their superscriptions, form a cluster of four royal prayers linked together by interweaving themes, especially "the common theme of strong reliance on God for deliverance in the face

of great--perhaps mortal--danger" (*Zondervan NIV Study Bible*, Psalms introduction, "Significant Arrangement of the Psalter"; and note on Psalms 61-64).

*Neginah* in the superscription of Psalm 61, which may be part of a postscript to Psalm 60, is probably correctly translated in the NKJV as "stringed instrument."

Overwhelmed at his circumstances (verse 2), the details of which we are not given except that it involves some enemy (verse 3), David feels cut off from God: "From the ends of the earth I call to You" (verse 2, NIV). He seeks to be led to the "rock that is higher than I" (verse 1). By "rock" he means God Himself, as he did earlier in Psalm 18 (verses 2, 31, 46). The imagery of God as a Rock of protection occurs early in Scripture in the Song of Moses (see Deuteronomy 32:4). David uses it again in the next Psalm (Psalm 62:2, Psalm 62:6-7) and in other psalms (Psalm 71:3; Psalm 144:1). "This is a particularly apt image [of God] for David, who many times had to hide in the mountains for security (see 1 Samuel 26:1, 1 Samuel 26:20)" (*Nelson Study Bible*, note on Psalm 18:2).

Indeed, it seems that David is now led to the Rock as he has asked--for the rest of his psalm exudes confidence in God's protection and blessing.

David likens the shelter of God's tabernacle to the shelter of a mother bird's wings (verse 4). David will repeat this imagery of finding refuge under God's wings in Psalm 63:7 (see also Psalm 17:8; Psalm 36:7; Psalm 57:1; Psalm 91:4). There is probably also a figurative tie--in here to the wings or hem of a garment--symbolism employed in the book of Ruth for taking in marriage (as Christ takes His people in marriage). God's people thus become part of His household and family--the primary idea behind abiding in His tabernacle (His dwelling) forever.

The vows David had made to God (verse 5)--his promises to remain devoted and faithful to God, to obey and serve Him--were genuine.

And for that God would reward him with the heritage of all who fear and honor God's name (same verse)--not just long life (verse 6) but eternal life in God's presence (verse 7). The King of Israel living forever here is understood in Jewish interpretation as a prophecy of the Messiah, as it likely is, but it also applies to David himself. God's "mercy and truth" would preserve King David as well as the future messianic King (verse 7; see also Psalm 25:10; Psalm 85:10, Psalm 85:15; Psalm 89:14; Proverbs 20:28; Isaiah 16:5). Consider that Jesus Christ came "*full of grace and truth*" (John 1:14; see also verse 17)--fulfilling the messianic expectation of these passages. David closes his prayer by saying that he will use the eternity God is giving him to forever extol and obey God (Psalm 61:8). What remarkable devotion!" [END]

## Psalm 62:

The UCG reading program states: "Jeduthun, in the superscription of Psalm 62, was, as noted in the Beyond Today Bible Commentary on Psalm 39, one of David's three choir leaders (1 Chronicles 15:41-42; 1 Chronicles 25:1, 1 Chronicles 25:6; 2 Chronicles 5:12) who was also known as a seer or prophet (2 Chronicles 35:15)--often thought to be synonymous with Ethan (1 Chronicles 6:44; 1 Chronicles 15:19), representing the Levitical family of Merari. The name Jeduthun also appears in the superscription of Psalm 77.

Psalm 62 has three stanzas (verses Psalm 62:1-4, Psalm 62:5-8, Psalm 62:9-12)--the first two of which begin almost the same (verses 1-2, 5-6). David here says that he will silently wait for God's deliverance and refers to God, as in the previous psalm, as his rock of protection and source of salvation. As the end of verses 2 and 6 declare, he will "not be greatly moved"--that is, "shaken" (NIV). David's need here is urgent. Arrogant foes conspire to "cast him down from his high position" (verse 4)--to topple him from the

throne--through deceit and intrigue. He asks them how long they will attack him (verse 3a). The meaning of the second part of verse 3 is not clear however. Either he is announcing to the conspirators what will befall them as in the NKJV: "You shall be slain, all of you, like a leaning wall and a tottering fence." Or he is further lamenting their attack on him, referring to himself as the vulnerable one: "Would all of you throw him down--this leaning wall, this tottering fence?" (NIV; see also NRSV; Tanakh).

In any case, David is confident of God's protection and ultimate deliverance. He gives others the advice he himself follows: to trust God at all times and pour out one's heart to Him (verse 8)--for God is an unfailing refuge. Men, no matter what their position, are inconstant and unreliable--and not the place to put one's trust (verse 9). It is futile to hope in their evil way of doing things or to trust in the wealth they pursue as a source of help in all of life's circumstances (verse 10). Real power belongs to God (verse 11)--along with mercy to those who serve Him and the means to compensate each person according to the choices they make in life (verse 12; compare Matthew 16:27).

That God has spoken *once* and David heard it *twice* (Psalm 62:11) is explained as a form of expression in Old Testament times. As *The Nelson Study Bible* notes on verse 11: "It is a convention of wisdom literature to use a number and then raise it by one (Proverbs 30:11-33). The point here is that David has heard the message with certainty." [END]