

Series: Psalm

Title: When My Heart is Overwhelmed

Text: Psalm 61: 1-8

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**Titled:** When My Heart is Overwhelmed

**Psalm 61: 1: 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.**

“Overwhelmed” is to be “covered over” with waves so that you are drowning, unable to breathe. There is a rock higher than you that is near. It is a rock that can lift you above the waves. But you are so overwhelmed that you cannot even get to the rock. So you cry out, “*Lead me to the rock higher than I.*”

Brethren has your heart ever been overwhelmed. There is nothing you can do. Lately, I have heard a few brethren in that condition. My prayer is that God would speak to us tonight from this Psalm and comfort his people.

In the first half, David makes some incredible vows to God.

First, he vows that he will cry unto God no matter his condition—**Psalm 61: 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:**

David’s next vow, he vows to do forever—**Psalm 61: 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**”—stop and consider. How is it David can make these vows with such resolve? No sinner has power to keep a vow *to cry to the Lord always, to abide in his tabernacle forever, to trust in the covert of his wings no matter what!* How could David make these vows?

In the second half, David declares his assurance to be the faithfulness of God.

David assurance that he will keep his vows is that God has already heard his vows/prayers and already made him a joint-heir with Christ through faith—**Psalm 61: 5: For thou, O God, hast heard my vows: thou hast given *me* the heritage [inheritance] of those that fear thy name.** [that believe on Christ]

David’s assurance that he will continue to call upon God forever is because David saw by faith and believed what God would do in David’s King. Notice, the change in the personal pronoun—**Psalm 61: 6: Thou wilt prolong the king’s life: *and* his years as many generations. 7: He shall abide before God for ever: O prepare mercy and truth, *which* may preserve him.**

Therefore, David concludes that by this he will continue forever giving God all the glory and performing his vows. Notice the change in the personal pronoun back to David—**Psalm 61: 8: So will I sing praise unto thy name for ever, that I may daily perform my vows.**

**Proposition:** If we believe on Christ then let us be assured that no matter our condition, we shall continue crying unto God our Father and trusting Christ our King, not by our strength but by the grace of God.

**Outline:** 1) David’s condition 2) David’s cry 3) David’s confidence

## DAVID’S CONDITION

**Psalm 61: 2: From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed**

David wrote this after he was king. But Absalom had banished him from Jerusalem. So David was a king in exile. He was cut off from everyone. David was crying unto God “*from the end of the earth.*” Brethren, have you ever felt cut off, alienated? That was David’s case.

In addition, David was alienated from the one place God appointed for worship and from his brethren. Above all else, David cherished the privilege to assemble in God’s house, together with God’s people, to worship God he loved. We are tasting a little of that now with this quarantine. Brethren, how we miss assembling together under the gospel! One good thing God has done through this quarantine is make us appreciate the blessing of gathering with one another under the gospel.

Then to make David’s situation even more sorrowful, it was his own dear son, Absalom, that rebelled against him and cast him out. No wonder David cried out as man whose heart was drowning.

Even more sorrowful than these things David faced, sometimes, God’s saints are overwhelmed with a sense of our sin. Our hearts are overwhelmed by the guilt of our sin; by the shame over sin we hate; sin that we want to be free from and done with. Other times, we are overwhelmed by our unbelief. Then there are many other kinds of afflictive providences that God

brings us into. All these trials are like a stormy sea where wave after wave rolls over us. Our hearts become overwhelmed so that we cannot breathe.

Remember, brethren, we have a great High Priest seated in the heavens who knows exactly what we go through. If we suffer it, Christ suffered it more. If we feel pain, Christ felt it more. If we sorrow, Christ more. If our hearts are overwhelmed, none is overwhelmed like Christ on the cross. What should that make us do?

Hebrews 4: 14: Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast *our* profession.

That is what we see David do here in his vows to continue crying unto God and trusting in God no matter his condition.

Hebrews 4: 15: For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as *we are*, yet without sin. 16: Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

That is what we see David do next.

## DAVID'S PRAYER

**Psalm 61: 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.**

In the midst of any trouble, knowing Christ sits there at God's right hand, let us come boldly—not haughty, not arrogantly. And if our heart is overwhelmed that is not how we come. We come begging, "*Hear my cry, O God; attend unto my prayer.*"

It is good to have brethren who you can call on. Brethren, we should communicate with one another, especially right now, especially with brethren who are suffering. Call on brethren and be there for brethren to call on. But when God brings us to the end of the earth, when our heart is overwhelmed then you cannot even talk to brethren. Yet, we can always cry unto God!

I love how David is firm in his resolve to hold fast his profession. In the midst of trouble, he vows that he will cry unto God no matter what. But notice, his resolve is to be entirely dependent upon God—"*From the end of the earth WILL I CRY.*" But notice David's dependence, "*UNTO THEE.*" David is resolute, "*When my heart is overwhelmed.*" But he is resolute to depend entirely upon God because he is utterly helpless, "*Lead me to the rock that is higher than I.*" Do you see his resolve? David's vow is not for something he expects to do himself. His vow is to cry unto God because David knows that he is helpless to save himself.

No matter where we are, no matter our condition, as strong as our trouble may be, let our resolve be stronger. And let it be to be entirely, utterly, dependent upon God—"*I will cry unto thee, O God!—Lead me!*" Child of God, you are never too far and your condition never too bad to call upon God!

Psalm 139: 7: Whither shall I go from thy spirit? Or whither shall I flee from thy presence? 8: If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. 9: If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; 10: Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.

Remember, Christ's cry to the Father in the midst of his travail on our behalf. He was cut off from God, cut off from his brethren; cut off because he bore the sins of his people; cut off because he bore the wrath of God. He was truly alienated from all! Yet, "*from the end of the earth*"—"with a heart overwhelmed" Christ cried, "*with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared; Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;*" (Heb 5: 7-9)

Brethren, shall God's firstborn Son suffer and we not suffer? God is teaching us obedience by the things we suffer. He is teaching us to trust God, to believe on God, to wait on God. Christ did so in perfection; he is our salvation, "*And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him.*"

Therefore, when our hearts are overwhelmed, make it our firm resolve to cry unto God in utter dependence, "*Lead me to the rock that is higher than I.*" God gets the glory for leading us to Christ and Christ our Rock gets the glory for saving us!

In the wilderness, Moses (the law) smote the rock. Out came water (life) for all the children of Israel—"that Rock is Christ." When Christ bore the sins of his people, the law smote Christ in our place and from Christ the Rock came living water for every elect child for whom he was smitten! That Rock followed the children of Israel and provided for them wherever they went.

1 Corinthians 10: 3:...they did all eat the same spiritual meat; 4: And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ.

Christ is the Rock higher than I who is ever present to save his redeemed. He is higher than David, higher than all kings of the earth, higher than angels in heaven, even higher than the heavens.

Hebrews 7:26: For such a high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens;

Has Christ not proven it already, believer?—*"For thou hast been a shelter for me, and a strong tower from the enemy."*

A Mighty fortress is our God  
A bulwark never failing

So HIS past mercies give us—*"I will abide in thy tabernacle for ever: I will trust in the covert of thy wings. Selah."* firm resolve for the future. We have the picture on the table in the back of the mother hen with her chickens under her wings—that is the metaphor here. Under Christ's wings we in the covert, the refuge, our hiding place, our place of protection. Therefore, by God's preserving grace, *"I will trust in the covert of thy wings!"*

Believer be sure to get this. I pray God help each of us to learn this. When we are overwhelmed in heart there is no comfort *looking* at the waves, *talking* about the waves, trying to *figure out* how the waves came. Look to Christ, not the waves! He is the Rock higher than I!

## DAVID'S CONFIDENCE

**Psalm 61: 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. 7: He shall abide before God for ever: O prepare mercy and truth, *which* may preserve him.**

How does David know he shall keep his vows? Is David counting on himself? No. David's confidence is that God has already heard his cry and already made him a joint-heir with Christ—*"For thou, O God, hast heard my vows [prayer, my cry]: thou hast given me the heritage [inheritance] of those that fear thy name."* God had already made David cry out to God in faith fearing his name. God had already heard David's cry. And God had already made David a joint heir with Christ.

See, brethren, God was David's assurance that God would keep him so that he could fulfill his vow to persevere in faith. Has God brought you to confess faith in Christ? Then God has made you a joint heir with Christ. And God never writes anyone out of his will! God is our assurance that we shall keep the vow of faith to continue trusting Christ alone!

David's confidence that he would continue trusting God was Christ. By faith, David looked ahead to Christ's day. Notice the change in personal pronouns. David says to God concerning Christ the King, *"Thou wilt prolong the king's life: and his years as many generations. He shall abide before God for ever: O prepare mercy and truth, which may preserve him."*

Christ *prepared mercy and truth which preserved him!* Christ made mercy and justice agree. He declared God just and Justifier of all who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. Our Substitute brought in everlasting righteousness for his people. By Christ's finished work of preparing mercy and truth, God preserved his Son. God the Father was so well-pleased with Christ his Son that he *"prolonged Christ the King's life and his years as many generations: he shall abide before God for ever"* And when God raised David's LORD, God raised David and you and me who believe.

## DAVID'S CONCLUSION

**Psalm 61: 8: So will I sing praise unto thy name for ever, that I may daily perform my vows.**

David concludes what you and I may conclude, *"So will I..."* The word is "after this manner will I." After the manner we have seen in this Psalm. By God the Father continually beholding Christ his Son before his face, by mercy and truth preserving us in Christ, by God continually sending trials to make us cry, by God continually hearing our cry, by God continually leads us to the Rock higher than I, *"So will I sing praise unto thy name forever, that I may daily perform my vows."*

Believer, the waves may be overwhelming! But God sent them to bring you to cry unto God! God shall continue to lead you to the Rock! So shall you sing praise unto his name for ever and continue performing your vow to trust Christ alone!

**Amen!**