

**Rest in God in the Face of Evil and Tragedy: Psalm 62**  
**Sunday, August 19<sup>th</sup> 2018**  
**By Ryan Perry**

**Read Psalm 62:**

- [1] For God alone my soul waits in silence;  
from him comes my salvation.
- [2] He alone is my rock and my salvation,  
my fortress; I shall not be greatly shaken.
- [3] How long will all of you attack a man  
to batter him,  
like a leaning wall, a tottering fence?
- [4] They only plan to thrust him down from his high position.  
They take pleasure in falsehood.  
They bless with their mouths,  
but inwardly they curse. *Selah*
- [5] For God alone, O my soul, wait in silence,  
for my hope is from him.
- [6] He only is my rock and my salvation,  
my fortress; I shall not be shaken.
- [7] On God rests my salvation and my glory;  
my mighty rock, my refuge is God.
- [8] Trust in him at all times, O people;  
pour out your heart before him;  
God is a refuge for us. **Selah**
- [9] Those of low estate are but a breath;  
those of high estate are a delusion;  
in the balances they go up;  
they are together lighter than a breath.
- [10] Put no trust in extortion;  
set no vain hopes on robbery;  
if riches increase, set not your heart on them.
- [11] Once God has spoken;  
twice have I heard this:  
that power belongs to God,
- [12] and that to you, O Lord, belongs steadfast love.  
For you will render to a man  
according to his work.

**Pray:**

**Introduction:**

**January 2018:** 2 killed and 18 injured in a school shooting at Marshall County High School in Benton, KY.

**February 2018:** A school shooting in Parkland Florida kills 17 students and staff.

**March 2018:** Former LDS mission's president Joseph Bishop is accused of multiple counts of abuse.

**April 2018:** Wildfires sweep across large parts of Arizona destroying thousands and thousands of acres of forest and wildlife.

**May 2018:** An earthquake in Hawaii causes a volcanic eruption and ensuing lava flow that has covered more than 12 square miles and has destroyed over 700 homes.

**June 2018:** A 17 year old boy, Antwon Rose Jr., is shot three times and killed following a routine traffic stop.

**August 2018:** The whole elder council of Willow Creek Church steps down after a mishandling of abuse allegations against Bill Hybels from at least 10 women spanning 42 years of ministry.

Now, all of these stories were found with a quick google search. I didn't need to dig deep to find the many instances of evil and tragedy that have happened in our country so far in 2018.

**But most of us realize that this is only scratching the surface.**

If we were to dig deep enough we would find thousands upon thousands of stories of evil and tragedy not only within our own country, but also within the world at large. Stories of political unrest and overthrow, suicide bombings, natural disasters, bridges collapsing, abuse scandals, etc...

**Unless we have lived our lives with our heads in the sand and have completely isolated ourselves these sorts of things should not surprise us.**

Instead they should bring to mind God's words in Genesis 8:21 when he says: "*...the intention of man's heart is evil from his youth...*" or the words of Paul in Romans 8:20-21 which say:

*[20] For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope [21] that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God.*

Through Adam sin entered the world, and corrupted everything in all creation. I know that you all understand this, and that I'm not telling you anything new.

For many of us these evils and tragedy's don't shock us anymore. We see or hear of a school shooting, natural disaster, kidnapping, or car bombing, and we almost react with an **emotionless indifference**. We do this because these things have become so common place in our world and culture.

But let me ask you this: **How do we respond when evil and tragedy meet us at your front door and step right into our lives? Are you and I emotionally indifferent?**

**No.**

If we're honest many of us begin to freak out. We tirelessly work and fret over alleviating, eliminating, or fixing whatever evil, trail, or hard has come our way. We begin to frantically pray hoping that God will just take it away from us so that we don't have to experience any pain and hardship.

We might even begin to question God with questions like: *"Why me...?"* Or we begin to accuse God of working against us or not working for our good.

And it is our responses in these personal tragedies, hardships, and experiences of evil that most reveal what we believe to be true about the world and God. **And they make it clear where we are putting our present and eternal hope.**

So this morning I would like to offer you, **in this Psalm**, a way through personal trials, and really a way to live, that is better than mere indifference, and yet is an antidote to the personal freak outs that can often befall us in the crises of life.

It begins with the belief and understanding that **we will** experience evil and tragedy in this life (3-4). Second, we must believe that we serve a powerful and gracious God who is for us through Christ (2, 6, 7, 11-12). Finally, our response to those truths should be to rest, hope, and trust in Christ in the face of evil and tragedy (1, 5, 8. 9-10).

### **1. Believe that you will experience evil in this life. (V. 3-4)**

*[3] How long will all of you attack a man  
to batter him,  
like a leaning wall, a tottering fence?  
[4] They only plan to thrust him down from his high position.  
They take pleasure in falsehood.  
They bless with their mouths,  
but inwardly they curse.*

This Psalm is a Psalm's of David where he's crying out against evil men who are working against him for his destruction. This is a theme that is very common in the Psalms and particularly in the psalms of David.

Look with me at Psalm 3:1-2:

*[1] O LORD, how many are my foes!  
Many are rising against me;  
[2] many are saying of my soul,  
“There is no salvation for him in God.”*

Psalm 13:3-4:

*[3] Consider and answer me, O LORD my God;  
light up my eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death,  
[4] lest my enemy say, “I have prevailed over him,”  
lest my foes rejoice because I am shaken.*

Psalm 31:11, 13:

*[11] Because of all my adversaries I have become a reproach,  
especially to my neighbors,  
and an object of dread to my acquaintances;  
those who see me in the street flee from me.*

*[13] For I hear the whispering of many—  
terror on every side!—  
as they scheme together against me,  
as they plot to take my life.*

These are only but a few instances within the Psalms where he is describing the evil that he is experiencing from those around him, but we can plainly see that David is no stranger to evil and its effects on his life.

He has endured scoffing, slander, war, attempts on his life, traitors, exile, and tragedy in many ways that most of us could never fathom and probably will never experience.

**But that doesn't mean we have never experienced evil and tragedy and it doesn't mean we somehow deserve or should expect to experience less than David did.**

On the contrary, for many of us we have experienced the personal tragedy and loss of a loved one, whether it be through sickness, an accident, substance abuse, suicide, or maybe even through the evil of another person.

Maybe you have or are currently walking through medical or emotional traumas that are a consistent reminder that evil and sin have corrupted our bodies.

Or maybe you have or are experiencing the present evil of this world in the form of slander, persecution or abuse by another human being or group of people.

**As a side note, if you are currently experiencing abuse by another human being I encourage you to talk to someone. Talk to one us as your elders and get help now.**

But all of these point us to the truth that we all have been affected by the evil of this world. **We cannot and should not expect to escape it.**

As the apostle Paul writes in Ephesians 5:15:

*[15] Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, [16] making the best use of the time, because the days are evil.*

He also says writes one chapter later in Ephesians 6:12:

*[12] For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.*

Evil is real, it is all around us, it is working against us, and in this life we will experience it. None of us are exempt. So as we look to deal with the evil and tragedies that we experience in this life we must first come to grips with this reality.

It doesn't mean we should be emotionally indifferent to the evil, but it does mean that we need to rightly understand we live in a fallen world, we have an enemy in the spiritual realm who is working against us, and **we will time and time again be forced to walk through evil and tragedy until the day we die or until Christ returns.**

But there is hope.

**2. Believe that we serve a powerful and gracious God who is for us through Christ (V. 2, 6, 7, 11-12)**

*[2] He alone is my rock and my salvation,  
my fortress; I shall not be greatly shaken.*

*[6] He only is my rock and my salvation,  
my fortress; I shall not be shaken.  
[7] On God rests my salvation and my glory;  
my mighty rock, my refuge is God.*

*[11] Once God has spoken;  
twice have I heard this:  
that power belongs to God,  
[12] and that to you, O Lord, belongs steadfast love.  
For you will render to a man  
according to his work.*

As I said earlier, David, has experienced the evil of this world in a way that many of us never will. And if we were not reading scripture, but were reading some other story, we would almost expect him to come to a point where he says, ***“I give up. I am done with this king thing. It’s too hard and too many people are speaking evil against me and trying to kill me. I’m out.”***

And we would probably think to ourselves, ***“I totally get it.”*** If we are honest that can at times be our response. When we experience the evil and hard realities of this world we so easily want to tap out and say, ***“I’m done.”***

*Maybe your kids are disobedient and you start fantasizing about who will take them. Maybe you are going through marriage struggles and you start to feel that voice tell you that you would be better off alone.*

*You come down with a life threatening illness or disease and begin to despair or get angry as if somehow you’ve been given a raw deal that you don’t deserve. Maybe someone tears you down or speaks against your character in a way that so hurts you that all you can think about is lashing out at them or vindicating yourself.*

*I know for myself that there have been times in my life where the pressures, whether real or imagined, have pushed me to a place where I have surely thought that a small isolated cabin away from civilization was God’s plan for my life.*

**But we need to remember in those moments that our thoughts are lying to us.** They are lies, coming from our enemy, the devil, who desires nothing more than to destroy our lives and the lives of those around us. As 1 Peter 5:8 says:

***[8] Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.***

**But there is a way to overcome these lies. We overcome them by enticing, and encouraging our hearts to believe the truth of who our god is, and who he is for us through Christ.**

**And according to this psalm, we need to remind and encourage our hearts to believe that God is our rock, fortress, refuge, and salvation.**

This idea of God being a rock means that he is someone who is steady and consistent in all he does. He is someone who will endure and come through for his people. He is a strong God who will not change, and as his people we can rely upon and trust him.

As our fortress and refuge, we must believe that God is the one who is protecting us and defending us through the struggles, trials, and attacks of the enemy and other people that come at us in this life. **That is absolute truth that comes right from this very psalm.**

**But I want to pause on that for a moment.** What I have said is true, but I realize that it would be easy to assume that the psalmist is talking about a defense and protection that are purely physical.

**Now, are there are times that God protects us and defends us physically in life?  
Absolutely!**

We end up protected in a car accident, or a child is protected from an abuser, or God miraculously works miracles to heal someone from diseases. These things are real and we should praise God for them, and pray for these kinds of things. **But he doesn't always work that way.**

There are real physical and emotional trials, sicknesses, and abuses that God's people go through that he does not keep them from. And there are even people who lose their lives as a result.

We can see evidence of this in what Paul writes in 2 Corinthians 4:8-10:

2 Corinthians 4:8–10

*[8] We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; [9] persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; [10] always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies.*

Paul was a man who went through many physical hardships including shipwrecks, stonings, and floggings. God did not keep him from these abuses or the trials. In fact, most of the apostles and many of the early disciples lost their lives for the cause of Christ.

Today, many Christians are still suffering and dying either because of physical ailments, starvation, or persecution. Even David himself endured exile, hunger, and of course the relentless attacks of evil men.

**So how can David then call God his rock, fortress, and refuge, or how can Paul say that he is not crushed, not driven to despair, not forsaken, and not destroyed?**

Because they know that God is not just their rock, fortress, and rescue for today but for eternity. And their greatest treasures are not physical, but are laid up for them and us in an eternity with God through Christ.

As Paul writes a few verses later in 2 Corinthians 4:17-18:

*[17] For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, [18] as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.*

Paul's hope is not in God protecting him from physical ailments or beatings, **but it is in God who is protecting and helping him to endure those things through Christ so that he will receive the eternal glory that will one day be his with God.**

In the same way David's writes in verses 11-12 of Psalm 62:

*[11] Once God has spoken;  
twice have I heard this:  
that power belongs to God,  
[12] and that to you, O Lord, belongs steadfast love.  
For you will render to a man  
according to his work.*

He knew the same thing that Paul knew. That evil men could persecute him, he could be struck down, perplexed, and beaten, but all real power belongs to God who will one day judge each person according to their work and how they have lived.

For those who have rejected God and have sought after the riches and pleasures of this world as their hope they will receive judgement.

**But to those who have made God their treasure, delight, rock, refuge, and rescue, to them belongs his unfailing love, and they will receive the eternal gift, reward, and glory of a life well lived for him. And all of this is made possible through the shed blood of Christ which is ours today as God's people.**

So live and believe that God is powerful, and is lovingly working on your behalf today. Like Paul and David he is your rock and fortress who is helping you to **endure the trials** of life in a way that may bring physical relief.

But more importantly, God is working on your behalf through Christ, so that you would **endure as a Christian** for his glory, **and receive the eternal glory that he is preparing for you right now.**



**Recap:** *First we endure personal trials by believing that we will experience evil. Secondly, we endure by believing that our powerful rescuer is working to prepare us for and prepare for us an eternity and glory that is far greater than we will ever or could ever experience in this life. So then, in light of these truths, how should we respond?*

**3. Our response should be to rest, hope, and trust in God in the face of evil and tragedy (1, 5, 8, 9-10).**

*[1] For God alone my soul waits in silence;  
from him comes my salvation.*

*[5] For God alone, O my soul, wait in silence,  
for my hope is from him.*

*[8] Trust in him at all times, O people;  
pour out your heart before him;  
God is a refuge for us.*

As I look around the room this morning, I realize that some of you are dealing with weighty and hard things. Brandon Wilkins just spent 6 out of the last 10 days in the hospital and was in a ton of pain. He and his family have had real life hard going on.

As a side note, if you didn't get a chance to read his thoughts on those last 10 days I encourage you to go read them on Facebook. **They hit the heart of this message so well that I'm pretty sure he should be giving this message instead of me.**

But I know that many of you have your own stuff. Hard relationships, medical issues, marriage issues, parenting issues, emotional issues, loss, etc... None of us can escape it nor should we try.

Yet we don't have to wallow in self-pity. We don't have to live in fear. We don't have to fret over how something is going to get fixed. We don't have to worry about having enough money to pay the bills. We don't have to worry about how others will respond to us, or if the doctors will do their job right, or if we will even get vindication in this life.

Because our forever hope, trust, and peace are not in these things. As David writes in verse 9-10.

*[9] Those of low estate are but a breath;  
those of high estate are a delusion;  
in the balances they go up;  
they are together lighter than a breath.*

*[10] Put no trust in extortion;  
set no vain hopes on robbery;  
if riches increase, set not your heart on them.*

This world and everything in it, including us, are but a breath, and therefore are vain hopes. They cannot and will not provide real security or real rest, and in the end they cannot rescue you.

Instead you and I have a God who is powerful, who loves us in a full and perfect way because of Christ. And he is working in all our stuff, both good and bad, so that we would behold him, stand in awe of him, trust him, love him, hope in him, and rest in him, with the assurance that he is preparing us for and preparing for us an eternal glory that will be ours on that day when he renders to each man according to his work.

So let us begin today, and every day to entice and encourage our hearts today to remember and believe these truths about who our god is, and who he is for us through Christ.

Let us pray them, meditate on them, speak them to ourselves in the midst of suffering, trials, and evil so that we may endure this life with a peace and rest in our souls that surpasses all understanding as we live, work, and wait for the blessed eternity that awaits us with Christ forever.

**Let's Pray.**