

Leaning on the Lord

Psalm 62

Studies in the Psalms #63

HIGH wind advisory, high surf advisory. Wind gusts, storm surge. That's about the extent of our big winter storm, but it's still a great time to consider the power of God's creation. It's still a great illustration of what our Psalm is about. The world apart from God is like a chaotic storm. What are you going to trust when the water rises, the waves come crashing in, and the wind is furious? Psalm 62 is a description of LEANING ON THE LORD.

CHAOS OF THE WORLD

Let's start in verses 3–4 and THE CHAOS OF THE WORLD. I'll explain why in a moment, so bear with me. Verse 3 asks the question: **How long will all of you attack a man to batter him, like a leaning wall, a tottering fence?**¹ At first read it sounds like the world is bearing down like hurricane force winds on people and the effect is that those being beaten are **like a leaning wall, a tottering fence**. The wicked seem strong as they prey upon the weak. But the reality is the wicked *are* **like a leaning wall, a tottering fence**. They're the weak ones! We say to our children that bullies bully because they're insecure, because there's something going on with them. Even though the wicked are weak they lash out to **attack and batter**. How do they attack? **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 (v. 4). To put it in our terms, the wicked are full of hot air!

CONFIDENCE IN THE LORD

I had up start with verses 3–4 because while it seems the wicked literally surround us on every side, notice literarily our enemies are surrounded by God in verses 1–2 and then 5–6 in a refrain of CONFIDENCE IN THE LORD.

For God alone my soul waits [that’s an indicative, or statement of fact] *in silence; from him comes my salvation. He alone is my rock and my salvation, my fortress; I shall not be greatly shaken* (vv. 1–2). To trust the Lord, brothers and sisters, is to have inner security despite outside turmoil. It’s not to ignore the turmoil, but it’s to know its context is the power of God.

Look at why he’s confident: In contrast to the wicked who are **like a leaning wall, a tottering fence** what is God like? **He alone is my rock**. The first time God is described this way is in Deuteronomy 32. Turn there for a moment. In verse 4 we read: “The **Rock**, his work is perfect, for all his ways are justice. A God of faithfulness and without iniquity, just and upright is he.” Being a Rock means he’s stable in justice. In verse 15: “But Jeshurun [a name for Israel] grew fat, and kicked; you grew fat, stout, and sleek; then he forsook God who made him and scoffed at the **Rock** of his salvation.” This is a

reminder of their complaints in the wilderness but God was the Rock from which water came to save them from thirst. In verse 18: “You were unmindful of the **Rock** that bore you, and you forgot the God who gave you birth.”

Again, an image of stability as they left Egypt and the traversed the wilderness. Verse 30 describes their victories over their enemies: “How could one have chased a thousand, and two have put ten thousand to flight, unless their **Rock** had sold them, and the LORD had given them up?” Then we read in verse 31: “For their **rock** is not as our **Rock**; our enemies are by themselves.”

All gods are rocks, but ours is true and victorious! Elsewhere we read, “There is none holy like the LORD: for there is none besides you; there is no **rock** like our God” (1 Sam. 2:2). “For who is God, but the Lord? And who is a **rock**, except our God? (2 Sam. 22:32); “Is there a God besides me? There is no **Rock**; I know not any” (Isa. 44:8).

This is why he repeats the refrain in verses 5–6, but note the difference:

For God alone, O my soul, wait [that’s an imperative] **in silence, for my hope is from him. He only is my rock and my salvation, my fortress; I shall not be shaken.** And again he states this as an indicative in verse 7, which forms the center of the Psalm: **On God rests my salvation and my glory; my mighty**

rock, my refuge is God. Our confidence is in the Lord brothers and sisters.

One of my Old Testament professors described the application of this like this:

From this psalm we learn the importance of taking time to be quiet before God when there is turmoil in our lives. Our temptation is to move into high gear to stay ahead of the storm. While there is a time and place for action, our activity is often a form of self-reliance. So our external pace is as hectic as our internal space. Quieting our souls before God and centering on him as the source of our well-being will produce the state of heart and mind needed to take action when appropriate.²

CONTINUED CONFIDENCE IN THE LORD

The Psalm ends with a series of imperatives that teach us as God's children the importance of *CONTINUED* CONFIDENCE IN THE LORD.

Verse 8 is one of my favorite verses: **Trust in him at all times, O people; pour out your heart before him; God is a refuge for us.** Because we're behind the walls that God provides from the storms, we can emote, we can cry, we can lay every single burden we have at his feet knowing he's able and willing to take them to himself. **Pour out your heart;** don't hold back!

We're confident in God as our rock in contrast to the leaning walls and tottering fences that are our enemies of the world, the flesh, and the devil. Look at how we describe them in verse 9: **Those of low estate (*bene-Adam*) are but a breath; those of high estate (*bene-ish*) are a delusion; in the balances they go up; they are together lighter than a breath.** The word **breath** at the end is *hebel*, which you might recognize from Ecclesiastes: "vanity." Because

this is who they are **put no trust in extortion; set no vain hopes on robbery** as they do. **If riches increase, set not your heart on them** (v. 10).

In contrast, we know **that power belongs to God** (v. 11), but even more, **that to you, O LORD, belongs steadfast love** or covenant faithfulness. Have no fear of them, beloved, they're leaning and tottering and one day will fall when God judges: **for you will render to a man according to his work** (v. 12).

Notes

¹ Motyer and Bonar take these references to the wicked themselves, whom it seems are strong preying on the weak but are in reality the weak ones about to be broken. *Psalms by the Day*, 163 n16; Bonar, 187..

² Futato, 211–212.