

LESSON 9
October 27, 2024

Unit II: Songs of the Old Testament
Let the Silence Speak

DEVOTIONAL READING: Jeremiah 17:5-11
BACKGROUND SCRIPTURE: Psalm 62
PRINT PASSAGE: Psalm 62:1-12

KEY VERSE

My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from him. (Psalm 62:5, KJV)

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Yes, my soul, find rest in God; my hope comes from him. (Psalm 62:5, NIV)

Lesson Aims

As a result of experiencing this lesson, you should be able to do the following:

- Review the role of stillness and silence in defining Israel's relationship with Yahweh.
- Experience the calm that comes from knowing God as a source of peace and protection.
- Recall an experience when turning to God in silence brought greater peace than turning to alternative sources of solitude.

***Key Terms**

Balance (verse 9)—Hebrew: *mozen* (mo-zane'): a scale; a pair of scales.

Excellency (verse 4)—Hebrew: *gā'ôn* (gaw-ohn'): majesty; exaltation; excellence; "lofty place" (NIV).

Refuge (verse 7)—Hebrew: *machaseb* (makh-as-eh'): from a Semitic root word, *chasab*, which means shelter, protection, or to go aside; hope; trust.

Salvation (verse 1)—Hebrew: *yeshuah* (yesh-oo'-aw): deliverance; help; prosperity; save; security; victory.

Tottering (verse 3)—Hebrew: *kashal* (kaw-shal'): feeble; stumbling; easily overthrown; weak; failing.

***(Word Study Supplement—Refer to page 2)**

Introduction

Silence and solitude, like ancient companions, beckon us to a deeper understanding of our souls and the rhythm of life. In their quiet embrace, we find solace, reflection, and connection to something beyond the mundane. Let us explore this sacred dance of silence and solitude. Silence is not merely the absence of noise; it is a profound presence. Here, the soul speaks in hushed tones, revealing its longings, fears,



The Biblical Context

The title of this psalm is “To the Chief Musician. To Jeduthun. A Psalm of David” (NKJV). Jeduthun was one of the musicians appointed by David to lead Israel’s public worship (see 1 Chronicles 16:41; 25:1). David, the great king and psalmist, composed this psalm. While no specific event is associated with Psalm 62, it may relate to David’s time as a fugitive from Saul (see 1 Samuel 19:1-2). David faced many trials and enemies throughout his life, and this psalm reflects his trust in God during difficult times. Psalm 62 emphasizes trust in God for salvation, stability, and protection. It speaks of waiting silently before God, surrendering to His sovereignty, and finding refuge in Him. The psalm contrasts human frailty with God’s unwavering strength. Psalm 62 reminds us that our ultimate refuge is in God, regardless of life’s challenges.

and hopes. Silence teaches us patience. In silence, we learn to trust the unseen processes shaping our lives. Solitude is the sacred space where silence finds its home. In solitude, we encounter God, ourselves, and the mysteries that lie beyond our comprehension. Psalm 62:5-6 declares, “Yes, my soul, find rest in God; my hope comes from him. Truly he is my rock and my salvation; he is my fortress, I will not be shaken” (NIV). Here, the psalmist anchors his soul in the unshakable truth of God’s presence. Solitude becomes the rock upon which we build our inner sanctuary, fortified against life’s storms. As we embrace silence and solitude, we discover that they are not empty spaces but fertile ground. So, let us heed the ancient call—to be still, to seek solitude, and to let our souls speak in whispers that echo throughout eternity.

ANALYSIS OF THE BIBLICAL TEXT

Waiting in Silence (*Psalm 62:1-4*)

KJV

TRULY MY soul waiteth upon God: from him cometh my salvation.

2 He only is my rock and my salvation; he is my defence; I shall not be greatly moved.

3 How long will ye imagine mischief against a man? ye shall be slain all of you: as a bowing wall shall ye be, and as a tottering fence.

4 They only consult to cast him down from his excellency: they delight in lies: they bless with their mouth, but they curse inwardly. Selah.

NIV

TRULY MY soul finds rest in God; my salvation comes from him.

2 Truly he is my rock and my salvation; he is my fortress, I will never be shaken.

3 How long will you assault me? Would all of you throw me down—this leaning wall, this tottering fence?

4 Surely they intend to topple me from my lofty place; they take delight in lies. With their mouths they bless, but in their hearts they curse.

The psalmist confessed his strong desire for God’s presence and compared it to the thirst of someone in a waterless land. This psalm expresses the psalmist’s trust in God’s ultimate victory against his murderous foes and is a personal lament (**verses 1-2**). The composer is identified as David, reflecting his time in the wilderness, which makes the thirst metaphor particularly fitting (see 1 Samuel 21-23). The psalmist expresses confidence in God’s ability to protect him instead of complaining despite his circumstances’ causing him anxiety. He took comfort in his relationship with God, knowing that God was his salvation and the solution to his troubles. He used metaphors of protection, such as a rock and a fortress, to convey his belief that God would not let his attackers overwhelm him. The psalmist

began his complaint by asking, “How long?” This question is common in prayers and indicates that he had been in pain for a long time without seeing an end in sight. It also conveys his belief that he had had enough (**verse 3**). Although the Hebrew is better translated as “How long will you assault a person?” the NIV notes that the psalmist was speaking indirectly of himself. His attackers perceived his weakness, which is conveyed through metaphors such as a *leaning wall* and a *tottering fence* (**verse 4**). These attackers were hypocrites who thrived on deception and sought to undermine the psalmist’s remaining strength.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

How do you practice waiting silently before God in your life?

Security in God (*Psalm 62:5-9*)

KJV

5 My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from him.

6 He only is my rock and my salvation: he is my defence; I shall not be moved.

7 In God is my salvation and my glory: the rock of my strength, and my refuge, is in God.

8 Trust in him at all times; ye people, pour out your heart before him: God is a refuge for us. Selah.

9 Surely men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lie: to be laid in the balance, they are altogether lighter than vanity.

NIV

5 Yes, my soul, find rest in God; my hope comes from him.

6 Truly he is my rock and my salvation; he is my fortress, I will not be shaken.

7 My salvation and my honor depend on God; he is my mighty rock, my refuge.

8 Trust in him at all times, you people; pour out your hearts to him, for God is our refuge.

9 Surely the lowborn are but a breath, the highborn are but a lie. If weighed on a balance, they are nothing; together they are only a breath.

In the aftermath of an attack, the composer found comfort in God and encouraged himself to place hope in Him (**verse 5**). He acknowledged that God was his defense against his adversaries. Still, this time, he emphasized that God was the source of his hope rather than his savior. He restated and expanded on the ideas expressed in the first section, describing God as his refuge and fortress and adding the metaphor of a rock to reinforce God’s protective role (**verses 6-7**). The psalmist addressed the congregation for the first time and encouraged them to trust in God’s ability to protect them (**verse 8**). God was their protection, and human beings are no threat. The “highborn” and “lowborn” are used as a merism (citing the poles to mean everything in between), indicating all humanity (**verse 9**). The word *breath* (*hebel*) is well known throughout the book of Ecclesiastes. It is typically translated as “meaningless,” although elsewhere, it could also have the temporal meaning “transient.” The highborn are also a lie because they look substantial but are not.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

What practical steps can we take to help us trust God more fully?

Recognizing God's Power (*Psalms 62:10-12*)

KJV

10 Trust not in oppression, and become not vain in robbery: if riches increase, set not your heart upon them.

11 God hath spoken once; twice have I heard this; that power belongeth unto God.

12 Also unto thee, O Lord, belongeth mercy: for thou renderest to every man according to his work.

NIV

10 Do not trust in extortion or put vain hope in stolen goods; though your riches increase, do not set your heart on them.

11 One thing God has spoken, two things I have heard: "Power belongs to you, God,

12 "and with you, Lord, is unfailing love"; and, "You reward everyone according to what they have done."

With this observation, the composer again turned to the congregation to urge them to put their trust in God rather than in wealth, particularly wealth amassed illegitimately (by extortion or theft) (**verse 10**). The book of Proverbs is filled with warnings about ill-gotten gains or putting trust in wealth (see Proverbs 11:4). After all, such wealth does not last (see Proverbs 11:18). The passage emphasizes the protective nature of God and highlights the insignificance of human threats. The terms "highborn" and "lowborn" are used to refer to all human beings (**verse 9**). The word *breath* (*hebel*) is frequently used throughout the book of Ecclesiastes. While it is usually translated as "meaningless," it can also mean "temporary." The "highborn" are considered deceitful because they appear to be substantial, but they are not.

Similarly, the book of Proverbs discourages relying on dishonest earnings or wealth, as they are short-lived and do not last. In this psalm, the writer affirms two important truths about God. First, God's own words in **verse 11** confirm that He is all-powerful and He is also characterized by unfailing love or loyal love, known as *chesed* in Hebrew. Therefore, God would not allow the psalmist to suffer at the hands of those who assaulted him, as stated in **verse 12**. Second, the psalmist believed that God will ensure that everyone receives their "just deserts," indicating that the psalmist would be rescued, while his enemies would be punished. This belief is echoed in Proverbs 24:12. After all, God is powerful and shows great fidelity to His people. Thus, He will make sure that those who assault the righteous will receive their just deserts (**verse 12**). Paul quotes this psalm's final verse in Romans 2:6, where he speaks about God's righteous judgment, encouraging his hearers to pursue God rather than their own stubborn and unrepentant hearts.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Discuss the contrast between temporal sources of security and God's unchanging nature.

A Closing Thought

Silence and solitude compose a symphony within us. Like skilled musicians, we learn to harmoniously play our instruments—the heart, mind, and spirit. We hear the gentle notes of grace, forgiveness, and healing in the quietude. We confront our brokenness and find the courage to mend/heal. Solitude becomes the rock upon which we build our inner sanctuary, fortified against life’s storms.

Your Life

Incorporating stillness into our busy lives is essential for our well-being. Here is one practical way to cultivate moments of quietude—*A Digital Detox*: Our devices constantly bombard us with information. Designate specific times to disconnect from screens—no e-mails, no social media. Use this time for reflection or a leisurely walk.

Your World!

Teaching children the value of silence is a beautiful endeavor that can shape their inner lives and foster mindfulness. Children learn by observing. Show them that silence is not awkward or empty but a space for reflection. Practice moments of quieting yourself—during meals, walks, or bedtime.

Closing Prayer

Dear God, forgive our tendency to allow others’ influence to override our responsibility to obey Your will submissively. Help us develop the spiritual sight that will enable us to see Your way as best for us and to trust You to meet all of our needs. It is in the name of Jesus that we pray. Amen.

Conclusion

(Preparing for Next Week’s Lesson)

What practical implications can we draw from the Lord’s being our Shepherd? Next week’s lesson answers this question for us (Psalm 23).

Home Daily Bible Readings

MONDAY, October 28	“Sheep without a Shepherd”	(Ezekiel 34:1-6)
TUESDAY, October 29	“God Opposes Unfit Leaders”	(Ezekiel 34:7-16)
WEDNESDAY, October 30	“God Will Appoint a Shepherd”	(Ezekiel 34:17-31)
THURSDAY, October 31	“The Good Shepherd Defends the Flock”	(John 10:1-10)
FRIDAY, November 1	“The Good Shepherd Gives His Life”	(John 10:11-18)
SATURDAY, November 2	“The Lamb Will Be Their Shepherd”	(Revelation 7:1-4, 9-17)
SUNDAY, November 3	“The Lord Is My Shepherd”	(Psalm 23)