

"God Helps Those Whose Only Help Is God." Feb. 24, 2013

Psalm 62

In the Name of Jesus, Dear Fellow Redeemed,

"God helps those who help themselves!" How often we have heard this. "It's in the Bible!" people say. It isn't! When Eve "helped herself," God rewarded her with death!

David teaches something else in the Psalm before us. He is describing how he suffered at the hands of those who tried to take away his throne as the King of Israel. His enemies were so confident in their opposition that David says they regarded him as a **"leaning wall and a tottering fence,"** which only needed one final push to be entirely toppled. In order to humiliate David and take away his crown they used **"lies and curses"** we are told.

But in the face of all this, David does not express fear or anxiety. Rather he expresses his complete confidence in God alone. The Psalmist does NOT teach us that "God helps those who help themselves." David testifies that

## **GOD HELPS THOSE WHOSE ONLY HELP IS GOD!**

### **I.**

In v. 1 and again in v. 5 David tells us his **"soul waits in silence for God."** We live in a noise-polluted world. A person can hardly drive down the streets of our city without the noise of someone's car radio. The first thing our teachers must do when our overly stimulated children enter the classroom is to quiet them down. Few are the people who prefer listening to speaking, or silence to sounding off!

And yet, in time of trouble or suffering, it's extremely important to **"wait in silence for God."**

This means humbly recognizing at the outset that God is in charge of our lives, not us. God had made David King of Israel. When David's kingdom and life were threatened, he might have complained to God, but he did not. David knew that his salvation was **from God.** Although he might tremble a bit, he would not be **"greatly shaken,"** because God was his **"Rock."** As the Rock

of our salvation in Christ, our God is to be rested upon in silence, without complaining in faithless fear and frustration.

Neither are we to create a disturbance by taking matters into our own hands. How often we jump to our own defense, making all sorts of noise, rather than quietly **praying** for the Lord's guidance and help as to what we ought to do or say. But consider David.

Word had come to him that his own son, Absalom, was marching toward Jerusalem with a huge army. Rather than rushing to do battle, David retreated into the wilderness to his loyal followers. He poured out his soul to the Lord for guidance. David was not a coward; but he was afraid to commit sin by hasty action. So he begged the Lord to direct him.

Then Zadok and the Levites brought the Ark of the Covenant out of the city in order that the presence of God might go with David. But David said: **"Carry the Ark of God back into the city. If I find favor in the eyes of the Lord, He will bring me back and show me both it and the place of His dwelling. But if He says: 'I have no delight in you,' then here I am, let Him do to me as it seems good to Him."** (2Sam. 15:25-27) David waited in silence for God!

Later, David came to Bahurim. There a man by the name of Shimei from the family of Saul, threw stones and kicked dirt at the king, shouting: **"Get out, get out, you man of bloodshed, and worthless fellow!"** Such abuse of their king made David's **"mighty men"** angry. One of them offered to cut off Shimei's head! But David answered: **"Let him alone and let him curse, for so the Lord has told him. Perhaps the Lord will look on my affliction and turn good to me instead of his cursing this day."** (2Sam. 16:11-12)

So David and his men continued on their way, while Shimei continued to curse and cast stones and dirt at David. Read 2Samuel 15-16 and learn what it means to silently wait for God by not taking matters into your own hands!

Finally, to wait in silence for God means that we do not always feel the need to run to everyone else before we run to God. When we talk too fast and too much to others about our troubles, we are

apt to say too little about them to our God. Perhaps you have heard the saying: "Talking of trouble makes it double." But God is our strength, our Rock, and our Refuge.

If we, like David, go to our God in silent conversation with Him, then we will not feel such a great need for the sympathy of others. So Luther wrote: "Bear and forbear, and silent be, tell no man thy misery; yield not in trouble to dismay, God can deliver any day!" Our God is a refuge for us! Therefore the Psalmist writes in v. 8: **"Trust in Him at all times, you people: pour out your heart before Him."**

## II.

Others are not to be the object of our trust. So often we choose to place our confidence in another human before taking the matter to God. But notice that the words **"only"** and **"alone"** are repeated in this Psalm to emphasize that God alone is truly worthy of our trust and confidence.

Verse 9 says: **"Those of low degree" (that is, the common man) "are mere vapor (breath)."** The majority of people are unstable, being driven back and forth by the winds of personal emotions and subjectivity. Even those we count as our closest friends have their "bad days." Woe to us if we ask their counsel on a "bad" day, or after we have had a disagreement with them, or when they are ill.

Someone may argue, "What about the very intelligent and well-educated among men?" Even these the Psalmist calls **"a lie"** when compared to our Lord. So, the common man and the "great" man are both unworthy of our trust as compared to God. If you add both types of men together and place them on a balance scale, they are lighter than **"a breath."** Building a house on them is like building on smoke instead of rock!

The Psalmist also warns us not to trust in ourselves. If we do, we may fall to using force and trusting vainly in **robbery** or some other sin in order to improve our situation. Neither are we to trust in the money we may gather, like the foolish rich man did, who trusted in his riches rather than in God. In v. 10 David says: **"If riches increase, do not set your heart upon them."** How

quickly riches may fly away! **"Riches have wings,"** Solomon writes in Proverbs 25.

On the other hand it is always wise to place our confidence in God alone. For when He **speaks "once,"** truth is established. David was content to wait in silence only upon his God, because God had revealed two things about Himself in the history of mankind.

First: v. 16, God possesses **"power."** Those who rise up in opposition to the will of God shall feel His power and be dashed to pieces by it! Consider the rulers of the nations in history who have opposed God or His Gospel! Where are they today?

Second: David saw that **"to the Lord belongs mercy."** History teaches that the Lord shows His mercy to those who **"wait upon Him for salvation,"** and submit their wills to His will. Our Lord **"resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble."** Think about it! Christ refused to show signs and miracles to the proud, self-righteous Jews who rejected His Word. But through the miracle of your Spirit-worked faith Christ has shown Himself to all of you who humbly confess your sins and trust in Jesus alone for salvation.

Would any of us build a house out of smoke? Of course not! Why then should we place our first confidence in human beings who are only breath? By your Savior's power sin, death, and hell were conquered on His cross. By His mercy you know and believe that He did it all for you that He might become your only help.

Our God will deal with each person according to his **"works,"** David says. To those whose works come from human pride and self-will, the power of God will bring punishment. But to those whose works come from a humble heart that trust in the grace of God in Christ alone, and who strive in love to obey God's word – to these will come divine mercy, help and salvation! Remember the teaching of this comforting Psalm: **"God helps those whose only help is God."** Amen.