

## PSALM 61

### *Confidence in God's Protection*

#### INTRODUCTION.

- A. To the Chief Musician. On a stringed instrument. A Psalm of David.
- B. This psalm is most frequently applied to David's thanksgiving on returning to Jerusalem after putting down the rebellion of Absalom.
- C. Coffman believes that it may have been written on David's fleeing the city in escaping Absalom.
- D. From early times in the church this has been sung as a morning prayer, and few hymn books today lack a song based on this psalm. Our hymnal has "The Rock that is Higher than I" by E. Johnson that is suggested in v2. "In the shelter of Your wings" in v4 is also a theme used in some of our songs.
- E. Coffman adopts Leupold's division of the psalm.
  - I. An exile's prayer for help (61:1-3).
  - II. His plea to dwell with God forever (61:4,5).
  - III. His prayer for "The King" (61:6-8).

#### THE TEXT.

Hear my cry, O God;  
Give heed to my prayer.  
2 From the end of the earth I call to You when my heart is faint;  
Lead me to the rock that is higher than I.  
3 For You have been a refuge for me,  
A tower of strength against the enemy.  
4 Let me dwell in Your tent forever;  
Let me take refuge in the shelter of Your wings. Selah.  
5 For You have heard my vows, O God;  
You have given *me* the inheritance of those who fear Your name.  
6 You will prolong the king's life;  
His years will be as many generations.  
7 He will abide before God forever;  
Appoint lovingkindness and truth that they may preserve him.  
8 So I will sing praise to Your name forever,  
That I may pay my vows day by day.

#### COMMENTS.

- A. An Exile's Prayer for Help (61:1-3).
  - [v1] "Hear my cry... attend to my prayer." No situation gets too bad for prayer, as James admonishes (Jas. 5:13).
  - [v2] "...the rock that is higher than I" refers to aid and assistance and protection from a power that was higher and stronger than David. (In ancient Israel, the Rock was a symbol of the love and protection of God.) See 1Cor. 10:1-4. "From the end of the earth..." David pledges to cry to God wherever he may be.
  - [v3] Verse 3 clearly describes how David considered God a Rock.
- B. His Plea to Dwell with God Forever (61:4,5).
  - [v4] "I will abide in Your tabernacle forever..." David is not suggesting that he can live in the literal tabernacle, but it represented God's presence, and is an appropriate figure of speech to indicate living in harmony with His will.
  - [v5] "...You have given me the heritage of those who fear Your name." The KJV also translates the word "heritage" as inheritance or possession. This refers to all of the blessings that David had in God, with the ultimate blessings in His Son.

C. His Prayer for “the King” (61:6-8).

**[v6]** “You will prolong the king’s life...” This seems to be David’s confidence that God will deliver him from the present distress.

**[v7]** “He will abide before God forever.” David pledges his faithfulness. “...prepare mercy and truth, which may preserve him!” We all need to realize that this is the only way that we can stand before God.

**[v8]** “So I will sing praise to Your name forever...” Those who truly receive God’s mercy and truth do love to sing His praises and tell others of the many blessings that they have received.