**Psalm Sixty-One**

*“The Rock that is Higher than I”*

**Introduction**

I

n another challenging episode of the life of the psalmist David, the disheartened sweet singer of Israel penned his problem and his praise. Categorized as a royal lament, this poem revealed little concerning the events other than the author was *“king”* (v. 6) who desired his place in the LORD’s Tabernacle (v. 4). The context posited David as King of Israel and not merely the anointed king under Saul. The backdrop bests suits David’s expulsion from Jerusalem in the revolt attempted by Absalom. Psalm 61 seems to harmonize with the titles and contexts of Psalms 42-50, and the related issues of the pursuit of the usurper Absalom. The psalm will receive this interpretation and exegesis.

**Structure**

As a pattern for believers, the psalmist found himself in a difficult valley of danger, despair, disappointment, discouragement, dejection, depression, despondency, or demoralization. He determined to petition the LORD and received deliverance for which David praised God. The following outline detailed the flow of the psalm.

A. The Cry of David (vv. 1-2)

B. The Confidence of David (vv. 3-7)

C. The Conduct of David (v. 8)

**Exegesis**

**A. The Cry of David (vv. 1-2)**

***1. The Direction of His Psalm (1a)***

a. Musical Instructor > Asaph > I Chr. 16:5, 7; Pss. 50, 73-83

b. Musical Instrument > *Neginah > Neginoth* (14x) >stringed instrument

***2. The Despair in His Psalm (1b-2)***

a. The Parallel >

1) The Imperative > *“Hear my cry”* *> “cry”* (*rinnah*) or loud singing

2) The Imperative > *“Attend unto my prayer”* *“attend”* (*qashav* [see Ps. 55:2])

b. The Place > end of the earth *“cry”* (*qara’*) > cf. Ps. 55:6-7

c. The Plight > my heart is overwhelmed *“is overwhelmed”* (*`ataph* [16x]).

d. The Petition > lead me to the rock *“lead”* (cf. Ps. 60:9)

1) I Sam. 13:6

2) Dt. 32:4

3) I Sam. 23:25-29

4) II Sam. 22:2-3

**B. The Confidence of David (vv. 3-7)**

***1. His Protection (v. 3)*** >

a. His Shelter > *machaceh* (20x)

b. His Strong tower > Prov. 18:10

***2. His Promise (v. 4)*** > Hab. 2:4

a. *“I will abide”* > *Tabernacle* *‘ohel* (345x) > place of worship > assembly > Acts 9:31; I Cor. 16:15; I Tim. 2:1-2; II Pet. 3:18

b. *“I will trust”* > covert > Mt. 23:37; Job 13:15 > *Selah!* (Asaph, end on a high note!)

***3. His Prospect (vv. 5-7)***

a. His Following (v. 5)

1) The Faithful God > Ps. 50:14-15

2) The Fearful Group

a) Heritage of Faith: Jerusalem and Land of Israel

b) Heroes of Faith: the 400 (I Sam. 22:2), the 600 (I Sam. 23:13), the “mighty men” (II Sam. 23:8)

b. His Future (v. 6)

1) Its Prolonging > Lev. 20:10; Ps. 90:10; I Ki. 1:1 > Acts 13:36 (II Sam. 5:4)

2) Its Perpetuation > the Davidic dynasty through Christ forever (Mt. 1:1-17)! > Ps. 89:35-37

c. His Fixture (v. 7)

1) His Abiding > *yashav* (1088x) or dwell

2) His Advocacy > *chesed* and *ameth* from Jehovah (II Sam. 15:20)

**C. The Conduct of David (v. 8)**

***1. His Singing (v. 8a)> “****sing praise” zimar*

***2. His Service (v. 8b) >*** *“daily perform my vows”* (*neder****)*** *>*Rev. 4:10-11; 5:12

**CONCLUSION: Betrayed and hunted by intimate friends, David sought solace in Jehovah his God.**