

## Psalm 62

After reading a description of the High Priest's garments, this Psalm cautions us not to take the High Priest's position as anything other than a servant of God. Because "men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lie" and vanity (verse 9).

**Psalm 62:1-2** - "Truly my soul waiteth upon God: from him cometh my salvation. He only is my rock and my salvation; he is my defense; I shall not be greatly moved."

"waiting" = *duwmiyah* - silent, confident expectation, remaining in rest and quiet.

"Only" is extremely important. We have no other rock or salvation.

(Note that verse 2 is repeated again in verse 6.)

"greatly moved" -

Rashi - I shall not "falter greatly" - According to the Midrash Aggadah (Mid. Ps. 62:2), "greatly" refers to Gehinnom.

## Gehenna

The Hinnom Valley - also called Tophet - was where some of the kings of Judah sacrificed their children by fire to Moloch, just beside the Temple.

**Isaiah 65:6-7** - "Behold, it is written before me: I will not keep silence, but will recompense, even recompense into their bosom, Your iniquities, and the iniquities of your fathers together, saith the LORD, which have burned incense upon the mountains, and blasphemed me upon the hills: therefore will I measure their former work into their bosom."

The Targum of this verse: "Their retribution is in Gehenna where the fire burns all the day. See, it is written before me: I will not give them respite during (their) life, for theirs is the retribution of their sins and I will hand over their body to the second death."

Gehenna was also known as Tophet, where idolatry was performed.

**Isaiah 30:33** - "For Tophet (Gehenna) is ordained of old; yea, for the king it is prepared; he hath made it deep and large: the pile thereof is fire and much wood; the breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it."

See **Revelation 21:8** - "But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death."

**Revelation 20:14** - "And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the

second death."

**Mark 9:43** - "And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched."

The picture of Gehenna as the place of punishment or destruction of the wicked occurs many times in the Mishna. Rabbi David Kimhi's commentary on **Psalm 27:13** (ca. 1200 AD). He maintained that in this loathsome valley fires were kept burning perpetually to consume the filth and rubbish, and cadavers were thrown into it.

David here is saying he is confident God will not let him fall into Gehenna.

**Psalm 62:4** - "They only consult to cast him down from his excellency: they delight in lies: they bless with their mouth, but they curse inwardly. Selah."

inwardly = *qereb* - in the inward parts, entrails; in the inner being, the center, the seat of thought and emotion.

This expression becomes momentous when we study the sacrifices later:

Consider the preparation of the sacrifice: **Exodus 29:17** - "And thou shalt cut the ram in pieces, and wash the inwards of him, and his legs, and put them unto his pieces, and unto his head."

Christ, as our substitute sacrifice, is completely clean inwardly. If we trust in Him, then God sees Christ's "inward parts," and our sins that spring from the inner thoughts and intents are nailed to the cross.

- **1 Corinthians 6:11** - "And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God."

**Psalm 62:8** - "Trust in him at all times; ye people, pour out your heart before him: God is a refuge for us. Selah."

"pour out" = *shaphak* - to spill forth as libation, to gush forth.

The Greek word in the Septuagint is "*ekcheo*" - used for the blood of the New Covenant "shed" or "poured forth" for many (**Mark 14:24, Matthew 26:28**); "That the blood of all the prophets, which was shed from the foundation of the world, may be required of this generation" (**Luke 11:50**); "And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh" (**Acts 2:17**); "the love of God is shed abroad" (**Romans 5:5**).

The idea is to open ourselves without reservation to God even unto death, as He has done for us.

**Psalm 62:9** - "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."

Added together, they would both weigh less than nothing.

"vanity" = *hebel* - emptiness, air or breath, things transitory

- **Psalm 118:8** - "It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man."

- **Psalm 146:3** - "Do not trust in princes, In mortal man, in whom there is no salvation."

**Psalm 62:10** - "Trust not in oppression, and become not vain in robbery: if riches increase, set not your heart upon them."

Or "pay no heed" - increased riches doesn't mean God is blessing them. Quite the opposite.

"oppression" = *osheq* - oppression, violence, extortion, fraud, unjust gain, cruelty. Especially used of oppressing the poor.

See **Ezekiel 22:29** - "The people of the land have used oppression, and exercised robbery (*osheq*) and have vexed the poor and needy: yea, they have oppressed the stranger wrongfully."

**Psalm 62:11-12** - "God hath spoken once; twice have I heard this; that power belongeth unto God. Also unto thee, O Lord, belongeth mercy: for thou renderest to every man according to his work."

The NET translates mercy as "loyal love" because the word includes an aspect of faithfulness/loyalty on God's part.

"mercy" = *hesed* - desire, ardor, love, kindness, favor. Mercy and pity when referring to those in misfortune. (Sometimes rarely - zeal, for or against someone, reproach).

But more importantly it can mean forgiveness:

- **Numbers 14:19** - "Pardon, I beseech thee, the iniquity of this people according unto the greatness of thy mercy (*hesed*) and as thou hast forgiven this people, from Egypt even until now."

The Jewish translation has "God spoke one thing, I heard two." The Talmud pairs this with **Jeremiah 23:29** - "Is not my word like fire, says the LORD, and like a hammer that breaks a rock in pieces?"

In R. Ishmael's School it was taught: And like a hammer that breaketh the rock in

pieces: i.e., just as [the rock] is split into many splinters, so also may one Biblical verse convey many teachings.

Rashi - First, that God has strength to repay a man according to his deed. Second, that You, O Lord, have kindness. It may also be interpreted: And You, O Lord, have kindness because You have the power to repay a man according to his deed. [but sometimes don't] **Ezra 9:13**: “for You, our God, have punished us less than our iniquities [deserve].”

(For Talmudic and early Christian commentaries on Psalm 62:11-12  
See <https://buff.ly/2u4TdgL> and <https://buff.ly/2FQzmr6> )