

# SOUTH GROVE FREE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

## Lord's Day Afternoon

Date 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2023

Preacher Pastor Philip Knowles

Hymns Ps 61:1-8 1<sup>st</sup> version T Salzburg, 575, 569

Read: Psalm 61:1-8      Text: Psalm 61:2      Title –  
Christ For The Overwhelmed

Many of the psalms were written by David and they show he was a man of prayer.

Through David's Psalms, we get an idea of the different circumstances which gave rise to many of these inspired prayers,

Such circumstances were in the form of troubles and trials and David was moved to pen his prayers.

This **61<sup>st</sup> Psalm** was based on the most extreme suffering that came upon David due to the heartbreak caused by his son Absalom.

I say that because it is agreed by many commentators, that David wrote this Psalm toward the end of his exile from Jerusalem when his son Absalom rebelled against him.

The background to the event is recorded in **2 Samuel ch 15-18**. Absalom conspired against David, to remove his father and take the throne.

To do this, Absalom needed a people on his side, that's why we read in **2 Sam 15:16** "**Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel**". They followed Absalom.

Absalom had done everything in his power to destroy his own father.

However, his rebellion also led to his own death, to which David wept over.

No Matter how much heartbreak caused by his son, David still loved his son Absalom.

we learn in 2 Samuel 18:33; 19:1-4, when David heard that Absalom was dead he ***“went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept... and cried with a loud voice, O my son Absalom, O Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!”***

The whole event between the rebellion and death of Absalom had worn David out.

He expresses himself as being overwhelmed, however, at the end of the Psalm, David find comfort from the Lord.

From a shattered parent full of sorrow, and a broken heart came a song of praise and worship.

David teaches us that when trials are past, there will be a time to praise again.

All because of Christ His rock. He is our salvation and song.

### **Christ For The Overwhelmed**

#### **IFRIST, THE CONDITION OF THE OVERWHELMED.**

With all that has taken place, David has fled from Jerusalem.

This is a great trouble to David. He is driven far away from God's house to what he calls ***“the end of the earth.”***

He has been driven into exile to dwell. David was brought to a very low place, such that causes him to cry out ***“my heart is overwhelmed.”***

The word **overwhelmed**, is a strong word meaning **to turn about**, it also translates as “**failing; faint, weak, and to cover**”, as in **Ps 78:53**, ***the covering of my heart***.

The idea here is that “**sorrows have covered and come upon the heart and have sapped strength away.**”

David is fainting, and so the words could be read, “***my heart is in anguish, my heart is in heaviness. Or my heart is sinking.***”

His heart was turned about, he was tossed to and fro.

David feels himself to be alone in an ocean, where the waves are coming one after another.

He is tossed about, turned every side by the force of the waves. He feels knocked down, he can't get up, and he cannot take it anymore.

***My heart is overwhelmed***, my heart is tossed about, my heart is covered by trouble.

His own son had rebelled against him. His own family had turned on him. Absalom wanted his father David out of the picture. This is a family issue.

Among God's people, not all, have the exact situation as David. But none the less, this was a real feeling with David, this trial overwhelmed him, and that feeling is experienced by so many of God's people.

Many are overwhelmed by family circumstances, such as children rebelling, backsliding, a spouse cold at heart, a sickness, bereavement, a financial worry in the home, pressure at work, a change of circumstance, or another situation,

but whatever it is that you are facing, you can say like David, “***My heart is overwhelmed.***”

***This is new territory for you. You hear and read such overwhelming circumstances about other families, but never expect to be in that situation yourself, and now you are.***

As you read many of David's Psalms, he was often overwhelmed, and distressed.

Saul hunted him, His Councillor Ahithophel betrayed him, Goliath wanted to kill his, The men at Ziglaga wanted to stone him. One situation after another.

For that reason, David says ***when my heart not if, but when my heart is overwhelmed.*** When my heart is overwhelmed, just as it is now.

when I feel as I do right now, Lord I need you to lead me to Christ.

David knew too well, ***many are the afflictions of the righteousness.***

At such times, it is vital, that believers must recognise the purpose of God in these trials, which is to always lead you to Himself.

In **2 Cor 4:17** Paul speaks of God's purpose in afflictions, "***For our light affliction which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.***" Here Paul speaks of affliction, troubles, ***Worketh for us***, the words ***worketh*** signifies ***to labor, work or engage in an activity involving considerable expenditure of effort.***

It means to work out, to accomplish or achieve an end, to finish or carry something to its conclusion.

Since the words is also in the present tense meaning continuously, then through our afflictions, Paul is saying what

God started in salvation He will continue until we are perfect in glory.

The situation that causes your heart to be overwhelmed, is not brought about by chance, or accident but through the counsel of Him who worketh all things to draw His people to Himself.

When overwhelmed I am brought to see like Job, that there is spiritual benefit in my trial, as **Job said 5v8-9** “ ***I would seek unto God, and unto God would I commit my cause: <sup>9</sup> Which doeth great things and unsearchable; marvellous things without number.***”

However, there are times we are overwhelmed because of our sin, disobedience to God’s word and ways. David said in **Ps 119:71** “***It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes.***”

God permits the trial, for the backslider to lead back to Christ in restoration.

## **II SECOND, THE CRY OF THE OVERWHELMED** “

When David was covered with anxieties, and troubles, his heart overwhelmed, he still cried unto God, ***From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed.***”

The word ***cry*** refers to ***a time of deep need***. A cry is the natural expression of sorrow, It is a cry for help.

He needs to hear from God. Notice the words **verse 1** “***hear my cry, O God; attend unto my prayer.***” In other words, Lord bow down thine ear. Lord focus upon my situation.

David poured out his heart before the Lord, he emptied himself.

Remember, David is cut off, from the house of God and worship with others. David may have been separated from Jerusalem, but he was not separated from God.

There may have been no one else near, yet the Lord was very present in a time of trouble. He had no access to the throne at Jerusalem but he always had access to the throne of God.

David's heart was sinking, he was worn out, he is exhausted, drained, overwhelmed, as expressed by his weakness, his feebleness.

Yet he cries for divine assistance, ***lead me to the Rock that is higher than I***, the strength of these words is this, ***Lead me up upon a rock that is too high for me to reach by my own efforts.***

I have no spiritual energy of myself. Left to myself I would remain under my burdens. Left to myself I would give up, but I cry unto thee Lord, Lead me, guide me, draw me to my Saviour, help me to seek His face.

David cried unto God, because he knew His Saviour would never forsake him, never cast him aside. Christ never loses sight of His people. He never lets go.

Unsaved one in the meeting, you cannot come to Christ in your strength, or merit.

You are spiritually helpless, and hopeless, sinking in sin, you must be led to Christ the Rock of salvation, you cannot get there yourself. Christ said in ***John 6:44 no man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him...***

God by the Holy Spirit leads overwhelmed sinners to Christ for full pardon and peace.

### **III THE COMFORT OF THE OVERWHELMED**

Here was David's comfort, when overwhelmed, "**lead me to the rock that is higher than I.**"

David speaks of the promised Saviour as His Rock. A description that David often uses in reference to His Saviour.

Christ is the Rock of salvation.

In thinking of a great Rock in the ocean that is solid, and immoveable and always there, so Christ is immoveable and ever present.

Therefore from generation to generation Christ is the immovable Rock. You will always find Him a very present help in trouble.

The rock that stands high above the waves, it is strong, secure, steadfast, firm, unmovable, unchanging and a safe place.

We see that from the words **higher than I** signifying **to lift up**. It carries the idea of "**a high fort; a place above the fight.**"

Learn the lesson, in Christ the Rock of salvation and security, there is a provision David could flee.

Christ the solid rock, and refuge of His people, was the beyond the reach of the enemies faced in life.

There is a place of safety. A personal refuge. There is a place where we can flee in the times of trouble, sorrow and suffering.

There is a place where the storms cannot come, the winds cannot blow, and the waves cannot reach us. There is a safe haven!

Yeah all these places are found in one person, Jesus Christ.

Therefore, Christ is our Rock. He is our Refuge. **V3** "**for thou hast been a shelter for me**" notice is refers to the past, **thou**

**hast been.** Lord you have never failed me or forsaken me in previous times.

David looks back over his life and he remembers the times when sorrows and troubles stalked him.

Think of those occasions when God gave him victory over a lion, a bear, and Goliath. He remembers God sheltered him from the jealous rage of king Saul.

David remembers that in every trial he ever faced, God provided him safety and protection. Based on God's past performance, David is certain that God will not fail him now.

Furthermore, David said **verse 4** "***I will trust in the covert of thy wings.***" The word "***covert***" speaks of "***a covering, protection, care, support, a hiding place, a place of safety a place of care.***"

The picture is taken from the hen gathering her chicks under her wings to keep them safe, and to care for them.

Christ covers, cares, and supports His people.

When we are led to our High Rock, we are led to His safe place. There is in Christ our High Rock abundant provision for everything necessary for life and godliness.

How needful then, in every trial, get to Christ. I am in a lowly state, I am covered with trouble, pray to God, lead me to My Saviour for He is my Rock and He is high over all the circumstances of life.

My heart is overwhelmed but lead me to the one who is never overwhelmed. My emotions have changed by day based on my situation, but lead me to my Rock who never changes, and can never be effected from anything without.



When your covered in an ocean of trouble, sorrow, heart break, shock and surrounded by overwhelming waves, Pray, lead me to Christ my Rock, He is my refuge, safety and shelter.

You may ask, why should God allow us to go through such times, what is the reason. Ay the words of Paul give help when he said **2 Cor 1:4** ***“Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.***

God would have us be an encouragement to others who go through what we have already done through.

Have you ever spoken to another believer about our trial, and they will say I may not know how you feel, but I have been there! You can express to them the same comfort that God gave you. In other words, what we pass through, is to tell others, at that time of despair, ***I was lead to the Rock which is higher than I***

But what about you who are unsaved, who are still under a sense of sin, who have not yet found the Saviour, let this be your prayer, “Lead me to the Rock that is higher than I am.”