

Sunday Morning Message

January 6, 2019

Climb

Text – Psalm 61

Congregational Reading – Psalm 61:1 - 2

Introduction

As with any other message, we will first teach the passage, and when concluding, we will make the applications that tie in with our theme for 2019.

"To the chief Musician upon Neginah, A Psalm of David."

"neginah" transliteration - means music, song, or stringed instrument.

We have absolutely no idea about the context of this psalm as there are no clues given, but we can think of many scenarios from David's life that would fit the description found here.

I David's Prayer for God to Hear Him (vs. 1 – 4)

"Hear my cry, O God; attend unto my prayer." (Psalms 61:1)

Isn't wonderful to know that we have a God that hears our prayers. The word, "attend", means to pay attention to. God has a whole universe to run, and 7 plus billion people to feed and care for, yet he cares about my little requests.

Psalm 142 is similar to this one.

"From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I." (Psalms 61:2)

This verse could mean that David was away from Jerusalem, as he was forced to be when he fled from his son, Absalom. God can hear us and will help us no matter how far we have strayed from Him or the place of His will, as long as we are headed back to Him.

We get the idea that David was in a situation here that was bigger than his own ability to fix. Life has a way of bringing us problems that overwhelm us, and we will need the help of the Lord to lift us up out of them.

Physical Problems

Family Problems

Financial Problems

David's prayer expressed humility in that he is bearing his heart here. David's prayer also expressed dependence upon the Lord.

Notice the expression "lead me to the rock that is higher than I" – a higher rock is a place of greater stability, safety, and security, and a place of greater sight. When God brings us higher, he helps us to understand what we could not understand, and he helps us to see what can be done.

"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." (Isaiah 55:8-9)

Notice the word, "rock". God often refers to Himself as "the Rock":

"He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he." (Deuteronomy 32:4)

"For who is God, save the LORD? and who is a rock, save our God?" (2 Samuel 22:32)

"The LORD liveth; and blessed be my rock; and let the God of my salvation be exalted." (Psalms 18:46)

"In God is my salvation and my glory: the rock of my strength, and my refuge, is in God." (Psalms 62:7)

He also refers to His Word as a rock:

*"Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock."
(Matthew 7:24-25)*

"For thou hast been a shelter for me, and a strong tower from the enemy." (Psalms 61:3)

David's prayer request is not founded merely upon doctrinal principle, but it is also based upon past experience.

We see the reference to the "strong tower", which is also a place of safety and security – a higher place.

"The name of the LORD is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe." (Proverbs 18:10)

2 Samuel 22 contains a similar psalm sung by David, that is not included within the Psalm Book, though it is almost identical to Psalm 18.

"I will abide in thy tabernacle for ever: I will trust in the covert of thy wings. Selah." (Psalms 61:4)

David was wholly dependent upon the Lord. The wings were a reference to the cherubim that covered the ark of the testimony in the Tabernacle. It was the place where God's presence was, and it was the place where the sins of man were symbolically atoned for. It was the place where David could go and inquire of God, and even though he was away from the Tabernacle, his heart and his mind were on that place as he prayed here.

II David's Praise for God's Past Answers (vs. 5 – 8)

"For thou, O God, hast heard my vows: thou hast given me the heritage of those that fear thy name." (Psalms 61:5)

There is a wonderful phrase here in this verse – "the heritage (possession or inheritance) of those that fear thy name". David says that God has treated him the same way that He has

treated the others who are part of the godly heritage. As believers, we receive the inheritance of Christ.

"Thou wilt prolong the king's life: and his years as many generations." (Psalms 61:6)

David knew that God had promised him the kingdom, and regardless of what he was facing here, he knew that God was not through with him. God promised David:

"And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever." (2 Samuel 7:16)

"He shall abide before God for ever: O prepare mercy and truth, which may preserve him." (Psalms 61:7)

David knew that God was going to preserve David, and David's family for many generations.

"So will I sing praise unto thy name for ever, that I may daily perform my vows." (Psalms 61:8)

David's daily dependence upon God, and his recognition of God's purpose for his life enabled him to praise the Lord. He knew that God would finish in David what He started, and God will do the same for us.

Conclusion

Let's look again at vs. 1 – 2:

"Hear my cry, O God; attend unto my prayer. From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I." (Psalm 61:1-2)

David was saying that when His problems were too big for him, he needed to climb higher and get to where God could do greater things.

In 2019, we need to climb higher to another level of closeness or intimacy with the Lord. We need to grow beyond the level of faith where we were last year, and move closer to the Lord.

Interestingly though, in order to climb higher in our level of spiritual maturity, we may need to:

- 1 Bow lower in humility
- 2 Tarry longer in prayer
- 3 Plunge deeper in our understanding of the Word of God
- 4 Reach out further and work a little harder in our communication of the Gospel

To climb spiritually does not just mean that we are going to go up some kind of spiritual ladder. It means that we are going to let God bring us to a place where we have never been before spiritually; to stretch us beyond what we could do or even understand previously.

In 2019, I want to climb to where the Rock is; to where the power of God is; to where the perfect will of God is.

In 2019, we want to see God bring Jersey Shore Baptist Church to a higher level. We want God to lead us to the place where we can be more effective in reaching this community with the gospel; to the place where we are more proficient in teaching this church the Word of God. We want to climb.