

What to Do When You Are Overwhelmed Psalm 61:1-8 (NKJV)

¹ Hear my cry, O God; Attend to my prayer.

² From the end of the earth I will cry to You,
When my heart is overwhelmed;

Lead me to the rock that is higher than I.

³ For You have been a shelter for me,
A strong tower from the enemy.

⁴ I will abide in Your tabernacle forever;
I will trust in the shelter of Your wings.

Selah

⁵ For You, O God, have heard my vows;
You have given me the heritage of those who fear Your name.

⁶ You will prolong the king's life, His years as many generations.

⁷ He shall abide before God forever.

Oh, prepare mercy and truth, which may preserve him!

⁸ So I will sing praise to Your name forever,
That I may daily perform my vows.

Psalm 61 does not say *“if my heart is overwhelmed,”* but *“when my heart is overwhelmed.”* All of us have experienced and will experience overwhelming moments, hours, days, and even overwhelming seasons. When this happens, our hearts (our inner self – will, disposition, intellect) are overwhelmed.

Overwhelmed means to “cover.” The overwhelmed heart in Psalm 61 means a heart covered with weakness, without strength, and sometimes even sickly because life has presented itself to us in such a way that we don’t know what to do or which way to go.

Some scholars say that Psalm 61 is David writing when he was running from his son, Absalom, who was trying to take over the throne (a coup). David also had overwhelming moments when Saul was throwing javelins at him and when he was hiding in a cave with 300 of his men.

Four things that we can do (that David did) when our hearts overwhelm us.

CRY OUT IN PRAYER – Psalm 61:1 & 2

“Hear” means to proceed, to understand it, and “cry” means the expression, the utterance of sound (a sound coming from our inner part that our heart is producing). Sometimes our heart is saying something that our mouth is not speaking. The voice that’s going on in our inner soul.

David is saying pay close attention to my cry with the idea that he needs God to respond and do something about it. We need to cry out to God from wherever we are, whether it’s in the car, the bathroom at work, or on Aisle 6 at Walmart, and turn it into the prayer room.

David is also saying that he needs God to hear his cry from his spiritual geography. We need to cry out from whatever place we are – whether we feel close to or far from God.

Psalm 142:1 – 3 (NKJV)

¹ I cry out to the Lord with my voice;
With my voice to the Lord I make my supplication.
² I pour out my complaint before Him;
I declare before Him my trouble.
³ When my spirit was overwhelmed within me,
Then You knew my path. In the way in which I walk,
They have secretly set a snare for me.

“God is bigger and greater than anything the enemy can do to me.” – Pastor Billy Johnson

ABIDE IN HIS PRESENCE – Psalm 61:2 & 4

(v. 2) David is saying when my heart is overwhelmed, don’t just leave me, but lead me to the rock that is higher than I. The rock is the place that’s higher than what I am experiencing right now. We need to abide in God.

(v. 4) God’s home in Jerusalem was the tabernacle to David. A place where he longed to be and go to worship God. We need to have our own personal Jerusalem where we can find the very presence of God and abide in Him.

“You have to ruthlessly remove hurry from your life.” – Dallas Willard

We are in such a hurry that we don't have time for God.

Pray - *“Lord, I’m crying out to You in prayer. I don’t know what to say, and I don’t really understand what’s going on with me, but I know that I need to come to You. I’m going to stay here with the expectation that I am in Your presence. And while I’m in Your presence, I’m going to let an exchange take place. I’m going to exchange my weakness for Your strength. I’m going to exchange what I’m feeling for Your joy because in Your presence there is fullness of joy, and at Your right hand there are pleasures forever more.”*

So, stay there in prayer until you're filled with the knowledge of His will. And stay there in prayer until you've heard from Him, and He's done something in you that settles your heart.

Philippians 4:6 -7 (NKJV)

⁶ Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your request be made known to God:
⁷ and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

Emotions, feeling, circumstances, tv, radio, etc. will counteract what you are trying to do. But you need to go to the person of peace – God the Peacemaker. We are void of peace because we have not taken time to abide in his presence. The psalmist said, *“Be still, and know that I am God”* (Psalm 46:10 NKJV). Don't guess, wonder, or think, but get to a place where you are so settled in your spirit that you know that God is God, and your situation is not. Get to a place where you understand that God is bigger than anything you are facing. Just get there and abide, spend some time with God.

TRUST IN HIS PROTECTION – Psalm 61:4

“There is something about being in a safe place/space where your heart begins to be at ease.” – Pastor Billy Johnson

We can look back on our own history and back at those who have gone before us and trust God’s protection. The enemy will try to overwhelm you with everything that’s going on around you (chatter, circumstances, pressure). But cry out to God in prayer, abide in His presence, and then just trust His protection.

It’s unfortunate that some people have not had the privilege of safe places all their lives, but for those who have, there’s a safe place in God where they can trust Him to keep their reputation, *etc.* There’s a safe place in God, and HE will be your defender (Romans 12:19). God’s got you, and He’s going to make sure that you are protected.

“The safest place for you is in His will.” – Pastor Billy Johnson

SING HIS PRAISES – Psalm 61:8

David is overwhelmed because Absalom is trying to take the throne. But in the midst of a coup, David gets his guitar. Although it looks like David will lose his throne, he knows that Absalom can’t take his promise from God. David knows that Absalom’s revolt against him will not stop what God is doing.

Today, there’s a promise over your life. There’s something over your life that’s bigger than the enemy’s actions. The enemy’s revolt against you will not stop what God has promised for you. Keep singing, *“I believe that I will see, the goodness of the Lord. I’m confident as seasons change, Your faithfulness remains.”*