

PSALM 55

Hear my prayer O God, and veil not Your face; to my entreaty, to see all Your grace.

- 2 Prick up Your ears, and see how I ramble; in my agitation, I clamor and babble.
- 3 At the enemy's call, I face evil works; shaking their vanity, in anger they lurk.
- 4 My heart twists and whirls, inside my breast; fright falls before me, of anguish and death.
- 5 Great fear and shuddering, 'round me assemble; covered with fright, and fear as I tremble.
- 6 I said Would He give me, His wings like a dove? Covered in safety, at home in His love.
- 7 Flapping I'd wander, and go far away; out in the desert, in the open I'd stay.
(Pause)
- 8 I'd hurry and flee, from the wind as it howls; from the storm's tempest, that twirls round and round.
- 9 Swallow up Lord, and split every tongue; lying contention, has to our camp come.
- 10 Both day and night, they travel our walls; injustice and worry, and trouble befalls.
- 11 Rushing and ruin, and inner defeats; fraud and deception, will not leave her streets.
- 12 If only a foe had defamed, I could bear; an enemy boast, I could hide from his stare.
- 13 But you were a man, in value the same; a familiar friend, who knew me by name.
- 14 We treasured each intimate, moment allowed; walking in God's house, among a great crowd.
- 15 Desolation upon them, into the grave quick; for all that is wicked, doth dwell in their midst.
- 16 I'll call upon God, address Him by name; the Lord gives salvation, and doth keep me safe.
- 17 At dusk and at dawn, and at noon I declare; crying to Him, Who hears all my prayer.
- 18 Delivering my soul, in war giving peace; for His strong minions, are there beside me.
- 19 He'll hear and will humble, Who lives throughout time; (Pause) Nothing will change them, God's not in their minds.
- 20 These stretch out the hand, against peaceful friend; dissolving their oath, and lying to men.
- 21 Mouths smoother than butter, heart full of war; words pour as oil, yet swords that are drawn.

- 22 Throw every burden, you have on the Lord; He will maintain you, the just never fall.
- 23 God brings them down, corrupt in the grave; they live half their lives, but I'll trust You to save!

Background

This Psalm has the title “Maschil,” which means instruction. Psalm 55 is separated into three sections, each separated with the Hebrew term “Selah,” which means to pause. Some Bible teachers say this connected the truths that come before and after the term. It has a closing subscript “To the chief Musician upon Jonath-elem-rechokim,” which means “a dove flying through faraway Terebint trees.” This could refer to David’s many wanderings through the wilderness, fleeing from his enemies. Compare verses 6 and 7 of this Psalm: “And I said, Oh that I had wings like a dove! *for then* would I fly away, and be at rest. Lo, *then* would I wander far off, *and* remain in the wilderness.”

Structure

(Verses 1,2) Prayer from David to God for help

(Verse 3) Oppressors who are wicked, deceitful, and hateful

(Verses 4-7) David’s response: fear and desire to flee

Pause

(Verses 7-15) David’s enemies rewarded for their evil

(Verses 16-19) Praise to God for His help over David’s enemies

Pause

(Verses 19-21) Oppressors who are wicked, deceitful, and hateful

(Verses 22,23) Praise to God for His help over David’s enemies

Key Scriptures

Verses 12-14—“For *it was* not an enemy *that* reproached me” “a man mine equal, my guide, and mine acquaintance” “We took sweet counsel together, *and* walked unto the house of God in company.” Could this refer to Judas Iscariot and his betrayal of the Messiah. Jesus Christ did speak of Judas’s demise in **Matthew 26:24**: “**The Son of man goeth as it is written of him: but woe unto**

that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! it had been good for that man if he had not been born.”

Verse 17—“Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud: and he shall hear my voice.” Like his ancestor David, Jesus Christ was a man of prayer. (Matthew 6:9; 14:23; 19:13; 26:36,39,42,44; Mark 1:35; 6:46; 14:32,35,39; Luke 5:16; 6:12; 9:18,28,29; 11:1; 22:41,44).

Verse 22—“Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee.” This quoted in I Peter 5:7 as “Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.” This is true for us when we, like the Messiah, humble ourselves under God’s mighty hand, soberly and vigilantly resist the Devil, and rely upon God’s grace (I Peter 5:6-10).