

Faith In The Midst Of Fear

Psalm 56

Historical Context: 1 Samuel 21:10-15

Inscription: To the chief Musician upon Jonath-elem-rechokim, Michtam of David, when the Philistines took him in Gath.

Poetical Structure: Alternate Parallelism (A,B,A,B)

Poetic Layout of Psalm 56

- 1) Be merciful unto me, O God:
for man would swallow me up;
He fighting daily oppresseth me.
- 2) Mine enemies would daily swallow me up:
For they be many that fight against me,
O thou most High.
- 3) What time I am afraid,
I will trust in thee.
- 4) *In God I will praise his word,
In God I have put my trust;
I will not fear
What flesh can do unto me.*
- 5) Every day they wrest my words:
All their thoughts are against me for evil.
- 6) They gather themselves together,
they hide themselves,

- They mark my steps,
When they wait for my soul.
- 7) Shall they escape by iniquity?
In thine anger cast down the people, O God.
- 8) Thou tellest my wanderings:
Put thou my tears into thy bottle:
Are they not in thy book
- 9) When I cry unto thee,
then shall mine enemies turn back:
This I know; for God is for me.
- 10) *In God will I praise his word:
In the Lord will I praise his word.*
- 11) *In God have I put my trust:
I will not be afraid
What man can do unto me.*
- 12) Thy vows are upon me, O God:
I will render praises unto thee.
- 13) For thou hast delivered my soul from death:
wilt not thou deliver my feet from falling,
That I may walk before God in the light of the living?

Outline

- I. David's cry for God's sympathy (v. 1-4)
 - A. The reason for his cry (v. 1-2)
 - B. The reassurance from his cry (v. 3)
 - C. The refrain of faith (v. 4)

- II. David's confidence in God's sincerity (v. 5-11)
 - A. In the midst of his trials (v. 5-7)
 1. The persistence of his enemies (v. 5)
 2. The practice of his enemies (v. 6)
 3. The punishment of his enemies (v. 7)
 - B. In the midst of his tears (v. 8-9)
 - C. The refrain of trust (v. 10-11)

- III. David's commitment to God's salvation (v. 12-13)
 - A. His commitment to praise (v. 12)
 - B. His commitment to practice (v. 13)

Definitions

- *Swallow* - to inhale eagerly; to covet or to be angry and devour
- *Oppresseth* - to press; to distress, force, crush
- *Wrest* - to vex
- *Mark* - to keep watch over
- *Wait* - to look patiently, tarry for
- *Vows* - a promise
- *Render* - make good, as in compensation or paying vows
- *Delivered* - to take away or snatch away

Meditation Guide

- 1. How do you personally relate to the psalmist's cry for help and their plea for God's mercy? In what ways have you experienced distress or attacks from enemies or the Adversary, the devil?**
- 2. Reflecting on the psalmist's trust in God's protection, how do you cultivate and strengthen your own trust in God during challenging times?**
- 3. What does it mean to you to believe in God's faithfulness, even when faced with adversity or opposition? How does this belief impact your perspective and actions?**
- 4. In what ways do you express gratitude and praise to God, especially when going through difficult circumstances? How can you deepen your commitment to worship and honor God even in challenging situations?**
- 5. Consider the imagery of tears being collected in a bottle and recorded in a book. How does this concept resonate with you? What significance does it hold for your understanding of God's care and compassion?**
- 6. How can you apply the psalmist's example of seeking God's help and refuge in your own life? How does this practice shape your approach to handling fear and anxiety?**
- 7. Reflect on times when you have felt pursued or threatened by enemies, whether physical or metaphorical.**

How did you find strength and courage to face those challenges? How did God intervene in those situations?

8. How does the psalmist's plea for deliverance encourage you to bring your own concerns and struggles before God? How does it inspire you to seek His intervention and guidance?
9. Consider the relationship between trust and fear highlighted in the psalm. How does trusting in God's character and promises help you overcome fear and find peace in challenging circumstances?
10. How can you apply the lessons and insights from this Psalm to your daily life? What practical steps can you take to deepen your reliance on God and live with greater faith and courage?