

Psalm 55

"David's Plea to God for Deliverance from Enemies and Betrayal"

For the choir director; on stringed instruments. A Maskil of David.

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A1 HIS PLEA FOR HELP 55:1-8

B1 The Statement of His Plea 55:1-2

C1 Listen and Don't Hide: {1} Give ear to my prayer, O God; And do not hide Yourself from my supplication. 55:1

C2 Listen and Don't Answer: {2} Give heed to me and answer me; I am restless in my complaint and am surely distracted, 55:2

B2 The Description of His Distress 55:3-8

C1 The Cause of His Distress – His Enemies 55:3

D1 His identification of his enemies 55:3a

E1 {3} Because of the voice of the enemy,¹

E2 Because of the pressure of the wicked;

D2 The action of his enemies 55:3b

E1 Spiteful trouble-making: For they bring down trouble upon me

E2 Angry grudge-bearing: And in anger they bear a grudge against me.

C2 The Emotions of His Distress 55:4-5

D1 Anguish and terror: {4} My heart is in anguish within me, And the terrors of death have fallen upon me. 55:4

¹ 55:3 - enemy: David identifies his opponent(s) as “the enemy,” “the wicked,” they who “bear a grudge” (55:3); “not an enemy,” not “one who hates me,” but rather one “who reproaches me,” and “who has exalted himself against me” (55:12); “a man my equal, my companion and my familiar friend” (55:13). He says of himself and his opponent, “We who had sweet fellowship together walked in the house of God in the throng” (55:14). Who was this opponent or who were these opponents? Of course, we cannot know for certain. But David’s own son Absalom might fit some of these descriptions (2 Sam. 15-18); and David’s own trusted counselor, Ahithophel, who betrayed David and defected to advise Absalom, would certainly qualify (2 Sam. 15:12, 31). From a Messianic point of view, Judas, one of Jesus’ twelve apostles, also would qualify as the traitor (Matt. 26:47-50). (See also Franz Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*, Keil and Delitzsch, Vol. 5.)

D2 Fear, trembling, and horror: {5} Fear and trembling come upon me, And horror has overwhelmed me. 55:5

C3 His Desire for Escape from Distress 55:6-8

D1 To flee like a dove: {6} I said, "Oh, that I had wings like a dove! I would fly away and be at rest. 55:6

D2 To escape into the wilderness: {7} "Behold, I would wander far away, I would lodge in the wilderness. **Selah.** 55:7

D3 To find refuge from the storm: {8} "I would hasten to my place of refuge From the stormy wind *and* tempest." 55:8

A2 HIS PRAYER FOR GOD TO CONFUSE HIS ENEMIES: {9} Confuse, O Lord, divide their tongues, [55:9a] 55:9-15

B1 Because of Violence and Strife in the City: For I have seen violence and strife in the city. **55:9b**

B2 Because of Iniquity and Mischief in the City: {10} Day and night they go around her upon her walls, And iniquity and mischief are in her midst. 55:10

B3 Because of Destruction, Oppression and Deceit in the City: {11} Destruction is in her midst; Oppression and deceit do not depart from her streets. 55:11

B4 Because of His Betrayal 55:12-14

C1 By Someone Not an Enemy: {12} For it is not an enemy who reproaches me, Then I could bear *it*; 55:12a

C2 By Someone Not a Self-Exalted Hater: Nor is it one who hates me who has exalted himself against me, Then I could hide myself from him. 55:12b

C3 By a Companion and Friend: {13} But it is you, a man my equal, My companion and my familiar friend; 55:13

C4 By One with Whom He Had Spiritual Kinship: {14} We who had sweet fellowship together Walked in the house of God in the throng. 55:14

B5 His Prayer for Sudden, Terrible Death upon His Evil Enemies: {15} Let death come deceitfully upon them; Let them go down alive to Sheol, For evil is in their dwelling, in their midst. 55:15

A3 HIS CALL TO RELIANCE UPON GOD 55:16-23

B1 His Personal Confidence in Elohim's Hearing and Response to His Continual Complaint 55:16-19a

C1 His Confidence: {16} As for me, I shall call upon God, And the LORD will save me.

- C2 His Continual Complaint: {17} Evening and morning and at noon, I will complain and murmur,
- C3 Elohim's Saving Response 55:17b-18
 - D1 His hearing: And He will hear my voice. 55:17b
 - D2 His redemption from his many antagonists: {18} He will redeem my soul in peace from the battle *which is* against me, For they are many *who strive* with me. 55:18
- C4 Elohim the Ancient, Changeless King Will Respond to the Adversaries Who do not Fear Him: {19} God will hear and answer them – Even the one who sits enthroned from of old-- **Selah**. With whom there is no change, 55:19a

B2 His Description of the Adversaries 55:19b-21

- C1 Not God-Fearing: And who do not fear God. 55:19b
- C2 Instigators of Violence: {20} He has put forth his hands against those who were at peace with him; 55:20a
- C3 Covenant Breakers: He has violated his covenant. 55:20b
- C4 Duplicitous Warmongers: {21} His speech was smoother than butter, But his heart was war; His words were softer than oil, Yet they were drawn swords. 55:21

B3 His Call to Confidence in God 55:22-23

- C1 Because Yahweh will Sustain and Protect the Righteous: {22} Cast your burden upon the LORD and He will sustain you; He will never allow the righteous to be shaken. 55:22
- C2 Because Elohim Will Judge Violent, Deceitful Men: {23} But You, O God, will bring them down to the pit of destruction; Men of bloodshed and deceit will not live out half their days. 55:23a
- C3 His Personal Resolve to Trust in God: But I will trust in You. 55:23b

EXPANDED ANALYSIS OF PSALM 55

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