

Psalm 60

"A Desperate Plea for Military Victory over Edom"

For the choir director; according to Shushan Eduth. A Mikhtam of David, to teach; when he struggled with Aram-naharaim and with Aram-zobah, and Joab returned, and smote twelve thousand of Edom in the Valley of Salt. ¹

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A1 THE PREDICAMENT OF THE NATION: ² Bitter Complaint of Defeat and Desperate Plea for Salvation 60:1-5

B1 A Plea to Elohim for National Restoration in View of His Angry Rejection 60:1-3

C1 A Plea for Elohim's Restoration of Israel in Light of His Rejection (through Edomite Invasion) 60:1

D1 Description of rejection: *{1}* O God, You have rejected us. You have broken us; You have been angry;

D2 Plea for national restoration: O, restore us.

C2 A Plea for Healing the Land Elohim Has Damaged 60:2

D1 Elohim's actions against the land

E1 *{2}* You have made the land quake,

E2 You have split it open;

D2 Plea for healing: Heal its breaches, for it totters.

¹ Superscription: Charles C. Ryrie, *The Ryrie Study Bible (RSB)* While David was fighting in the north with *Aram-naharaim* (Mesopotamia) and *Aram-zobah* (between Damascus and the Upper Euphrates), Edom, invading from the south, defeated Israel. Joab was dispatched and achieved an important victory over the Edomites (2 Sam. 8; 1 Chron. 18).

Note on 1 Chron. 18:12-13 by Eugene H. Merrill, *The Bible Knowledge Commentary (TBKC)*: In his recounting of the Edomite conquest, the chronicler gave credit for its success to David's nephew Abishai (Zeruiah was a half sister of David, 2:16), who killed 18,000 Edomites, rather than to David himself (cf. 2 Sam. 8:13). This is unusual in that the chronicler generally promoted David rather than his underlings. The Valley of Salt is evidently in Edom, near the Dead Sea.

The Superscription to Psalm 60 states, on the other hand, that *Joab*, Abishai's brother, killed 12,000 Edomites in the Valley of Salt. Perhaps this difference is explainable by noting that the entire campaign was under Abishai's direct command, and that Joab was responsible (with the soldiers in his contingent) for killing two thirds of the Edomites.

² 60:1 - The Predicament of the Nation: The three headings in all caps at 60:1, 6, 9 are borrowed from Charles Ryrie, *RSB* notes.

C3 The Desperation behind the Plea 60:3

D1 Divinely-induced hardship: {3} You have made Your people experience hardship;

D2 Divinely-induced disorientation: You have given us wine to drink that makes us stagger.

B2 A Plea for God to Save and Answer His Beloved Who Fear Him 60:4-5

C1 The Background of the Plea for Salvation 60:4

D1 {4} You have given a banner to those who fear You,

D2 That it may be displayed because of the truth.³ Selah.

C2 The Plea for Salvation: {5} That Your beloved may be delivered,

D1 Save with Your right hand,

D2 and answer us!

A2 THE PROMISE OF GOD -- Elohim's Answer to Prayer: He will protect Israel and defeat her enemies! 60:6-8

B1 Elohim Has Sovereignty over Israel 60:6-7

C1 He Parceled Out the Land in the Conquest: {6} God has spoken in His holiness: 60:6

D1 "I will exult,

D2 I will portion out Shechem

D3 and measure out the valley of Succoth.

C2 He Owns the Regions and Tribes of Israel 60:7

D1 Owning Gilead: {7} "Gilead is Mine,

D2 Owning Manasseh: and Manasseh is Mine;

D3 Treasuring Ephraim: Ephraim also is the helmet of My head;

D4 Ruling from Judah: Judah is My scepter.

³ 60:4 - truth: NASB, KJV have truth; NIV has bow, following LXX. Ron Allen, *TBKC*, following NIV, interprets 60:4 as a sarcastic reproach -- You have led us out with a banner, under which we expected victory, only for us to be confronted by a bow from which we fled!

We follow here NASB. Even so, however glorious the banner which was "bannered" (noun and verb are from the same root!), even if it were a banner of truth, has been insufficient because the defeat came about anyway! The perfect tense "you have given" serves as a background for the ensuing verse which, shouting through imperatives, pleads for salvation (one imperfect and two imperatives!) Whatever the translation, whatever happened in 60:4 was insufficient for victory. Thus David pleads for salvation and deliverance!

B2 Elohim Has Sovereignty over Israel's Enemies, Which Serve Him at His Pleasure! 60:8

- C1 Moab Serves as a Bowl to Wash God's Feet: {8} "Moab is My washbowl;
- C2 Edom Serves as a Slave to Tend God's Sandals: Over Edom I shall throw My shoe;
- C3 Philistia Serves as a Musician to Sing God's Victory Song: ⁴ Shout loud, O Philistia, because of Me!"

A3 THE PETITION OF DAVID -- Renewed Complaint and Plea; Confidence in Military Success 60:9-12

B1 His Indirect Plea for Divine Assistance in a Viable Military Strategy to Retake Conquered Territory 60:9

- C1 {9} Who will bring me into the besieged city? ⁵
- C2 Who will lead me to Edom?

B2 His Complaint that Elohim Has Rejected Them 60:10

- C1 His Complaint: {10} Have not You Yourself, O God, rejected us?
- C2 His Desire for Elohim to Accompany Israel's Armies: And will You not go forth with our armies, O God?

B3 His Outright Plea for Divine Help 60:11

- C1 His Plea: {11} O give us help against the adversary,
- C2 His Reason: For deliverance by man is in vain.

B4 His Faith in Elohim's Positive Response 60:12

- C1 His Confidence in Military Success through Elohim's Assistance: {12} Through God we shall do valiantly,
- C2 His Belief that Elohim Will Defeat Israel's Foes: And it is He who will tread down our adversaries.

⁴ 60:8 - Victory Song: This interpretation is attributed to the *Ryrie Study Bible*. See also Allen P. Ross, *TBKC*, who holds a similar interpretation to the function of these three enemies of Israel. Another possibility is that Philistia yells in terror at God's onslaught.

⁵ 60:9 - besieged city: Possibly a reference to Petra, the capital city of Edom well-protected in a narrow canyon. (A. R. Fausset of Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown, *Critical and Experimental Commentary*, Vol. III, p. 229)

EXPANDED ANALYSIS OF PSALM 60

Prepared by James T. Bartsch

September, 2010. Updated October, 2013

Published Online by WordExplain.com

Email Contact: jbartsch@wordexplain.com

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