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## Psalm 56

(2019)

Bible House of Grace contains an easy to read New and Old Testament commentary full of spiritual treasures and pearls, complete with an insightful resource guide illuminating God's love and grace.



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at Home

Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man, as to such I neither claim perfect knowledge or perfect understanding.

## Psalm 56.

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### Topics.

- When afraid, I trust God whose word I praise what can flesh do to me?
- My enemy injures my cause; their thoughts are against me for evil.
- God has kept count of my tossing's and put my tears in his book.
- In God I trust; I shall not be afraid. What can man do to me?
- God has delivered my soul from death that I may walk before him.

**FOR INFORMATION:** concerning people, places and the meaning of words see the title: "Map Locations and People of the Bible," and the title: "Bible Dictionary" on Website Menu.

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### INTRODUCTION

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Psalms are songs and prayers offered to God by the nation Israel, they cover the range of human emotion, expressing praise, faith, victory, sorrow, despair, depression, frustration and the troubled heart of a mourner. They contrast the righteous with the wicked, and include the wisdom and the treasure of God's word. Psalms were written at the beginning of the 15th century BC and probably collected in their final form in the 3rd century.

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### BOOK TWO (PSALM 42-72)

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### PSALM 56:1-4

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To the Choirmaster: According to the Dove On Far-Off Terebinths. A Miktam of David.

#### When Afraid, I Trust God who I Praise what can Flesh Do to Me?

- **Psalm 56:1-4:** Be gracious to me, O God, for man tramples on me; all day long an attacker oppresses me; <sup>2</sup>my enemies trample on me all day long, for many attack me proudly. <sup>3</sup>When I am afraid, I put my trust in you. <sup>4</sup>In God, whose word I praise, in God I trust; I shall not be afraid. What can flesh do to me?

Some feel that it is pointless to pray since God knows all things and already knows all our motives, thoughts, our heart attitude and our enemies our troubles, grief and sorrows yet throughout all David's prayers this is exactly what David does. No doubt this is one of the reasons God said, "David was a man after his own heart," (1 Sam. 13:14) (Acts 13:22). God delights in His children sharing the honest thoughts of our mind, our emotions and feelings and our troubles hardships and grief's and sorrows. It is right and proper to humbly come before God and pour out our inner most fears, anxieties and worries as though He is not aware of them, this is exactly what David is doing and does do in all his prayers.

**What can flesh do to me?** (v4) meaning what can man do to me that will harm me, obviously man can do quite a lot to harm and hurt David, they can deceive and cheat him, plot to destroy his Kingdom and even kill him which means the expression, "What can flesh do to me," is in the context of eternal life and eternal death. Underpinning David's life was the quiet confidence that should the worst befall him and he was killed in battle God would raise him to eternal life and everlasting happiness.

**My Enemy Injures My Cause; their thoughts are Against Me.**

- **Psalm 56:5-7:** All day long they injure my cause; all their thoughts are against me for evil. <sup>6</sup>They stir up strife, they lurk; they watch my steps, as they have waited for my life. <sup>7</sup>For their crime will they escape? In wrath cast down the peoples, O God!

David's enemies are not only plotting to do all they can to bring whatever David plans to do to ruin, but also desiring his death. David's prayer, "In wrath cast down the peoples, O God" (v7) is not a prayer from a spirit of hatred and from a lust and craving for revenge, but from a spirit that loves justice and greatly desires that the wicked and evil that plot harm and hurt upon others would be judged according to their evil deeds. As the reader travels through David's Psalms two things become very clear, firstly that David was far from being a perfect man and he knew it and secondly that David did care about the well-being of those in his kingdom and hated it when he saw the rich and those who had great authority and power cheating the helpless out of what was rightfully theirs by preventing justice and oppressing the poor for their own personal gain. This is one of the reasons God said of David, "

- I have sought out a man after my own heart to be prince over my people. (1 Samuel. 13:14).

Paul after the reading from the Law and the Prophets said:

- God raised up David to be their king, of whom he testified and said, "I have found in David the son of Jesse a man after my heart, who will do all my will." <sup>23</sup>Of this man's offspring God has brought to Israel a Saviour, Jesus, as he promised. (Acts 13:22-23).

Imperfect as David was in his own personal life he had a heart of compassion for those in his kingdom and for the helpless and the poor. This is why he prays so vehemently against those who abuse them. It is not from a spirit of revenge David is praying but from the hatred he has toward seeing the innocent destroyed by war simply so that a king or ruler gains greater power, property wealth and land and seeing others abused and treated as second class citizens by those who consider themselves superior and elite. This is why he prays that the LORD will cast them down into the pit of destruction.

**For their crime will they escape?** (v7) though judgment is delayed at the moment it will not be delayed forever. God allowed the people of Noah's era to live and do as they please until the appointed time for the flood, likewise in the days of Sodom and Gomorrah the cup of iniquity eventually overflows and God intervenes. Today it could be said that we live in a long day of death and a long day of grace. No one will escape the judgment of God, some will be judged at the first resurrection (Rev. 20:4-6) and rewarded or suffer loss and others will be judged at the second death (Rev. 20:6) (a symbol of eternal death and total extinction) at the Great White Throne Judgment (Rev. 20:11-15)

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**PSALM 56:8**

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**God has Kept Count of My Tossings and put My Tears in His Book.**

- **Psalm 56:8:** You have kept count of my tossings; put my tears in your bottle. Are they not in your book?

This is amazing when it is considered David as a young boy faced off Goliath and slew him and was a mighty warrior in battle. During some of Israel's blood thirsty battles twenty-thousand men would be slaughtered in a day and here we see this great and might warrior in tears humbling praying before God.

**My tears in your book:** not only means that God sees all our suffering and hidden tears that we shed, but also keeps them in His eternal memory. David comforts himself, in his distress and fear that God noticed all his grief and that God has a book for his people's tears, both the tears they shed over their sins, and those they shed over their afflictions, sorrows, troubles and hardships.

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## PSALM 56:9-11

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### **In God I Trust; I shall Not be Afraid. What can Man do to Me?**

- **Psalm 56:9-11:** Then my enemies will turn back in the day when I call. This I know, that God is for me. <sup>10</sup>In God, whose word I praise, in the LORD, whose word I praise, <sup>11</sup>in God I trust; I shall not be afraid. What can man do to me?

David's statement, "I know, that God is for me" (v9) express his confidence that God is on his side and God's favour is with him, the following two verses express the same confident faith: -

- The LORD is on my side; I will not fear. What can man do to me? (Psalm 118:6)
- If it had not been the LORD who was on our side—let Israel now say—<sup>2</sup>if it had not been the LORD who was on our side when people rose up against us, <sup>3</sup>then they would have swallowed us up alive, when their anger was kindled against us; <sup>4</sup>then the flood would have swept us away, the torrent would have gone over us (Psalm 124:1-4).

David had a covenant interest in God and God with him and knew that God would be his God and guide him through life, through his wilderness moments and through the darkness of death to eternal life and everlasting happiness.

**Then shall mine enemies turn back:** (v9) David felt weak and helpless before his enemies and knew that the only power that could deliver him from them was God. With his back up against a wall he cries to God to secure the overthrow of his enemies. This expresses David's strong confidence in prayer. David had no doubt that the ultimate end result of his prayer would be the downfall of his enemies, though his faith and patience might be tried since it might be some time before it comes to pass.

**What can man do to me:** for information concerning this expression, see the notes following verse four under the title, "What can flesh do to me?"

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## PSALM 56:12-13

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### **God has Delivered My Soul from Death that I May Walk Before Him.**

- **Psalm 56:12-13:** I must perform my vows to you, O God; I will render thank offerings to you. <sup>13</sup>For you have delivered my soul from death, yes, my feet from falling, that I may walk before God in the light of life.

These verses shine a brilliant spotlight on the truth David was fully aware he would be resurrected from death to eternal life. Contained within much of the language of David's prayers is the request for an immediate deliverance from his present troubles and the absolute confidence God will redeem and deliver him from death to eternal life. David prayed for victory in battle, but he knew even if he was killed on the battle field God who has been enthroned on high since before time began would raise him up on the great day of the resurrection.

David wrote:

- I have set the LORD always before me; because he is at my right hand, I shall not be shaken. <sup>9</sup>Therefore my heart is glad, and my whole being rejoices; my flesh also dwells secure. <sup>10</sup>For you will not abandon my soul to Sheol, or let your holy one see corruption. (Psalm 16:8-10).
- I believe that I shall look upon the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living! <sup>14</sup>Wait for the LORD; be strong, and let your heart take courage; wait for the LORD! (Psalm 27:13-14).

The word Sheol means the grave, the words, "You will not abandon my soul to Sheol," means God will not leave David in the grave forever he will be resurrected at the right time and the statement, "You will not let your holy one see corruption," means God will not let the body of Jesus decay in the grave (tomb) contrasting David's body which will decay in the grave and remain there until the glorious day of the resurrection.

For further information concerning the resurrection, see the title:

- Resurrection (ON WEBSITE MENU).

This prayer of David's highlights the following two things:

1. The great faith of David who despite all his natural stress, sorrow worry and fear he is constantly praising God for His steadfast love.
2. That David's faith is greater than his feelings and emotions.

Belonging to God does not make us ice cold emotionally, we will still have moments of worry, stress, sorrow and tears. The way to dispel these moments is to do what David constantly does, trust in God and commit the outcome to Him.

#### **David's re-occurring phrase in this Psalm is:**

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- In God, whose word I Praise.

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*As the founder of Bible House of Grace, I would like to thank the many Christian scholars, commentators and theologians who have gone before me, and the many today, who have freely made available their works to enhance the knowledge of the Bible to all people worldwide. It is only with the help of these faithful writers that much of Bible House of Grace exists as it does today.*

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