

## PSALM 56

*Supplication for Deliverance and Grateful Trust in God.*

### INTRODUCTION.

- A. From Roy H. Enoch (10-12-94).
- B. To the Chief Musician. Set to "The Silent Dove in Distant Lands." A Michtam of David when the Philistines captured Him in Gath. "A Prayer for Deliverance from Enemies and Grateful Trust in God"
- C. The scriptures speak of David fleeing to Gath after he got Goliath's sword from the tabernacle (1Sam. 21:10-15). But we have no record of his being captured by the Philistines. But whoever wrote the ancient superscription of the psalm was in a better position to know than any modern scholar.
- D. Coffman quotes Rawlinson on this psalm:

"This psalm and the following (Psalm 57) are called 'twin psalms.' Each of them begins with almost the same words; each has a refrain that divides it into two parts. One difference is that this psalm has an epilogue (vv. 12,13), whereas, Psalm 57 does not. Both are written in circumstances of great distress; and the tone of thought in each of them is similar. Each has a statement of the problem, then a prayer for deliverance, and ends with praise and triumph."
- E. The psalm may logically be divided into three parts:
  1. David asks for deliverance (56:1-4).
  2. He describes his situation (56:5-11).
  3. He concludes with praise and thanksgiving (56:12,13).

### THE TEXT.

- 56:1** Be gracious to me, O God, for man has trampled upon me;  
Fighting all day long he oppresses me.
- 2** My foes have trampled upon me all day long,  
For they are many who fight proudly against me.
- 3** When I am afraid,  
I will put my trust in You.
- 4** In God, whose word I praise,  
In God I have put my trust;  
I shall not be afraid.  
What can *mere* man do to me?
- 5** All day long they distort my words;  
All their thoughts are against me for evil.
- 6** They attack, they lurk,  
They watch my steps,  
As they have waited *to take* my life.
- 7** Because of wickedness, cast them forth,  
In anger put down the peoples, O God!
- 8** You have taken account of my wanderings;  
Put my tears in Your bottle.  
Are *they* not in Your book?
- 9** Then my enemies will turn back in the day when I call;  
This I know, that God is for me.
- 10** In God, *whose* word I praise,  
In the LORD, *whose* word I praise,
- 11** In God I have put my trust, I shall not be afraid.  
What can man do to me?
- 12** Your vows are *binding* upon me, O God;  
I will render thank offerings to You.
- 13** For You have delivered my soul from death,  
Indeed my feet from stumbling,  
So that I may walk before God  
In the light of the living.

## COMMENTS.

### A. David Asks for Deliverance (56:1-4).

**[v1,2]** "...for man would swallow me up..." Not a particular man, but mankind generally. "...for there are many who fight against me..."

**[v3]** "Whenever I am afraid, I will trust in You." Here is the key to living a life of contentment. It does not depend on external circumstances, but to our inner attitude. We chose whether we will worry or whether we will have confidence in God to care for us.

**[v4]** "In God I have put my trust; I will not fear. What can flesh do to me?" This is similar to the confidence of Paul in Romans 8:31: "...If God is for us, who can be against us?"

### B. He Describes His Situation (56:5-11).

**[v5]** "All day they twist my words..." God certainly understands how people twist words (2Pet. 3:16).

**[v6]** "They gather together, they hide, they mark my steps..." The Philistines had good reason to want David dead, when we consider the thousands that David had killed in wars with them.

**[v7,8]** "...Put my tears into Your bottle; are they not in Your book?" The analogy here of God's "bottle" and "book" indicates that God keeps records of our deeds and our sufferings. The reference to "tears in Your bottle" indicates attention to detail as "the hairs of your head are numbered" (Mt. 10:29).

**[v9]** "This I know, because God is for me." The complete confidence that God is for us is a key to peace of mind and not worrying.

**[v10]** This is a refrain from verse 4, which emphasizes the main thrust of his petition.

**[v11]** This also is a part of the refrain in verse 4.

### C. He Concludes With Praise and Thanksgiving (56:12,13).

**[v12]** "Vows made to You are binding upon me, O God..." Devotion to God, and our service must begin with the realization that we must act in a responsible manner: We must do what we say that we will. God is responsible for us, and we must be thankful and grateful to Him and praise His name.