

Side Notes

David wrote this psalm of lament when the Philistines seized him in Gath (1 Sam 21:10).

This psalm is similar to Psalms 54, 55, 57.

1-3
David calls for God's help and explains why he needs it.

5-6
David explains how the enemy is twisting his words to harm him.

7
David does not want the enemy to go unpunished for their sins.

David's picture of God is as one who keeps a score of right and wrong.

10
God's Word is a vow to man.

12
Just as God made a vow to man, man should make a vow to God.

Psalm 56

Fear and Faith (1-4)

¹ Be merciful to me, O God, for men hotly pursue me; all day long they press their attack. ² My slanderers pursue me all day long; many are attacking me in their pride.

³ When I am afraid, I will trust in you. ⁴ In God, whose word I praise, in God I trust; I will not be afraid. What can mortal man do to me?

Destroyer and Deliverer (5-9)

⁵ All day long they twist my words; they are always plotting to harm me. ⁶ They conspire, they lurk, they watch my steps, eager to take my life.

⁷ On no account let them escape; in your anger, O God, bring down the nations.

⁸ Record my lament; list my tears on your scroll-- are they not in your record? ⁹ Then my enemies will turn back when I call for help. By this I will know that God is for me.

Trust and Thanksgiving (10-13)

¹⁰ In God, whose word I praise, in the LORD, whose word I praise--
¹¹ in God I trust; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?

¹² I am under vows to you, O God; I will present my thank offerings to you. ¹³ For you have delivered me from death and my feet from stumbling, that I may walk before God in the light of life.