

# Psalm 56

- I. [Superscription]  
 A. To the preeminent one/ choir director  
 B. Upon “the dove of distant silence”  
 C. A Miktam of David  
 D. When the Philistines seized him in Gath
- II. [Cry for help/Description of suffering (1-2)]  
 A. Be-gracious-to-me God because he-crushes-me mankind<sup>1</sup> a b c  
 B. All-of the-day the-fighting-ones he-oppresses-me d c' b'  
 C. They-crush the-one-who-lies-in-wait all-of the-day b c'' d  
 D. Because many (are) warring-ones against-me proudly - c''' -
- III. [REFRAIN- Confession of trust (3-4)]  
 A. Whenever I-will-fear I unto-You I-will-trust a b c -b'  
 B. Through/in-God/God's-help I-will-praise His-word/promise d -b'' e  
 C. Through/in-God/God's-help I-trust not I-will-fear d -b' -b  
 D. What? He-will-do flesh to-me
- IV. [Description of suffering (5-6)]  
 A. All-of the-day my-words/affairs they-hurt a b c  
 B. Against-me all-of their-thoughts/plans (are) to bad/evil d b' c'  
 C. They-quarrel they-will-lie-hidden they e e'  
 D. My footprints they-watch just-as they-lie-in-wait-for my-soul f e'' e''' f'
- V. [Petition for Rescue (7)]  
 A. On-account-of wickedness bring-to-safety from-them a b c  
 B. With-wrath peoples bring-down God a' c' b'
- VI. [Appeal to God's Nature/covenant (8)]  
 A. My-wanderings-of-aimless-fugitive You-took-account-of You a b  
 B. Place my-tears in-Your-skin-bottle is-not? In-Your-scroll b' a' c c'
- VII. [Expression of assurance (9)]  
 A. Then they-will-turn-back my-enemies back a b  
 B. In-day I-will-call a' b'  
 C. This I-know that God (is) for-me
- VIII. [REFRAIN- Confession of trust (10-11)]  
 A. Through/in-God/God's-help I-will-praise word/promise a b c  
 B. Through/in-Yahweh/Yahweh's-help I-will-praise word/promise a' b c  
 C. Through/in-God/God's-help I-will-trust not I-will-fear a d d'  
 D. What? He-will-do human to-me
- IX. [Vow to Praise (12)]  
 A. Incumbent-upon-me (are) God Your-vows a b  
 B. I-will-fulfill thank-offerings to-You a' b'
- X. [Expression of assurance (13)]  
 A. Because You-deliver my-soul from-death a b c  
 B. Are-not? My-feet from-stumbling - b' c'  
 C. To-walk-about before God in-light-of the-living

<sup>1</sup> Very literal word order and translation to show parallelism.

# Psalm 56

עַל־יוֹנֵת אֵלֶם רַחֲקִים

mpa distant msa silence fsc dove prep upon

לְמַנְצֵחַ 1

PielPtcmpsa+ל to/of preeminent one, poss. choir director

לְדָוִד מִכְתָּם

msa PropN+ל miktam<sup>2</sup> to/of/by David

בְּגַת

PropN+ב in Gath

פְּלִשְׁתִּים

PropNmpa Philistines

אֹתוֹ

DDO+3ms him

בְּאֶחָז

QInfcs+ב<sup>3</sup> when grasped, seized

אֲנוֹשׁ

msa mankind

שָׁאֲפֵנִי

QPf3ms+1cs he crushes, tramples upon me

כִּי־אֱלֹהִים

conj because

פִּי־

mpa God

חַנּוּנִי

QIpv2ms+1cs show favor, be gracious to me

2

יִלְחָצֵנִי

QIpf3ms+1cs he squeezes, presses, oppresses me

לַחֶם

QPtcmpsa the one fighting, doing battle<sup>4</sup>

כָּל־הַיּוֹם

msa+ה adj all of

הַיּוֹם

msa+ה the day

כָּל־

adj all

שׁוֹרְרִי

msc+1cs my (insidious) watcher, one who lies in wait

שָׁאֲפוּ 3

QPf3mp they crush, trample

מְרוֹם

msa height, fig. 'proudly'

לִי

1cs+ל against<sup>5</sup> me

לַחֲמִים

QPtcmpa warring ones (are)

כִּי־רַבִּים

mpa conj. many because

אֶבְטַח

QIpf1cs I will trust<sup>6</sup>

אֶלְיָךְ אֲנִי

prep+2ms 1cs upon, unto You I

אֶירָא

QIpf1cs I will fear

יוֹם

msa

4

lit. 'day' indefinite time, whenever, in that time

<sup>2</sup> Technical term of uncertain meaning, poss. 'inscription', always with leDavid.

<sup>3</sup> Temporal Williams §504, cf. §200, 241

<sup>4</sup> Cf. v.3, Psa 35:1.

<sup>5</sup> Williams §271.

דְּבַרְוּ

msc+3ms

His word, matter, promise

אֶהְלֵל

PielIpf1cs

I will praise, celebrate

בְּאֱלֹהִים 5

mpa+ב

through God (God's help)<sup>7</sup>

אִירָא

QIpf1cs

I will fear

לֹא

neg.

not

בְּטַחְתִּי

QPf1cs

I trust

בְּאֱלֹהִים

mpa+ב

in/through God (God's help)<sup>6</sup>

לִי

1cs+ל

to me

בְּשָׂר

msa

flesh, man as over against God, frail and powerless

מֶה-יַעֲשֶׂה

QIpf3ms

interrog. he will do what?

יַעֲצִבוּ

PielIpf3mp

They hurt, pain, vex

דְּבָרַי

mpc+1cs

my words, affairs

כָּל-הַיּוֹם 6

msa+ה

adj the day

all

לְרַע

msa+ל

to bad, evil (are)

מִחְשַׁבְתָּם

fpc+3mp

their thoughts, devices, plans

כָּל-

adj

all of

עָלַי

prep+1cs

against me

הִמָּה

3mp

they

[יִצְפוֹנוּ]

QIpf3mp

they will lie hidden, lurk

(יִצְפִּינוּ)

HiphIpf3mp

they will hide

יִגְוְרוּ 7

QIpf3mp

they quarrel, stir up strife

נַפְשִׁי

fsc+1cs

my soul, life

קוּי

PielPf3cp

they lie in wait for

כְּאֲשֶׁר

rel.part.+כ

just as

יִשְׁמְרוּ

QIpf3mp

they watch, guard

עֵקְבָי

mpc+1cs

my footprints

לָמוֹ

3mp+ל

To/(from) them

פְּלִטָּה

PielIpf2ms

bring to safety<sup>8</sup>

אָוֶן

msa

trouble, sorrow, wickedness, idolatry

עַל- 8

prep

on account of

<sup>6</sup> Cf. wealth of Psa refs. in BDB.

<sup>7</sup> Means or instrument Will. §243. cf. WBC and K-D 'through God's help'.

אֱלֹהִים      הוֹרֵד      עַמִּים      בְּאַף  
 mpa                      HiphIpv2ms                      mpa                      msa+ב  
 God                      bring down, cast down                      peoples                      with, by anger, wrath

אַתָּה                      סִפַּרְתָּה                      נָדַי                      9  
 T T                      T T                      msc+1cs  
 2ms                      QPf2ms                      msc+1cs  
 You                      You numbered, took account of                      my wandering of aimless fugitive

בְּסִפְרֹתֶיךָ                      הֲלֹא                      בְּנֹאדֶיךָ                      דְּמִעְתִּי                      שִׁימָה  
 T T                      T                      msc+2ms+ב                      T                      T  
 fsc+2ms+ב                      neg+interog.                      msc+2ms+ב                      fsc+1cs                      QIpv2ms  
 in Your book/scroll (for remembrance)                      is not?                      In Your skin bottle                      my tears                      put, place

אַחֹר                      אוֹיְבֵי                      יִשׁוּבוּ                      אַז      10  
 T                      T                      T                      T  
 msa                      QTcpmpc+1cs                      QIpf3mp                      adv  
 back                      my enemies                      they will turn back/away                      then

אֶקְרָא                      בַּיּוֹם  
 T                      msa+ב  
 QIpf1cs                      msa+ב  
 I will call                      in day

זֶה-יִדְעֵתִי כִּי-אֱלֹהִים לִי  
 1cs+ל                      mpa                      conj                      QPf1cs                      rel.pron.  
 to/for<sup>9</sup> me                      God                      that                      I know                      this

דְּבַר                      אֶהַלֵּל                      בְּאֱלֹהִים      11  
 msa                      Piellpf1cs                      mpa+ב  
 word, matter, promise                      I will praise, celebrate                      through God (God's help)<sup>10</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Poss. emend to פלט 'weigh out/recompense' cf. RSV, WBC takes as question 'will there be liberation for them?' cf. K-D "marked as such [question] by the order of the words (2Kgs 5:26, Isa 28:28)" take פלט as 'substantivized infinitive', others read ל with force 'from' 'give deliverance from them.', others 'in vain let their escape be.'

<sup>9</sup> Advantage, Williams §271.

<sup>10</sup> Means or instrument Will. §243. cf. WBC and K-D 'through God's help'.

דָּבַר

msa

word, matter, promise

אֶתְלַל

PielPflcs

I will praise, celebrate

בִּיהוָה

D.N.+ב

in/through Yahweh (Yahweh's help)<sup>11</sup>

אִירָא

QIpf1cs

I will fear/be afraid

לֹא

neg.

not

בְּטַחְתִּי

QPf1cs

I will trust

12 בְּאֱלֹהִים

mpa+ב

in God

לִי

1cs+ל

to/against me

אָדָם

msa

man/a human

יַעֲשֶׂה

QIpf3ms

he will do

מָה־

interog.

what?

נִדְרֶיךָ

mpc+2ms

Your vows

אֱלֹהִים

mpa

God

עָלַי

prep+1cs

(are) incumbent upon me<sup>12</sup>

13

לָךְ

2ms+ל

to You

תּוֹדָת

fpa

thanksgivings, thank offerings

אֲשַׁלֵּם

PielPflcs

I will fulfill, make good, pay

מִמּוֹת

msa+מ

from death

נַפְשִׁי

fsc+1cs

my soul

הַצַּלְתָּ

HiphPf2ms

You deliver

14 כִּי

conj

because

מִדְּחִי

msa+מ

from stumbling<sup>13</sup>

רַגְלֵי

mpc+1cs

my feet

הֲלֹא

neg+interog

are not?

הַחַיִּים

mpa+ה

the living

בְּאוֹר

msc+ב

in light of

אֱלֹהִים

mpa

God

לְפָנַי

prep

before

לְהִתְהַלֵּךְ

HithpInfcs+ל

walk about = live<sup>14</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Means or instrument Will. §243. cf. WBC and K-D 'through Yahweh's help'.

<sup>12</sup> Obligation Will. §294.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Psa. 116:8.

<sup>14</sup> Of friendly relation to God, cf. Gen. 17:1, 24:40, as token of Divine favor, 1Sam 2:30, Psa 116:9.