

Psalm 60 Prayer in Difficult Times

CHARACTERS: Joab, Abishai, David, All

SETTING: bare stage

RUN TIME: 2 minutes

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: Psalm 61

Before you read: Read 1 Chronicles 18:12-14 (Abishai son of Zeruiah struck down 18,000 Edomites in the Valley of Salt. 13 He put garrisons in Edom, and all the Edomites were subject to David. The Lord made David victorious wherever he went. 14 So David reigned over all Israel, administering justice and righteousness for all his people.) and 2 Samuel 8:13-14 (David made a reputation for himself when he returned from striking down 18,000 Edomites in the Valley of Salt. 14 He placed garrisons throughout Edom, and all the Edomites were subject to David. The Lord made David victorious wherever he went. 15 So David reigned over all Israel, administering justice and righteousness for all his people.) Compare this to the directions to the choirmaster that precede Psalm 60 (For the choir director: according to "The Lily of Testimony." A Davidic Miktam for teaching. When he fought with Aram-naharaim and Aram-zobah, and Joab returned and struck Edom in the Valley of Salt, killing 12,000.)

2 Samuel mentions David, 1 Chronicles mentions Abishai and Psalm 60, Joab who was Abishai's older brother. Why might the authors focus on three different warriors for the same military campaign?

DAVID: God, You have rejected us;

JOAB: You have broken out against us;

ABISHAI: You have been angry. Restore us!

DAVID: You have shaken the land and split it open.

ALL: Heal its fissures, for it shudders.

JOAB: You have made Your people suffer hardship;

ABISHAI: You have given us wine to drink that made us stagger.

DAVID: You have given a signal flag to those who fear You, so that they can flee before the archers.

JOAB: Save with Your right hand, and answer me, so that those You love may be rescued.

ABISHAI: God has spoken in His sanctuary:

VOG: I will triumph! Gilead is Mine, Manasseh is Mine, and Ephraim is My helmet; Judah is My scepter. Moab is My washbasin. I throw My sandal on Edom; I shout in triumph over Philistia.

DAVID: Who will bring me to the fortified city?

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JOAB: Who will lead me to Edom?

ABISHAI: God, haven't You rejected us?

ALL: God, You do not march out with our armies.

DAVID: Give us aid against the foe, for human help is worthless.

ALL: With God we will perform valiantly; He will trample our foes.

Psalm 61 Security in God

CHARACTERS: David, All

SETTING: bare stage

RUN TIME: 1 minute

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: Psalm 61

DAVID: God, hear my cry; pay attention to my prayer.

ALL: I call to You from the ends of the earth when my heart is without strength.

DAVID: Lead me to a rock that is high above me, for You have been a refuge for me,

ALL: a strong tower in the face of the enemy.

DAVID: I will live in Your tent forever and take refuge under the shelter of Your wings.

ALL: God, You have heard my vows; You have given a heritage to those who fear Your name.

DAVID: Add days to the king's life; may his years span many generations.

ALL: May he sit enthroned before God forever; appoint faithful love and truth to guard him.

DAVID: Then I will continually sing of Your name, fulfilling my vows day by day.

Psalm 62 Trust in God Alone

CHARACTERS: David, All, Groups A & B

SETTING: bare stage

RUN TIME: 2 minutes

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: Psalm 62

DAVID: I am at rest in God alone; my salvation comes from Him.

ALL: He alone is my rock and my salvation, my stronghold; I will never be shaken.

DAVID: (*to enemies*) How long will you threaten a man? Will all of you attack as if he were a leaning wall or a tottering stone fence?

GROUP A: They only plan to bring him down from his high position.

GROUP B: They take pleasure in lying; they bless with their mouths, but they curse inwardly.

DAVID: Rest in God alone, my soul, for my hope comes from Him.

ALL: He alone is our rock and salvation,

DAVID: my stronghold; I will not be shaken.

ALL Our salvation and glory depend on God, our strong rock.

DAVID: My refuge is in God.

GROUP A: Trust in Him at all times, you people; pour out your hearts before Him.

ALL: God is our refuge.

GROUP B: Men are only a vapor; exalted men, an illusion.

DAVID: Weighed in the scales, they go up;

ALL: together they are less than a vapor.

GROUP A: Place no trust in oppression, or false hope in robbery.

GROUP B: If wealth increases, pay no attention to it.

DAVID: God has spoken once; I have heard this twice:

ALL: strength belongs to God,

DAVID: and faithful love belongs to You, Lord.

ALL: For You repay each according to his works.

Psalm 63 Praise God Who Satisfies

CHARACTERS: Ittai the Gittite (a friend who supported David during Absalom's rebellion), David, All

SETTING: bare stage

RUN TIME: 2 minutes

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: Psalm 63

Before you read: David's son Absalom was trying to wrest the kingdom from his father and kill him. 2 Samuel 15: 30 tells us "David was climbing the slope of the Mount of Olives, weeping as he ascended. His head was covered, and he was walking barefoot." How do you think David as he fled for his life? How would it be the same or different than when he fled from Saul?

Ittai: A Davidic psalm composed when he was in the Wilderness of Judah.

DAVID: God, You are my God; I eagerly seek You. I thirst for You; my body faints for You

ALL: in a land that is dry, desolate, and without water.

DAVID: So I gaze on You in the sanctuary to see Your strength and Your glory. My lips will glorify You

ALL: because Your faithful love is better than life.

DAVID: So I will praise You as long as I live;

ALL: at Your name, I will lift up my hands.

DAVID: You satisfy me as with rich food; my mouth will praise You with joyful lips.

ALL: When I think of You as I lie on my bed,

DAVID: I meditate on You during the night watches because You are my helper;

ALL: I will rejoice in the shadow of Your wings.

DAVID: I follow close to You; Your right hand holds on to me. But those who seek to destroy my life

ITTAI: will go into the depths of the earth.

ALL: They will be given over to the power of the sword;

ITTAI: they will become the jackals' prey.

ALL: But the king will rejoice in God; all who swear by Him will boast,

DAVID: for the mouths of liars will be shut.

Psalm 64 Protection from Evildoers

CHARACTERS: David, All, Evil Schemer,

SETTING: bare stage

RUN TIME: 1 minute

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: Psalm 64

DAVID: God, hear my voice when I complain.

ALL: Protect my life from the terror of the enemy.

DAVID: Hide me from the scheming of wicked people, from the mob of evildoers,

ALL: who sharpen their tongues like swords and aim bitter words like arrows,

DAVID: shooting from concealed places at the innocent.

ALL: They shoot at him suddenly and are not afraid.

DAVID: They encourage each other in an evil plan:

ALL: they talk about hiding traps and say,

EVIL SCHEMER: Who will see them?

DAVID: They devise crimes and say,

EVIL SCHEMER: We have perfected a secret plan.

ALL: The inner man and the heart are mysterious.

DAVID: But God will shoot them with arrows; suddenly, they will be wounded.

ALL: They will be made to stumble; their own tongues work against them.

DAVID: All who see them will shake their heads.

ALL: Then everyone will fear and will tell about God's work, for they will understand what He has done.

DAVID: The righteous one rejoices in the Lord and takes refuge in Him;

ALL: All those who are upright in heart will offer praise.

Psalm 65 - God's Care for the Earth

CHARACTERS: David, All, Groups A & B

SETTING: bare stage

RUN TIME: 2 minutes

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: Psalm 65

Before you read: A common literary feature of Hebrew poetry in the Psalms is called parallelism, in which the words of two or more lines of text are directly related in some way. In synthetic parallelism the second or third lines of the unit are not synonymous to the first line but advance the thought in a variety of other ways. Notice when Group A and B do this.

DAVID: Praise is rightfully Yours, God,

ALL: All humanity will come to You, the One who hears prayer.

DAVID: Iniquities overwhelm me; only You can atone for our rebellions.

ALL: How happy is the one You choose and bring near to live in Your courts!

GROUP A: We will be satisfied with the goodness of Your house, the holiness of Your temple.

GROUP B: You answer us in righteousness, with awe-inspiring works,

DAVID: God of our salvation, the hope of all the ends of the earth and of the distant seas.

GROUP A: You establish the mountains by Your power, robed with strength.

GROUP B: You silence the roar of the seas, the roar of their waves,

DAVID: Those who live far away are awed by Your signs; You make east and west shout for joy.

GROUP A: You visit the earth and water it abundantly, enriching it greatly.

GROUP B: God's stream is filled with water, for You prepare the earth in this way, providing people with grain.

DAVID: You soften it with showers and bless its growth, soaking its furrows and leveling its ridges.

GROUP A: You crown the year with Your goodness; Your ways overflow with plenty.

GROUP B: The wilderness pastures overflow, and the hills are robed with joy.

DAVID: The pastures are clothed with flocks and the valleys covered with grain.

ALL: They shout in triumph; indeed, they sing.

Psalm 66 Praise for God's Mighty Acts

CHARACTERS: GROUPS A & B, David, All

SETTING: bare stage

RUN TIME: 3 minutes

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: Psalm 66

Before you read: Which group of people is David referring to when he says "You turned the sea into dry land, and they crossed the river on foot"? How does "You lured us into a net; You placed burdens on our backs. You let men ride over our heads" apply to this group of people?

DAVID: Shout joyfully to God, all the earth!

GROUP A: Sing about the glory of His name; make His praise glorious.

DAVID: Say to God,

GROUP B: How awe-inspiring are Your works!

DAVID: Your enemies will cringe before You because of Your great strength.

GROUP A: All the earth will worship You and sing praise to You.

GROUP B: They will sing praise to Your name.

DAVID: Come and see the wonders of God;

GROUP A: His acts for humanity are awe-inspiring.

GROUP B: He turned the sea into dry land, and they crossed the river on foot.

ALL: There we rejoiced in Him.

DAVID: He rules forever by His might;

GROUP A: He keeps His eye on the nations.

GROUP B: The rebellious should not exalt themselves.

DAVID: Praise our God, you peoples; let the sound of His praise be heard.

GROUP B: He keeps us alive and does not allow our feet to slip.

GROUP A: For You, God, tested us; You refined us as silver is refined.

DAVID: You lured us into a net;

ALL: You placed burdens on our backs.

DAVID: You let men ride over our heads;

ALL: we went through fire and water, but You brought us out to abundance.

GROUP B: I will enter Your house with burnt offerings;

DAVID: I will pay You my vows that my lips promised and my mouth spoke during my distress.

GROUP A: Come and listen, all who fear God, and I will tell what He has done for me.

DAVID: I cried out to Him with my mouth, and praise was on my tongue.

GROUP B: If I had been aware of malice in my heart, the Lord would not have listened.

ALL: However, God has listened;

DAVID: He has paid attention to the sound of my prayer.

GROUP A: May God be praised!

GROUP B: He has not turned away my prayer or turned His faithful love from me.

Psalm 67 All Will Praise God

CHARACTERS: GROUP A & B, David, All

SETTING: bare stage

RUN TIME: 2 minutes/page

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: Psalm 67

Before you read: A common literary feature of Hebrew poetry in the Old Testament is called parallelism, in which the words of two or more lines of text are directly related in some way. Sometimes one line is echoed by a second using different words but painting the same imagery. Notice how often Group A and B echo each other.

DAVID: May God be gracious to us and bless us;

ALL: look on us with favor so that Your way may be known on earth,

DAVID: Your salvation among all nations.

GROUP A: Let the peoples praise You, God;

GROUP B: let all the peoples praise You.

DAVID: Let the nations rejoice and shout for joy, for You judge the peoples with fairness and lead the nations on earth.

GROUP A: Let the peoples praise You, God,

GROUP B: let all the peoples praise You.

ALL: The earth has produced its harvest; God, our God, blesses us.

DAVID: God will bless us, and all the ends of the earth will fear Him.

Psalm 68 God's Majestic Power

CHARACTERS: Groups A & B, David, All, Female voices, Voice of God

SETTING: bare stage

RUN TIME: 6 minutes

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: Psalm 68

Exodus 15:19-21 reads "When Pharaoh's horses with his chariots and horsemen went into the sea, the Lord brought the waters of the sea back over them. But the Israelites walked through the sea on dry ground. 20 Then Miriam the prophetess, Aaron's sister, took a tambourine in her hand, and all the women followed her with their tambourines and danced. 21 Miriam sang to them: Sing to the Lord, for He is highly exalted; He has thrown the horse and its rider into the sea." Where is this incident referenced in this Psalm? Why might David have chosen this? (see also 1 Samuel 18:6-8 As the troops were coming back, when David was returning from killing the Philistine, the women came out from all the cities of Israel to meet King Saul, singing and dancing with tambourines, with shouts of joy, and with three-stringed instruments. 7 As they celebrated, the women sang: Saul has killed his thousands, but David his tens of thousands.

DAVID: God arises. His enemies scatter, and those who hate Him flee from His presence.

GROUP A: As smoke is blown away, so You blow them away.

GROUP B: As wax melts before the fire, so the wicked are destroyed before God.

ALL: But the righteous are glad;

DAVID: they rejoice before God and celebrate with joy.

GROUP A: Sing to God! Sing praises to His name.

GROUP B: Exalt Him who rides on the clouds

ALL: His name is Yahweh— rejoice before Him.

GROUP A: God in His holy dwelling is a father of the fatherless and a champion of widows.

GROUP B: God provides homes for those who are deserted.

DAVID: He leads out the prisoners to prosperity,

ALL: but the rebellious live in a scorched land.

GROUP A: God, when You went out before Your people,

GROUP B: When You marched through the desert,

ALL: the earth trembled and the skies poured down rain

GROUP A: before God, the God of Sinai,

GROUP B: Before God, the God of Israel.

DAVID: You, God, showered abundant rain;

ALL: You revived Your inheritance when it languished.

GROUP A: Your people settled in it; God, You provided for the poor by Your goodness.

DAVID: The Lord gave the command; a great company of women brought the good news:

FEMALE VOICES: The kings of the armies flee—they flee!

DAVID: She who stays at home divides the spoil.

GROUP B: While you lie among the sheepfolds, the wings of a dove are covered with silver,

GROUP A: and its feathers with glistening gold.

DAVID: When the Almighty scattered kings in the land, it snowed on Zalmon.

GROUP B: Mount Bashan is God's towering mountain;

GROUP A: Mount Bashan is a mountain of many peaks.

DAVID: Why gaze with envy, you mountain peaks, at the mountain God desired for His dwelling?

ALL: The Lord will live there forever!

GROUP B: God's chariots are tens of thousands,

GROUP A: thousands and thousands;

DAVID: the Lord is among them in the sanctuary as He was at Sinai.

GROUP B: You ascended to the heights, taking away captives;

GROUP A: You received gifts from people, even from the rebellious,

DAVID: so that the Lord God might live there.

ALL: May the Lord be praised!

GROUP B: Day after day He bears our burdens;

ALL: God is our salvation.

DAVID: Our God is a God of salvation, and escape from death belongs to the Lord God.

GROUP A: Surely God crushes the heads of His enemies,

GROUP B: the hairy head of one who goes on in his guilty acts.

ALL: The Lord said, "I will bring them back from Bashan;

VOICE OF GOD: I will bring them back from the depths of the sea so that your foot may wade in blood and your dogs' tongues may have their share from the enemies.

ALL: People have seen Your procession, God,

DAVID: the procession of my God, my King, in the sanctuary.

GROUP B: Singers lead the way, with musicians following;

FEMALE VOICES: among them are young women playing tambourines.

DAVID: Praise God in the assemblies; praise the Lord from the fountain of Israel.

GROUP A: Your God has decreed your strength.

GROUP B: Show Your strength, God, You who have acted on our behalf.

DAVID: Because of Your temple at Jerusalem, kings will bring tribute to You.

ALL: Sing to God, you kingdoms of the earth; sing praise to the Lord

GROUP A: to Him who rides in the ancient, highest heavens.

GROUP B: Look, He thunders with His powerful voice!

DAVID: Ascribe power to God. His majesty is over Israel,

ALL: His power among the clouds.

DAVID: God, You are awe-inspiring in Your sanctuaries.

ALL: The God of Israel gives power and strength to His people.

DAVID: May God be praised!

Psalm 69 A Plea for Rescue

CHARACTERS: GROUP A & B, David, All

SETTING: bare stage

RUN TIME: 4 minutes

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: Psalm 69

Before you read: Several verses in this Psalm are quoted in the New Testament. See which verses here match up with the following verses: John 2:16 (Jesus told those who were selling doves, "Get these things out of here! Stop turning My Father's house into a marketplace!" And His disciples remembered that it is written: Zeal for Your house will consume Me.); John 15:25 (But this happened so that the statement written in their scripture might be fulfilled: They hated Me for no reason.) Acts 1:20 ("For it is written in the Book of Psalms: Let his dwelling become desolate; let no one live in it; and Let someone else take his position.) John 19:20 (After this, when Jesus knew that everything was now accomplished that the Scripture might be fulfilled, He said, "I'm thirsty!" 29 A jar full of sour wine was sitting there; so they fixed a sponge full of sour wine on hyssop[h] and held it up to His mouth.) and Matthew 27:34 (they gave Him wine mixed with gall to drink. But when He tasted it, He would not drink it.)

DAVID: Save me, God, for the water has risen to my neck.

GROUP A: I have sunk in deep mud, and there is no footing;

GROUP A: I have come into deep waters, and a flood sweeps over me.

DAVID: I am weary from my crying; my throat is parched.

ALL: My eyes fail, looking for my God.

GROUP A: Those who hate me without cause are more numerous than the hairs of my head;

GROUP A: my deceitful enemies, who would destroy me, are powerful.

DAVID: Though I did not steal, I must repay.

ALL: God, You know my foolishness, and my guilty acts are not hidden from You.

GROUP A: Do not let those who put their hope in You be disgraced because of me,

GROUP A: Lord God of Hosts; do not let those who seek You be humiliated because of me,

DAVID: For I have endured insults because of You, and shame has covered my face.

GROUP A: I have become a stranger to my brothers

GROUP A: and a foreigner to my mother's sons

DAVID: because zeal for Your house has consumed me,

ALL: and the insults of those who insult You have fallen on me.

GROUP A: I mourned and fasted, but it brought me insults.

GROUP A: I wore sackcloth as my clothing, and I was a joke to them.

ALL: Those who sit at the city gate talk about me, and drunkards make up songs about me.

DAVID: But as for me, Lord, my prayer to You is for a time of favor.

GROUP A: In Your abundant, faithful love, God, answer me with Your sure salvation.

GROUP A: Rescue me from the miry mud; don't let me sink.

DAVID: Let me be rescued from those who hate me and from the deep waters.

ALL: Don't let the floodwaters sweep over me or the deep swallow me up;

ALL: don't let the Pit close its mouth over me.

GROUP A: Answer me, Lord, for Your faithful love is good;

GROUP A: in keeping with Your great compassion, turn to me.

DAVID: Don't hide Your face from Your servant, for I am in distress.

ALL: Answer me quickly!

GROUP A: Draw near to me and redeem me; ransom me because of my enemies.

DAVID: You know the insults I endure— my shame and disgrace.

GROUP A: You are aware of all my adversaries.

DAVID: Insults have broken my heart, and I am in despair.

GROUP A: I waited for sympathy, but there was none;

GROUP A: for comforters, but found no one.

DAVID: Instead, they gave me gall for my food, and for my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.

GROUP A: Let their table set before them be a snare, and let it be a trap for their allies.

GROUP A: Let their eyes grow too dim to see, and let their loins continually shake.

ALL: Pour out Your rage on them, and let Your burning anger overtake them.

DAVID: Make their fortification desolate; may no one live in their tents.

GROUP A: For they persecute the one You struck

GROUP A: and talk about the pain of those You wounded.

DAVID: Add guilt to their guilt; do not let them share in Your righteousness.

ALL: Let them be erased from the book of life and not be recorded with the righteous.

DAVID: But as for me—poor and in pain— let Your salvation protect me, God.

GROUP A: I will praise God's name with song and exalt Him with thanksgiving.

GROUP A: That will please Yahweh more than an ox, more than a bull with horns and hooves.

DAVID: The humble will see it and rejoice.

ALL: You who seek God, take heart!

DAVID: For the Lord listens to the needy and does not despise His own who are prisoners.

ALL: Let heaven and earth praise Him, the seas and everything that moves in them,