

Psalm 56 — “In Your Troubles, Trust God’s Promises”

Ps 56 is the complaint of one who - though hard-pressed by enemies - nevertheless trusts in God, rests in His promises, flees to Him for help, and renders thanks for His mercy” (J.J. Stewart Perowne).

William Plumer gives 3 words of practical application from Ps 56: (1) whatever our case may be, let us always render praises. they are always due to God. (2) a past deliverance should not be allowed to grow out of date, nor expire. It should be frequently mentioned both for the strengthening of faith in ourselves and others and for the glory of our great Redeemer. (3) Who can be against you if you have all omnipotence for you, on your side, defending & fighting for you!

As our experiential knowledge of God’s promises grows, then the more our hearts echo the truth of God’s promises. William Spurstowe (c. 1605–1666) said that God’s gospel promises are like stars at night. When you look into a dark countryside sky, you see few stars at first, but the longer you gaze into the sky and your eyes adjust to the night light, the more stars you see, until “the whole firmament, from every quarter, with a numberless multitude of stars, is richly enamelled as with so many golden studs.”[5]So when we begin to meditate on God’s promises, the number of promises and the light coming from them may at first seem to be small and weak, so as to be insufficient to quell our fears and dispel our darkness, but when we read and meditate further—and begin to see the thousands of promises in the Scripture together with the bright light that shines from them clearly and distinctly—our souls are then ravished and filled with delight and assurance. (Joel Beeke)

YOU CAN TRUST GOD’S PROMISES

- Josh 21.45 - not one of the good promises of the LORD have failed
- 2 Cor 7.1 - we have these promises
- Heb 11.33 - believers have ‘obtained the promises’
- Gal 4.28 - we are children of promise!
- Eph 3.6 - we are fellow partakers of the promise thru Christ
- 1 John 2.25 - this is the promise HE made to us : eternal life!
- 2 Cor 1.20 - as many as are the promises of God, in him they are yes!
- 2 Pet 1.4 - God has granted to us his precious and magnificent promises

Background to Psalm 56

- Title (superscript) - a Miktam: something to be remembered/treasured; when David was in Gath (1 Sam 21.10-15)
- Close (subscript; Ps 57 header) - for the choir director (public worship); set to a tune that is unknown to us but it was known to them: “Al-Tashheth”

THESIS — Ps 56 is a “divine song” worth remembering & treasuring in your heart! Treasure this. Bottle it up; Store it away; save it to the *desktop of your mind* so you can easily access it.

>> To treasure it up simply: 3 words: (1) **trouble** (2) **trust** (3) **thanks!**

I. TROUBLE (1-2, 5-7)

II. TRUST (3-4, 8-11)

v.4 = praising God’s “*word*” - the idea is God’s “promises” — His specific words/promises to us.

v.8-9 - God knows, cares, and ‘bottles up’ all your tears!

III. THANKS (12-13)

1. **A Promise** (definition): a declaration of God’s will stating what he will give or what evils he will remove.
2. **Greatness** of a Promise: they all spring from God and are “yes” in Christ; they give us the right to things of infinite value; they are precious & magnificent; they are grounds for exceeding comfort.
3. **Benefits** from Promises: We must (1) KNOW the promises // we must (2) BELIEVE the promises (Lam 3.21-22) // (3) we must APPLY (use them!) the promises // we must (4) PRAY the promises!
 - a) How do we *USE* a promise of God in Scripture? (1) meditate often on them; (2) have a particular promise to go to in those extreme times; (3) think of biblical examples where promises were fulfilled; (4) be thankful for the smallest way God fulfilled them; (5) tell others how faithful God has been to you; rehearse it; (6) read & treasure them & think on them often. (7) speak a promise to other believers to edify them!

Psalm 56 — "In Your Troubles, Trust God's Promises"**GOD'S PROMISES**

Here are a few guidelines that the Puritans provide us with for using God's promises in Christ while encountering affliction:

1. Choose some verses that speak of Christ's assurance of His presence and protection in trials and meditate on them so that you will not be at a loss for support and comfort when hard times come. In this way, you will prepare your heart for trials and will not be surprised when they come.
2. Do not just assent to God's promises in Christ; take them in hand and lean upon them, like elderly people lean on their canes. Andrew Gray says: "As you would not destroy your own souls, be much in making use and application of the promises. Are not the promises your life? Did not all the saints that went to heaven before us, go to heaven living upon the promises?"
3. Remember that Christ promises to uphold and sustain you in afflictions (Pss. 9:9; 37:4, 39–40) and also that His abundant comforts will shatter your troubles as light shatters the darkness (Ps. 112:4; Mic. 7:8–9; 2 Cor. 1:5).
4. A lively faith in God's promises in Christ will help you exercise patience in affliction. As Gray writes: "If you would inquire of faith in the midnight of your affliction, what is its opinion of God and of your own estate, it would sweetly answer you thus: 'Wait upon God for I shall yet praise Him. If it seems slow, wait for it; comfort and relief will surely come; it will not delay.'"
5. Go to the Lord in your affliction and say: "Lord, it is part of thy covenant to deliver me from such a cross and calamity; Thou hast said that the rod of the wicked shall not rest upon the lot of the righteous; that Thou wilt afflict, but in measure, according to our strength, and for our good. O sanctify Thy hand unto me, give me faith and patience to wait upon Thee, wisdom to make a good use of this chastisement; let it purge me from my dross, and breed the quiet fruit of righteousness."
6. Let your afflictions drive you to greater fellowship and communion with Christ. Let affliction make you seek out God's promises, and let those promises stir up your faith. Then let your faith lead you to prayer, for in your prayer you will find Christ (Jer. 29:10–14; Mic. 7:7).
7. Plead in your prayers the hope that God's promises offer you in affliction, not asking when you will be delivered from your trial but what your trial is meant to deliver to you. Since the Lord has sent it for your good, pray for it to be sanctified to you, to work healing in you, to be remedial in its effect, and to be a cause of rejoicing both in the midst of it and when you come to the other side of it.

IN TIMES OF AFFLICTION - HERE ARE STEPS TO TAKE:

1. Choose verses of his presence and protection and meditate / think on them.
2. Consider Isaiah 43.2 and Hebrews 13:6 that God is with you to protect and guard you
3. See the dangers that Isa 43 says God's people will encounter through life.
4. don't just know a promise, but take it in hand like you would take a staff and lean on it.
5. God's promises are to uphold and sustain you
6. Your trials are a sign NOT of God's abandonment or anger but of your sonship and Christian badge.
7. in all your afflictions, trust God.
8. you must believe the promises and not merely know about them
9. remind yourself of your chief end - purpose - to glorify God and enjoy him forever.
10. whatever you lose in this life, your Father is trading for that which is infinitely and eternally better in glory.

EVERY PROMISE OF YOUR WORD

1. From the breaking of the dawn
 To the setting of the sun,
 I will stand on every promise of Your word.
 Words of power, strong to save,
 That will never pass away,
 I will stand on every promise of Your word.
 For Your covenant is sure,
 And on this I am secure,
 I can stand on every promise of Your word.

2. When I stumble and I sin,
 Condemnation pressing in,
 I will stand on every promise of Your word.
 You are faithful to forgive,
 That in freedom I might live,
 So I stand on every promise of Your word.
 Guilt to innocence restored:
 You remember sins no more!
 So I'll stand on every promise of Your word.

Words: Stuart Townend, Music: Keith Getty

3. When I'm faced with anguished choice,
 I will listen for Your voice,
 And I'll stand on every promise of Your word.
 Through this dark and troubled land
 You will guide me with your hand
 As I stand on every promise of Your word.
 And you've promised to complete
 Every work begun in me,
 So I'll stand on every promise of Your word.

4. Hope that lifts me from despair,
 Love that casts out every fear,
 As I stand on every promise of Your word.
 Not forsaken, not alone,
 For the Comforter has come,
 And I stand on every promise of Your word.
 Grace sufficient, grace for me,
 Grace for all who will believe,
 We will stand on every promise of Your word.

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PSALM 56: PSALTER (Tune: "Come, Christians, Join to Sing")

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| <p>1. O God, be merciful,
 be merciful to me;
 all day man tramples me,
 oppressing without cease.
 Boldly my many foes
 against me wage their fight;
 all day they trample me,
 attacking me in pride.</p> <p>2. LORD, I will trust in you,
 whenever I'm afraid.
 In God the LORD I trust;
 in God, whose word I praise.
 What can man do to me?
 I will not be afraid.
 All day they hurt my cause;
 their thoughts against me rage.</p> <p>3. They meet, they lurk, they watch,
 as for my life they wait.
 God cast them down in wrath!
 Will they their crimes escape?</p> | <p>You have kept count of all
 my tossings to and fro.
 Bottle my tears, O LORD;
 are they not in your scroll?</p> <p>4. LORD, when I call to you,
 my foes shall turn and flee,
 for this I surely know,
 that God is still for me.
 In God the LORD I trust;
 in God, whose word I praise.
 What can man do to me?
 I shall not be afraid.</p> <p>5. O LORD, my God, to you
 my solemn vows are due.
 Thank off'rings I will bring
 and offer unto you.
 From death you saved my soul,
 from falling kept my feet,
 that in the light of life
 my walk with you may be.</p> |
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