Psalm 55

"David's Plea to God for Deliverance from Enemies and Betrayal"

For the choir director; on stringed instruments. A Maskil of David.

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A1 HIS PLEA FOR HELP  55:1-8

B1 The Statement of His Plea  55:1-2

C1 Listen and Don’t Hide: {1} Give ear to my prayer, O God; And do not hide Yourself from my supplication.  55:1

C2 Listen and Don't Answer: {2} Give heed to me and answer me; I am restless in my complaint and am surely distracted,  55:2

B2 The Description of His Distress 55:3-8

C1 The Cause of His Distress – His Enemies  55:3

D1 His identification of his enemies  55:3a

E1 {3} Because of the voice of the enemy,¹

E2 Because of the pressure of the wicked;

D2 The action of his enemies  55:3b

E1 Spiteful trouble-making: For they bring down trouble upon me

E2 Angry grudge-bearing: And in anger they bear a grudge against me.

C2 The Emotions of His Distress  55:4-5

D1 Anguish and terror: {4} My heart is in anguish within me, And the terrors of death have fallen upon me.  55:4

¹ 55:3 - enemy: David identifies his opponent(s) as “the enemy,” “the wicked,” they who “bear a grudge” (55:3); “not an enemy,” not “one who hates me,” but rather one “who reproaches me,” and “who has exalted himself against me” (55:12); “a man my equal, my companion and my familiar friend” (55:13). He says of himself and his opponent, “We who had sweet fellowship together walked in the house of God in the throng” (55:14). Who was this opponent or who were these opponents? Of course, we cannot know for certain. But David's own son Absalom might fit some of these descriptions (2 Sam. 15:18); and David's own trusted counselor, Ahithophel, who betrayed David and defected to advise Absalom, would certainly qualify (2 Sam. 15:12, 31). From a Messianic point of view, Judas, one of Jesus' twelve apostles, also would qualify as the traitor (Matt. 26:47-50). (See also Franz Delitzsch, Commentary on the Old Testament, Keil and Delitzsch, Vol. 5.)
D2  Fear, trembling, and horror: 55:5

C3 His Desire for Escape from Distress 55:6-8

D1 To flee like a dove: 55:6

D2 To escape into the wilderness: 55:7

D3 To find refuge from the storm: 55:8

A2 HIS PRAYER FOR GOD TO CONFUSE HIS ENEMIES: 55:9-15

B1 Because of Violence and Strife in the City: 55:9b

B2 Because of Iniquity and Mischief in the City: 55:10

B3 Because of Destruction, Oppression and Deceit in the City: 55:11

B4 Because of His Betrayal 55:12-14

C1 By Someone Not an Enemy: 55:12a

C2 By Someone Not a Self-Exalted Hater: 55:12b

C3 By a Companion and Friend: 55:13

C4 By One with Whom He Had Spiritual Kinship: 55:14

B5 His Prayer for Sudden, Terrible Death upon His Evil Enemies: 55:15

A3 HIS CALL TO RELIANCE UPON GOD 55:16-23

B1 His Personal Confidence in Elohim’s Hearing and Response to His Continual Complaint 55:16-19a

C1 His Confidence: 55:16
C2 His Continual Complaint:  {17} Evening and morning and at noon, I will complain and murmur,

C3 Elohim’s Saving Response  55:17b-18

D1 His hearing:  And He will hear my voice.  55:17b

D2 His redemption from his many antagonists:  {18} He will redeem my soul in peace from the battle which is against me, For they are many who strive with me.  55:18

C4 Elohim the Ancient, Changeless King Will Respond to the Adversaries Who do not Fear Him:  {19} God will hear and answer them – Even the one who sits enthroned from of old-- Selah. With whom there is no change,  55:19a

B2 His Description of the Adversaries  55:19b-21

C1 Not God-Fearing:  And who do not fear God.  55:19b

C2 Instigators of Violence:  {20} He has put forth his hands against those who were at peace with him;  55:20a

C3 Covenant Breakers:  He has violated his covenant.  55:20b

C4 Duplicitous Warmongers:  {21} His speech was smoother than butter, But his heart was war; His words were softer than oil, Yet they were drawn swords.  55:21

B3 His Call to Confidence in God  55:22-23

C1 Because Yahweh will Sustain and Protect the Righteous:  {22} Cast your burden upon the LORD and He will sustain you; He will never allow the righteous to be shaken.  55:22

C2 Because Elohim Will Judge Violent, Deceitful Men:  {23} But You, O God, will bring them down to the pit of destruction; Men of bloodshed and deceit will not live out half their days.  55:23a

C3 His Personal Resolve to Trust in God:  But I will trust in You.  55:23b