

STUDIES IN PSALMS

2. Consider carefully the *Analysis* of this psalm and then read this from Scroggie: "In structure the Psalm is highly artificial. There are two main divisions, 1-9 and 10-17. Each of these ends with a refrain in which the Psalmist speaks of God as his *strength* and *high tower* (9, 17). Each of these main divisions has two stanzas divided by a *Selah* (5, 13) and the second stanza in each division begins in the same way (6, 14). The two main divisions closely resemble one another, but each has its characteristics" (*Ibid.* p. 55). Discuss the structure of this psalm.
3. Discuss the import of the description the psalmist gives of his enemies—as in verses one through five and verses six through nine?
4. What is meant by the little phrase in verse eleven "slay them not lest my people forget"? Discuss its application to our day.
5. When does God laugh? (Cf. vs. 8) What kind of laugh is it? Discuss.

PSALM 60

DESCRIPTIVE TITLE

An Outcry of Anguish, Expostulation and Entreaty,
under a Severe Reverse.

ANALYSIS

Stanza I., vers. 1-4, Lamentation over a Defeat. Stanza II., vers. 5-8, Prayer for Victory, based on an Ancient Oracle. Stanza III., vers 9-12, In Order to Victory, Divine Guidance and Presence Besought.

(Lm.) A Tablet—By David—To instruct—When he waged war with Aramneharaim and with Aram-zobah, and Joab returned and smote of Edom in the Valley of Salt twelve thousand.¹

- 1 O God thou hast rejected us—hast broken out upon us,
Thou hast been angry—wilt thou not take us back?²
- 2 Thou hast shattered the land—hast split it open,
Heal thou the fractures thereof—for it hath tottered.

1. Cp. 44, text and Exposition.
2. So O.G. 998b.

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- 3 Thou hast sated¹ thy people with hardship,
 hast let them drink reeling as wine.²
- 4 Thou hast given to them who revere thee a signal,
 in order to take flight before the bow!³
- 5 That thy beloved ones may be rescued
 oh give victory with thy right hand and answer me.⁴
- 6 God spake in his sanctuary:—⁵
 "Let me exult let me apportion Shechem,
 And the vale of Succoth will I measure out:
- 7 Mine is Gilead and mine Manasseh:
 But Ephraim is the defence of my head,
 Judah is my commander's staff:⁶
- 8 Moab is my wash-bowl,
 Unto Edom will I cast my sandal:⁷
 Over Philistia will I⁸ raise a shout of triumph."
- 9 Who will conduct me to the city entrenched?
 who will lead me as far as Edom?
- 10 Wilt not thou O God (who hast) rejected us?
 yea wilt thou not O God go forth in our hosts?
- 11 Grant to us help out of distress!
 since unreal is a victory⁹ by man.
- 12 In God we shall do valiantly,
 he himself therefore shall¹⁰ tread down our adversaries.
- (Lm. To the Chief Musician. (CMm.) For stinged instruments.

PARAPHRASE

PSALM 60

(Written by David at the time he was at war with Syria, with the outcome still uncertain; this was written when Joab, captain of his forces, slaughtered 12,000 men of Edom in the Valley of Salt.)

1. So *Gt.*—*Gn.*
2. So *O.G.* 947.
3. As if with the irony of astonishment.
4. *Written* "us"; but *read* "me." Some cod. (w. 4 ear. pr. edns., Aram., Sep., Syr., Vul.), both write and read "me"—*Gn.*
5. Or: "holiness."
6. *Sep.*: "my king."
7. Thus assigning to both Moab and Edom a menial position.
8. So *Gt.*—*Gn.*
9. Or: "deliverance," "salvation."
10. A consenting petition: "We are willing to accept his terms, and give him the glory." Cp. *Exposition* on 51:7, 8.

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O God, You have rejected us and broken our defenses; You have become angry and detested us. Lord, restore us again to Your favor.

2 You have caused this nation to tremble in fear; You have torn it apart. Lord, heal it now, for it is shaken to its depths.

3 You have been very hard on us and made us reel beneath Your blows.

4, 5 But You have given us a banner to rally to; all who love truth¹ will rally to it; then You can deliver Your beloved people. Use Your strong right arm to rescue us!

6, 7 God has promised to help us! He has vowed it by His holiness! No wonder I exult; "Shechem, Succoth, Gilead, Manasseh—still are Mine!" He says. "Judah shall continue to produce kings, and Ephraim great warriors.

8 Moab shall become My lowly servant, and Edom My slave. And I will shout in triumph over the Philistines."

9, 10 Who will bring me in triumph into Edom's strong cities! God will! He who cast us off! He who abandoned us to our foes!

11 Yes, Lord, help us against our enemies, for man's help is useless.

12 With God's help we shall do mighty things, for He will trample down our foes.

EXPOSITION

By reference to Ps. 44, text and notes, it will be recalled that this psalm as well as that was written in the interval of suspense that occurred between the alarming raid of Edomites while the main portion of David's army was in Syria, and the effective relief obtained by Joab's sanguinary defeat of these their troublesome neighbours. The exact circumstances have to be inferred from a few known facts; but, notwithstanding the disadvantage under which we thus labour, this psalm offers a few outstanding features, which are not a little impressive and instructive. It is needless to speak of the temporary alarm, almost amounting to panic, which is so often caused in the history of warfare, by reverses which are serious enough at the time, but soon overcome and forgotten. It is not often that their effect is so vividly described as in the opening stanza of this psalm: this raid from the south seemed for the time like the driving home of a wedge

1. Literally, "that it may be displayed because of the truth."

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splitting open the whole fabric of the nation; like the administering of a poisoned draught stupefying the senses of the people. It is seen at a glance how both weal and woe are ever closely associated with Jehovah's providence over Israel. It is specially observable how the psalmist bases his plea for restored success to his arms on the records of the past. As we have had repeated occasion to remark, David's wars were first and foremost a resumption and continuance of those of Joshua. Here is an old record, dating from the conquest, from which the inferiority of Edom's assigned relation to Israel is clearly foretold. And is *Edom* thus to seize a favorable chance to overrun the whole land? This can never be tolerated: *Who will conduct me to the fortified city among the rocks?* We cannot say whether Joab, in his terrible slaughter of Edomites, exceeded his commission, or made more than necessary reprisals, but this we can see—that David, at least, desired, from the outset of this southern expedition, to act in unreserved submission to Divine guidance. To the student of prophecy it is enough to say, Watch *Edom*, for developments not even yet complete! To the humble saint, who cannot well grasp national and world-wide problems, it may suffice to address the watch-words: *Who will conduct me? Vain is a victory by Man! In God we shall do valiantly.* May no readers of these lines have *adversaries* other than those whom *God himself will tread down!*

“Shechem at the foot of Mt. Gerizim, the chief gathering-place in the time of Joshua, stands for the country west of the Jordan: cp. Josh. 24:1. The Valley of Succoth, in the valley of the Jordan on the eastern side, near the Jabbok . . . stands for the country east of the Jordan . . . Gilead, as distinguished from Manasseh, must indicate with it the two chief divisions east of the Jordan, as Ephraim and Judah, the two chief divisions on the west. Accordingly Gilead here is for the southern portion assigned to Reuben and Gad, Nu. 32:1-29, and Manasseh for the northern portion, or the land of Bashan. . . . Moab was the troublesome neighbour of Israel, occupying the region east of the Dead Sea. He is to be so reduced that he becomes the wash-basin which is carried by a slave to pour water over his master's hands or feet. . . . Edom, the troublesome neighbour of Judah on the south-east, was also so reduced as to become another slave to whom the master kicks off the sandals when he would have them removed to wash his feet”—Br.

STUDIES IN PSALMS
QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. At what possible time did verses one through three apply to the nation of Israel?
2. From the superscription of this psalm we could assume that David fought against the Syrians in the far north. Read II Sam. 8:13, 14; I Kings 11:15, 16 and I Chron. 18:12, 13. While David was away from Jerusalem the Edomites took advantage of his absence and invaded Palestine. News came to David—he sent Joab to defend the homeland. In the interval David wrote this psalm. What did Joab do? Read verse nine and notice the faith of David. Discuss.
3. What is “the banner” given to them that fear thee? Cf. vs. 4.
4. Moab and Edom were to be treated in a strange way—“Moab is my washpot” and “Upon Edom will I cast my shoe”. What is the meaning of these figures of speech?
5. Has God ever led in war or has He merely used it as a rod of correction after man initiated it?

PSALM 61

DESCRIPTIVE TITLE

The Psalmist, in Banishment, Prays for Restoration.

ANALYSIS

Stanza I., vers. 1-4, Prayer for Restoration based on Past Mercies. Stanza II., vers. 5-8, Prayer for Long Life, grounded on Public Blessings, and closing with a Promise of Perpetual Praise.

(Lm.) By David.

- 1 Do hear O God my piercing¹ cry,
oh attend unto my prayer:
 - 2 From the end of the land unto thee will I cry when my heart
fainteth,
into a rock too high for me (to climb) shalt thou lead me.
1. “Plaintive”—Del.; “ringing”—Dr.