

## Studies in Psalms by [John T Polk II](#) For [The Fellowship Room](#)

Psalms 55

11/30/12

Vs. 1-2 a call to God;  
Vs. 3-5 David's depression;  
Vs. 6-15 suggestions for relief;  
Vs. 16-23 give the privilege and process of faith in God.

Whatever the event in David's life that produced this Psalm, it seems the "sticking point" is in **verses 12-14**: his troubler was a former close personal friend, or family member.

**Verses 1-2**: The living God needs no "vain repetitions" (Matthew 6:7) to get His attention.

**Verses 3-5**: The wicked's words, oppression, and pressures, motivated by wrath, had caused David to descend into: pained heart, terrors of death, fearfulness and trembling, and horror. It's no wonder, then, that God was the only way out. Nothing can hurt someone more than with words: "A man who bears false witness against his neighbor *is like* a club, a sword, and a sharp arrow" (Proverbs 25:18).

**Verses 6-15**: David pictures his peacefulness if he was out of this picture (**verses 6-8**); divided tongues worked to scatter God's enemies at the Tower of Babel (Genesis 11:1-9), and the constant crime and violence in "the city" might be reduced if they were scattered. What hurts the most is to be wounded by close friends or relatives. An "enemy" is an adversary from whom one flees, but if the enemy comes from one's own family, escape may not be an option. Later the prophet Micah decried the same condition: "Do not trust in a friend; Do not put your confidence in a companion; Guard the doors of your mouth From her who lies in your bosom. For son dishonors father, Daughter rises against her mother, Daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; A man's enemies *are* the men of his own household" (Micah 7:5-6). Jesus quoted Micah 7:6 and showed even in His day, "a man's enemies will be those of his *own* household" (Matthew 10:34-36). Sometimes an enemy may arise from someone with whom we have had "sweet counsel together," and even congregated for worship! Understand the frustration in Paul's wish in Galatians 5:11-12.

**Verses 16-23**: David will not let external circumstances diminish his faithful confidence in God (**verse 16**). **Verse 17** will be repeated by Paul in 1 Thessalonians 5:17: "pray without ceasing" (1 Thessalonians 5:17). By **verse 18**, either relief arrives, or David is claiming that it will arrive. David puts this in perspective, this is not personal with David, for troublers have always been those who "do not change," and who "do not fear God" (**verse 19**).

**Verses 20-21** show the troublers have broken faith with David, for they once were: "at peace with him," in "covenant," users of "smooth words" when "war was in his heart," a slick speaker with "drawn swords." Beware of political or religious leaders who say the

***All Scriptures and comments are based on the New King James Version, unless otherwise noted.***



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right things without the right meaning – who devise “peace processes” without God’s plan for conversion. Jesus rightly gave the alarm: “Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves” (Matthew 7:15). Jesus also gave the “fruit test” as the method to reveal them (Matthew 7:16-20). Indeed, **Psalm 55:22** is embodied in Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 6:24-34.

**Verse 23** warns that the wicked can (and will!) die in “half their days,” meaning God can bring them to nought suddenly!

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