

# Psalm 56: God our Deliverer



Psalm 56 (55) (Mode 2. 5....31 / 4.....32)

This is a prayer of trust in God accompanied by a request for God's protective justice against human cruelty and violence.

Be gracious to me, O God,  
for my enemies attack me.

They [<sup>e</sup>nosh אֶנֶשׁ] trample me down.

Wave after wave of them pursue me.

They give me no respite  
as they bear down upon me.

*Thanks be to God.*

*I praise God and God's promise.*

*I trust in God and am not afraid.*

*What can mere mortals [basar בְּשָׂר] do to me?*

‘I, I am he who comforts you; why then are you afraid of a mere mortal who must die, a human being who fades like grass?’(Isaiah 51:12).

‘The Egyptians are human, and not God; their horses are flesh, and not spirit’(Isaiah 31:3).

‘Cursed are those who trust in mere mortal human beings and make mere flesh their strength, whose hearts turn away from the Lord’(Jeremiah 17:5).

‘He remembered that they were but flesh, a wind that passes and does not come again’(Psalm 78:39).

All day long they discredit my words.  
Their only thought is to harm me.  
They band together in ambush.  
They track me down to take my life.

The following two lines are not in the liturgy

Repay them for their crimes.  
In your anger, God, cast them down!

You have kept an account of my turmoil.  
You have kept a record of my tears.  
My enemies will retreat when I call on you.  
This I know, that God is on my side

*Thanks be to God.*

*I praise God and God's promise.*

*I trust in God and am not afraid.*

*What can mere mortals do to me?*

I am bound by the vows  
I made to you;  
I will carry them out, O God,  
as I offer you my thanks.

You have delivered me from death,  
and kept my feet from stumbling,  
so that I may walk in the presence of God  
and enjoy the light of the living.