

**PSALMS: DIARIES OF GODLY OLD TESTAMENT SAINTS**  
**Psalm Fifty-Five: Handling Relationship Trials With Former Close Associates**  
**(Psalm 55:1-23)**

**I. Introduction**

- A. If a Christian shops at a New York City mall and runs into a verbally abusive party, he thinks little of avoiding problems by leaving the store and going elsewhere. After all, he doesn't **know** the abusive party.
- B. However, having a falling out with a former **close** associate to whom one has become **vulnerable** is more difficult. The inability to solve the problem can make one want to run away or have no close friends again!
- C. Psalm 55 is a record of a personal bout David had in such a matter, and teaches us how to deal with it.

**II. Handling Relationship Trials With Former Close Associates, Psalm 55:1-23.**

- A. The fifty-fifth psalm, a *maschil*, is a **teaching** psalm intended to edify its listeners through **instruction**.
- B. As such, we note the content of the psalm as **learners** would heed a **teacher's** illustration as follows:
  - 1. David expressed a deeply disquieting concern at one point in his life, Ps. 55:1-5:
    - a. David urgently wanted God's help as expressed in his urging God not to hide from his prayer, v. 1.
    - b. He admitted to God that he was wandering about restlessly with his troubled musings of the mind, and that he was greatly disturbed in soul about a matter, v. 2.
    - c. The trouble involved being mistreated by a party who held a grudge against him contrary to Leviticus 19:18 in the Law, and the matter bothered David, making him feel deep anguish of soul, v. 3-5.
  - 2. He wanted to flee away from the problem as a dove flies silently away to hide in a desert place, v. 6-8.
  - 3. David detailed the problem, revealing a former close relationship gone sour to involve many people:
    - a. David revealed unto the Lord that a whole city in which he was living at the time was caught up in the difficult relationship problem surrounding him, Ps. 55:9-11.
    - b. What had made this situation particularly difficult was its arising from a former close confidant, a close friendship gone awry, Ps. 55:12-14, 20-21. This associate had formerly enjoyed spiritual fellowship with David, and now that former close fellowship had turned into a nightmare of trouble!
  - 4. In verses 15-19, David reports that he found solace in calling out to God in prayer for His help, and that God heard the prayer and ransomed him from the trouble brewed up by his former, traitorous friend.
  - 5. In fact, David expressed confidence that God would appropriately judge the wrongdoer(s) while he simply relied on the Lord to deliver him from the trouble and pain involved, Ps. 55:23.
  - 6. **In a key address to the LISTENER, David tells of the afflicted one's need to release to God as one would release a bird the anxiety that had been handed to him by a former close but betraying associate, for it is GOD who can successfully sustain and not let him even totter**, Ps. 55:22.
  - 7. In view of the former description where David **felt** like solving his problem by **fleeing** like a dove, he here suggests releasing the **anxiety** as one does a bird, for the **anxiety**--not **DAVID**--must depart!
  - 8. The lesson is this: **one cannot solve the problem of a damaged close relationship by running from the pain; the only solution is giving God the anxiety felt and trusting Him to solve the matter.**

***Lesson:*** (1) *When we leave ourselves vulnerable to becoming close to others, along with the promise such friendships supply for being greatly blessed, we also run the risk of being badly HURT!* (2) *However, we have a great GOD upon Whom we can rely for help in such times of hurt.*

***Application:*** (1) *Fleeing a troubled relationship with a former close friend is no way to solve the problem--it only takes the problem with us as the ANXIETY behind the desire to flee is always WITH us. Learn to let go of that ANXIETY by faith if we want to solve its PAIN!* (2) *Since a man of an indiscriminate choice of friends will come to ruin, Prov. 18:24, it pays to be careful in choosing QUALITY friends as CLOSE ones to avoid needless burnout.* (3) *However, don't hesitate to make new close friends just for being badly "burned" before in such relationships--God is big enough to heal and keep us on track so that we can afford to be trusting with others.* (4) *Keep in mind that some people are incurably abusive and must be avoided, 2 Tim . 3:1-5. Some former close friendships may be irreconcilable, so don't keep feeling guilty if reconciliation cannot occur!*