

**Psalms 60:0 ¶ To the chief Musician upon Shushaneduth, Michtam of David, to teach; when he strove with Aramnaharaim and with Aramzobah, when Joab returned, and smote of Edom in the valley of salt twelve thousand.**

Shushaneduth = testimony, witness in Hebrew; Easton's Bible Dictionary = lily of the testimony (possibly identifying a tune for the psalm)

David wrote this psalm as a poem of instruction, a testimony to the power and faithfulness of God. I could not identify the specific account in scripture that matched with the events that inspired this psalm.

Spurgeon offers this explanation: "When he strove with Aramnaharaim and with Aramzobah. The combined Aramean tribes sought to overcome Israel, but were signally defeated. When Joab returned. He had been engaged in another region, and the enemies of Israel took advantage of his absence, but on his return with Abishai the fortunes of war were changed. And smote of Edom in the valley of salt twelve thousand. More than this appear to have fallen according to 1Chronicles 18:12, but this commemorates one memorable part of the conflict."

Verses 5-12 of this psalm are basically repeated in Psalm 108.

**Psalms 60:1 ¶ O God, thou hast cast us off, thou hast scattered us, thou hast been displeased; O turn thyself to us again.**

The psalm opens with David pleading with God to intervene on behalf of Israel. It seems that their situation at the time indicated that God had forsaken them in His displeasure.

**Psalms 60:2 Thou hast made the earth to tremble; thou hast broken it: heal the breaches thereof; for it shaketh.**

It sounds like David is describing an earthquake that he attributes to God's judgment against them. Maybe, however, it is his way of describing the effects of how battles with their enemies had affected the land.

Spurgeon thinks this is descriptive of the condition of Israel after Saul's death and David became king. "Things were as unsettled as though the solid earth had been made to quake; nothing was stable; the priests had been murdered by Saul, the worst men had been put in office, the military power had been broken by the Philistines, and the civil authority had grown despicable through insurrections and intestine contests. Thou hast broken it. As the earth cracks, and opens itself in rifts during violent earthquakes, so was the kingdom rent with strife and calamity."

**Psalms 60:3 Thou hast shewed thy people hard things: thou hast made us to drink the wine of astonishment.**

David continues to lament that God had caused His people to suffer times so difficult that it left them reeling, feeling out of control.

Guzik: "Israel's defeat was hard to understand and there were many other aspects of their situation that caused David **confusion**. Still, there was a kind of comfort in understanding that God was the author of it all, because God what God does in judgment or discipline He can restore in love and mercy."

**Psalms 60:4 Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee, that it may be displayed because of the truth. Selah.**

David notes that in some way the LORD had provided a rallying point for those that revered Him.

Selah – a pause, an opportunity for meditation

Our rallying point as Christians today is Jesus. In Him is rooted all that is ours both now and for eternity.

**Psalms 60:5 That thy beloved may be delivered; save *with thy right hand*, and hear me.**

David pleads with God to deliver His beloved, His people, with the arm of His strength.

*Deuteronomy 7:6–8 "For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God: the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people: **But because the Lord loved you**, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the Lord brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt."*

**Psalms 60:6 ¶ God hath spoken in his holiness; I will rejoice, I will divide Shechem, and mete out the valley of Succoth.**

**Psalms 60:7 Gilead is mine, and Manasseh is mine; Ephraim also is the strength of mine head; Judah is my lawgiver;**

**Psalms 60:8 Moab is my washpot; over Edom will I cast out my shoe: Philistia, triumph thou because of me.**

David is basically attributing the fate of Israel and the nations to the power of God and references the word of God as his source (though I could not find specific references to quote).

Shechem, the valley of Succoth, Gilead (located east of Jordan) Manasseh, Ephraim and Judah make reference to the whole of Israel. "Judah is my lawgiver" makes reference to the fact that Judah was designated as the royal tribe, the tribal heritage of the Messiah. Moab (descendants of Lot) and Edom (descendants of Esau) were both related to the Israelites and along with Philistia represent some of the main enemies of Israel.

**Psalms 60:9 Who will bring me *into* the strong city? who will lead me into Edom?**

**Psalms 60:10 Wilt not thou, O God, *which* hadst cast us off? and *thou*, O God, *which* didst not go out with our armies?**

**Psalms 60:11 Give us help from trouble: for *vain is the help of man.***

**Psalms 60:12 Through God we shall do valiantly: for he *it is that* shall tread down our enemies.**

I liked the CJB for these verses: *“Who will bring me into the fortified city? Who will lead me to Edom? God, have you rejected us? You don’t go out with our armies, God. Help us against our enemy, for human help is worthless.”*

David continues his plea for God to help them. He knows that no human army can deliver them from their enemy; only God can. With God on their side, he is confident of victory.