

When New Initiatives and Ventures of Faith are Called For

Psalm 108

BACKGROUND

Two psalm-endings of David, **57:7—11** and **60: 5—12**, have been joined to make this single piece. Each had begun under stress, with David hunted in Psalm 57 and defeated in Psalm 60; but each had ended strongly. The new psalm starts at this more positive point in each of them, and so provides for a situation which is certainly chastening (**11**), but whose challenge is that of an inheritance not yet seized (10ff; *cf.* 9), rather than a defeat not yet avenged (*cf.* Ps. 60:1-3, 9ff.). For our use, the earlier psalms may well provide for times of personal or corporate peril, but the present one for times which call for new initiatives and ventures of faith.¹

Its position after Ps 107 reflects not only the shared divine attribute of *dsj* “loyal love” (v 5), but also its historical and theological setting: after return to the land, the hope of total repossession and of vindication of God’s sovereignty by means of Edom’s conquest remains as the goal of his people.² The focus upon Edom in v 11 would have special meaning for the Jewish community after 587 B.C., as the book of Obadiah eloquently testifies. The same book attests the organic link between conquest of Edom and possession of the whole land, the first being viewed as a signal for the second and also for the vindication of Yahweh and Israel against “all the nations” (Obad 15—21). Accordingly, there appears to be good reason for taking the reference to Edom as literal. Whether the new composition was used first for an actual campaign against Edomites cannot be clarified. It may simply reflect confidence expressed by a leader of the community in Yahweh’s ultimate victory on their behalf.³ The specification received fresh warrant after Edom’s treachery when Jerusalem fell in 587 B.C. (*cf.* Obad 11—14). Edom became the focus of the community’s appeal for divine justice. In their eyes the corollary of Edomite ascendancy was Judean humiliation, which spelled God’s own dishonor. ¶So Ps 60 came alive with a new relevance. ... The post-exilic community knew all too well the theme of divine judgment (*cf.* v 12), and encouragement was what was needed on the occasion(s) when the new psalm would be sung. Accordingly it was replaced with the confident assurance of the second half of Ps 57. Its vow of praise breathed certainty, uncowed by the pagan environment. It grounded its hope in the reality of God’s overwhelming loyalty to his own. It looked for manifestation of his glory so that all men might know Yahweh to be the true God.⁴

**The greatness of God calls for energetic _____
and _____, v 1-3**

A joyful _____ commitment, 1

An _____ commitment, v 2

¹ Kidner, *Psalms*, p.387.

² Allen, *Pslams*, p. 66.

³ Allen, *Psalms*, p. 69.

⁴ Allen, *Psalms*, p. 69

Begin the day with praise

A commitment to let the _____ know, v 3

Because of God's _____ and _____, v4.

Love = hesed, "Choice to be loyal, the obligation assumed by one person to act favorably on the behalf of another, who is dependent upon the aid of the first and helpless to function without it.

Faithfulness = emeth reliability, dependability.

Why indeed wouldn't helpless people want the world to know this exalted one?, v 5

The greatness of God calls for new _____ to action, vv. 6-13.

A confident prayer in difficult situation, 6

Confident _____ of God's promises, 7-9

If God has spoken it, it is a "done deal."

_____ assurance in God's ability to keep his promises, 10-13.

Edom, fortified city probably "Petra," v 10

It was our fault we went into captivity, v 11.

If God alone is for us, it does not matter who is against us, 12, 13.

Who is God?	What has he said?	What has he done?	What does that mean to me?