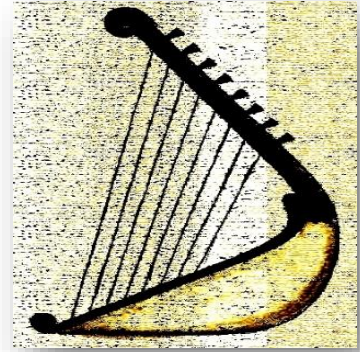


PSALM 31 vs 1

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Title and Subject: The dedication to the Chief musician proves this song of mingled measures and alternate strains of grief was intended for public singing, and thus a deathblow is given to the notion that nothing but praise should be sung. The Psalmist in dire affliction appeals to his God for help with confidence and holy pestering, and soon finds his mind reinforced that he magnifies the Lord for His great goodness. Some have thought the occasion that led to this Psalm was when Absalom rebelled, and courtiers fled from him, while lying lips spread a thousand rumors against him.



Divisions: there are no great lines of demarcation, throughout the strain undulates, falling into valleys of mourning; rising on hills of assurance. David testifies of his confidence in God, and asks for help (1-6); then expresses gratitude for mercies received (7-8); describes in detail his case (9-13); pleads for deliverance (14-18); and expects a blessing (19-22); and ends with its affects the people of God – Charles Spurgeon.

For the Chief musician,

A Psalm of David

¹ To You, O LORD, I run; leave me not in my shame: deliver me in Your righteousness.

² Stretch Your ear to me; deliver me speedily: be my Rock of refuge, a House of defense to save me.

³ For You are my Rock and my Fortress; for the sake of Your Name, lead me and guide me.

⁴ You pull me from the net that they hid for me: for You are my Strength.

⁵ Into Your hand I commit my spirit: You rescued me, O LORD God of truth.

⁶ I hate those who regard useless demon idols: but on the LORD I lean.

Think about it: David runs for safety; nowhere else does he fly for shelter, but to the Lord; let the tempest howl. The Psalmist has one refuge, and it's the best one. Listen to me attentively as one who hears every word. The enemy was cunning as well as mighty; if they could not conquer him by power, they would capture him by craft. "Into Your hand I commit my spirit" these living words of David were our Lord's dying words, and are often used by faithful men and women in their hour of death. Those who will not lean on the true arm of strength, are sure to make for themselves vain confidences. Man must have a god, and if he will not adore the only true God, he makes a fool of himself, and pays superstitious regard to a lie, and waits with anxious hope based on delusion. Those who did this were none of David's friends.

⁷ I am glad and rejoice in Your mercy: for You saw my trouble;

You know the distress of my soul;

⁸ and did not give me into the hand of the enemy: but You set my feet in a spacious place.

Think about it: The tight spot we are in. To be shut up in another's hand is to be delivered over to his power. The enemy may get a temporary advantage over us, but God will always provide a way of escape. Blessed be God for liberty: civil liberty is valuable, religious liberty is precious, spiritual liberty is priceless. He opens and no one shuts. Thank the Lord for an open door that no man nor demons can close. We are not in man's hands, but in the hands of God: else our feet would be in the stocks... and not in the large room of liberty.

⁹ Have mercy on me, O LORD, for I am in distress: My eye wasted away in grief, Yes, my soul and also my body.

¹⁰ For grief has consumed my life, and my years with groaning: my strength failed because of my twisted crime, and my bones wasted away.

¹¹ and to all my enemies, I was a reproach, but among my neighbors especially repulsive, and dreaded by those who know me: those who see me on the street run from me.

¹² I am forgotten as a dead man, gone from their memory: I am like a broken vessel.

Think about it: "Have mercy on me" ...he comes to a description of his sorrowful case; he unpacks his heart, lays bare his wounds, and expresses his inward desolation. Treat me not as I deserve to be treated. "My strength fails because of my perversity" ... my twisted obstinance, my warped stubbornness. Was this his foulest crime which now gnawed at his heart, and devoured his strength? Probably so. "I was a reproach among my enemies," they were pleased to have something to throw at me; even those who were the nearest. "They fled from me" afraid to be seen in the company, those who once courted his society, hurried from him as though he had been infected with the plague.

¹³ For I heard the slander of many: terror is on every side: while they took counsel against me, they schemed to take away my life.

¹⁴ But on You I lean, O LORD: I say, You are my God.

¹⁵ In Your hand are my times: deliver me from the hand of my enemies, and from those who persecute me.

¹⁶ May Your face shine upon Your servant: save me for Your mercy / not that I deserve it.

¹⁷ O LORD, **leave me not in my shame; for I called on You: let the wrongdoer be ashamed, and let them be silent in the grave.**

¹⁸ Silence the lying lips, who speak rudely, arrogantly and mockingly against the right ones.

Think about it: One slanderous viper is death to all comfort – what must be the venom of a whole brood? The accusing voices were so loud; the foul mouths had grown so bold, that they poured forth their lies in the presence of their victim.

These hard-heads, these boastful hypocrites, these demon inspired useful idiots; they speak slanderous lies – it's part of their speech; things cutting deep into the soul. May they all go to hell.

¹⁹ How great is your goodness, which You stored up for those who fear You; which You prepared for those who run to You in the presence of the sons of men!

²⁰ In secret, keep them sheltered in Your presence from the schemes of man: concealing them from combative liars.

Think about it: "How great is Your goodness" ... it is not often to find such a joyful sentence in connection with so much sorrow. Truly the life of faith is a miracle of God. What specifically happened? We do not know; he does not tell us. No measures can set forth the immeasurable goodness of the Lord.

²¹ with bended knee to the LORD: for His marvelous mercy to me, in a city under siege.

²² For in my haste I said: I am cut off from before Your eyes: yet You heard the voice of my request when I called out to You.

²³ O love the LORD, all you who love and trust Him: the LORD watches over the faithful, and fully repays the fat-headed doer.

²⁴ Be resolved, and He will strengthen your heart, all who wait on the LORD.

Think about it: "Be adamant" having done all, call on the Lord; and wait on Him; then be inflexible, like a rock that is not afraid of any weather, summer or winter, sun and showers, heat and cold, frost and snow; it does not blush; it does not shrink; it does not change its complexion. Our God hears and He will answer.

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