

"Blessed Be the LORD"

Psalm 31

As the title of this psalm designates, this was written by David for "the chief musician." This would have been to the chief musician of the Temple worship and would have been given for the purpose of being sung at some point in the worship of the Temple. The content of the psalm doesn't give much indication as to the occasion so we will not give any opinion on the matter. This is another psalm that seems to be intended for all of God's people of all ages, not just 3000 years ago when it was written.

There are numerous portions of this psalm that have been seen in previous ones and will be continued to be given throughout the psalms because they are so important for God's children to understand.

I. WE NEED TO TRUST IN HIM - vs. 1-8

- A. He never disappoints - He cannot lie so we never need to be ashamed of trusting Him - vs. 1.**
- B. He's always listening for and to our prayer to help us, and that in all the urgency that is needed - vs. 2.**
- C. He promised to lead and guide us - vs. 3**

There are only two places in the Bible that the words "lead" and "guide" are used in the same text. Here, and in Isaiah 49:10.

Isaiah 49:10 [on the restoration of Israel during the Millennium]

¹⁰ They shall not hunger nor thirst; neither shall the heat nor sun smite them: for he that hath mercy on them

shall lead them, even by the springs of water shall he guide them.

1. "Lead" (נָהַג) has the overall journey in mind, setting the course of one's life.
2. "Guide" has to do with the specific direction or instruction of that course.

Together, these terms reflect a profound trust in God's ability to shepherd His people through every challenge, providing both protection and purpose.

The purpose for this guidance, as the verse states "for thy name's sake," is not merely for the psalmist's benefit but to uphold God's reputation and glory.

D. He will get us through the trials - vs. 4

E. He will be faithful to us to and through death - vs. 5

1. This was quoted by Jesus on the cross, making a connection to the importance of this psalm.

[Luke 23:46](#)

⁴⁶ And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, **Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit:** and having said thus, he gave up the ghost.

2. Something similar was said by Stephen when he was being stoned.

[Acts 7:59](#)

⁵⁹ And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.

3. The Apostle Paul referenced something similar as well as it related to the preservation of the soul in Christ.

2 Timothy 1:12

¹² For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.

F. He will help us to hate sin - vs. 6

1. There is a distinction in this psalm as there is in many of them, and throughout the Bible for that matter, between the righteous and the wicked. We are to be lovers of righteousness and hate wickedness - the terms are literal opposites.
2. The phrase "I have hated them" is showing, as it did in Psalm 26:5, not a hatred or personal animosity for the one mentioned but a rejection or disassociation of their actions. The psalmist is distancing himself from the practices and values of those who worship idols (which is what is meant by the term "lying vanities").

By application, we need to distance ourselves from the worldly practices of those around us, even if they are in the church, and make sure we fellowship with those that follow the Lord as they should.

G. He causes joy - vs. 7-8

1. His mercy brings joy
2. Joy even in times of internal turmoil - "trouble"

(עָנִי).

II. BECAUSE WE WILL HAVE TROUBLE - VS. 9-13

This whole text is speaking of the trouble that had come to David. The first line of verse nine sets the tone: we will need God's mercy when we are in trouble.

The word for "trouble" (צָר) here is a different Hebrew word than in verse seven. There, it deals with internal turmoil, this word deals with outside adversity or trouble.

III. WE KNOW OUR TIMES ARE IN HIS HAND - VS. 14-18

The first word of verse fourteen shows the stark contrast of what was just said about the trouble David was in and the anguish it was causing him with what is about to be said concerning his life being in the Lord's hands and the care He would take for His child.

A. God is in control of our lives - vs. 14-16

1. When trouble comes, we can trust in the Lord to carry us through because we are His - "Thou art my God" - vs. 14.
2. No matter what happens around us or to us, our "times" (the very days of our lives) are in God's hands, and nothing will happen to us that He doesn't allow - vs. 15.

This speaks of the sovereignty of God and that He has a plan for our lives and will work that plan for us. We can, however, intervene and affect that plan if we get outside of God's will.

Job 14:5

⁵ Seeing his days are determined, the number of

his months are with thee, thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass;

Ecclesiastes 3:1-2

¹ To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven:

² A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted;

Isaiah 46:9-10

⁹ Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me,

¹⁰ Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure:

Matthew 6:25-27

²⁵ Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?

²⁶ Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?

²⁷ Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?

James 4:13-15

¹³ Go to now, ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain:

¹⁴ Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth

away.

¹⁵ For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that.

B. He will not fail to keep His word - vs. 17a

David comes back to the truth that God will keep His word and never give a reason for His children to be ashamed of being His child.

C. Others may fail us, but God will not - vs. 17b-18

IV. AND HE HAS TREASURED UP ("LAID UP") GOODNESS FOR US - vs. 19-22

Notice the change in pronoun use - from first person to third person. The goodness of God that David speaks of is not just for him - it's for all that trust in the Lord.

A. More than enough for all we need and for all that need it - vs. 19

This is seen in the word "great" - all the goodness and wonder that God has for us is "laid up" - stored up, treasured up for whenever we need it.

B. In that goodness is protection from those that would come against us - vs. 20

Notice the parallelism of this verse:

"Thou shalt hide them" - "thou shalt keep them."

"In the secret of thy presence" - "secretly in a pavilion"

"From the pride of man" - "from the strife of tongues"

C. We need to continually praise God for that

goodness - vs. 21-22

Conclusion: The last two verses of this psalm serve as a fitting conclusion. These are words of great comfort for the child of God, especially during times of "trouble," and they should be words of great concern for the non-believer in that they will be plentifully "rewarded" for their pride and arrogancy in thinking they don't need God.

A Rabbi wrote about his experience in a Nazi concentration camp. One evening in the winter of 1944, his father, who was also a prisoner there, took him and some of their friends to a corner of the barracks. He told them it was Hanukkah, and began to light a wick placed in his melted margarine ration.

The son protested this waste of precious food. His father said, "We have seen that it is possible to live up to three weeks without food. We lived almost three days without water once. But you cannot live properly for three moments without hope!"

If one's hope is based on circumstances, one must always live in fear. Circumstances change as quickly as the weather. But if one's hope is based on an ever-faithful God, one can smile in the face of the foulest circumstances. God is bigger than any problem one can ever face.

"Blessed be the LORD!"