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Lesson 19: Psalm 31

Psalm 31

Author: David

Background: It has been thought to belong to the period of his early persecution by Saul; but, on the whole, it seems rather suggestive of the later period of trouble connected with the rebellion of Absalom.¹

Theme: David expresses confidence in God in the midst of deep distress.

Outline (*The outline comes from Willmington's Outline Bible with additional notes from other resources as noted.*)

I. THE DELIVERANCE SOUGHT BY DAVID (31:1-5)

David asks the Lord to listen to his cry in verse two and rescue him from his enemies. "Bow down thine ear to me" ...look at Psa. 71:2.

Also in verse two, David wants God to come quickly! Look at Pss. 38:22; 40:17; 70:1; 71:12. Is there anything you're going through right now where you need God to move quickly? How can a child of God be encouraged when God is moving rather slowly?

In verse three, David seeks God for guidance. Let's talk about this for a moment.

Verse five- "Into thine hand I commit my spirit"- David was not thinking of a final

¹ *The Pulpit Commentary: Psalms Vol. I.* 2004 (H. D. M. Spence-Jones, Ed.) (226). Bellingham, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.

committal of his soul, as distinct from his body, into the hands of the Creator, but only intended solemnly to commit himself, both soul and body, into the Divine keeping, to be preserved from the attacks of his enemies.²

II. THE **DESPAIR** SUFFERED BY DAVID (31:9–13)

A. **His anguish** (31:9–10)

What do you hear David saying when he says, “Mine eye is consumed with grief” (v.9) & “My life is spent with grief” (v.10)? Imagine having lunch with a child of God and they say those things to you. How would you respond?

B. **His alienation** (31:11–13)

1. *He is scorned* (31:11–12).
2. *He is slandered* (31:13).

III. THE **DEDICATION** SHOWN BY DAVID (31:6–8, 14–24)

Despite his troubles, David expresses great confidence in the Lord.

- A. **He trusts God** (31:6–8, 14–18): By “lying vanities” are meant idolatrous practices, or possibly such superstitious usages as recourse to witchcraft and divination.³ He knows the Lord will save him from his enemies.

In verse eight- “Thou hast set my feet in a large room.” Given me, *i.e.*, plenty of space and freedom for action; not confined me, nor cramped me, nor hindered me in any way (comp. Pss. 4:1; 18:36).⁴

Make thy face to shine (v.16): This expression is first used in the blessing of Moses (Numb. 6:25). Its intrinsic beauty and poetry recommended it to the psalmists, with whom it recurs frequently (comp. Pss. 4:6; 67:1; 80:5, 7, 19; 119:135).⁵

The “face” of God is his personality as turned towards man, or else turned away from him. His face hidden or turned away is despair and death (Deut. 31:17, 18; Job 13:24); his face turned against man is destruction and death (Levit. 17:10; Ps. 34:16); his face turned upon man in love and mercy is life and salvation (Ps.

² *The Pulpit Commentary: Psalms Vol. I.* 2004 (H. D. M. Spence-Jones, Ed.) (227). Bellingham, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.

³ *The Pulpit Commentary: Psalms Vol. I.* 2004 (H. D. M. Spence-Jones, Ed.) (227). Bellingham, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.

⁴ *The Pulpit Commentary: Psalms Vol. I.* 2004 (H. D. M. Spence-Jones, Ed.) (227). Bellingham, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.

⁵ *The Pulpit Commentary: Psalms Vol. I.* 2004 (H. D. M. Spence-Jones, Ed.) (228). Bellingham, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.

27:1; 44:3).⁶

B. **He thanks God** (31:19–24)

1. *For his great goodness* (31:19–20)
2. *For his unfailing love* (31:21–24)⁷

⁶ *The Pulpit Commentary: Numbers*. 2004 (H. D. M. Spence-Jones, Ed.) (52). Bellingham, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.

⁷ Willmington, H. L. (1999). *The Outline Bible* (Ps 31). Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House Publishers.