

Psalm 31, Trusting God in Times of Adversity, Bible Study Outline

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1. Introduction
 - a. "To the Chief Musician", intended for public congregational singing
 - b. "A Psalm of David", its authorship, the occasion is not stated, though that of the liberation of Keilah recorded in 1 Samuel 23:1-13 seems likely
2. Psalm 31:1-24, as a single prayer, does not easily lend itself to divisions
 - a. 31:2-3, God a rock and a fortress, a divine defense, our own defenses insufficient
 - b. 31:4, the wiles of the enemy, frontal assaults as well as crafty snares
 - c. 31:5b, God's redemption in history, first instances (Genesis 3:15,21); Job 19:25; Exodus 15:13; Isaiah 41:14, 59:16,20; Romans 3:24; Ephesians 1:7; Galatians 3:13; 1 Peter 1:18; as finished work (Hebrews 9:12), God has redeemed you!
 - d. 31:5a, God's redemption elicits the response of committal of the spirit, man's most precious and lasting possession, because God can be trusted, as modeled by Jesus Christ, these being His last words as recorded in Luke 23:46, Do you know for certain where you will be going after this life? Is your spirit fully committed to God today?
 - e. 31:6, Commitment to God reflected in one's attitude towards sin, and the seriousness with which one takes sin, OT seen in desire for sacrifice to make peace, NT seen in the desire to find peace with God because of His sacrifice, partaking of communion the particular manifestation (Acts 2:42)
 - f. 31:7c, the central theme of Psalm 31, saints known to God, how to get better acquainted with God, prayer tends to be more common in adverse times, but why not in pleasant times—which will settle perspective before difficult days?
 - g. 31:9-10, depression a black hole, which desires God's light of mercy, let us pray more in such times, and let God be our strength
 - h. 31:10, weakening influence of sin and its consequences
 - i. 31:11-13, as did the men of Keilah in response to David's kindness, mistreatment expected by enemies but not those near at hand, Cf. Psalm 41:7-9.
 - j. 31:14-19, God to be trusted and chosen, He holds our destiny and it is therefore safe, not so for others (Luke 12:5), prayer for divine favor (v.16), God will sooner or later vindicate His saints, many times in life this is so (as with David)
 - k. 31:20, "the strife of tongues", Cf. James 3:1-12, the temptation to partake
 - l. 31:21, remembrance and meditation upon the spiritual "glory days"
 - m. 31:22-24, the adversary will tempt us to give in and give up, but the Lord will show up to preserve His people, strengthening heart and hope
 - n. Hymn #50, "Through the Fire" illustrates Psalm 31 truth and themes.