

## Psalm 31

# "David's Desperate Desire for Divine Deliverance from His Dire Distress"

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For the choir director. A Psalm of David.

### A1 DAVID'S DESPERATE PLEA 31:1-2

**B1 A Plea for Deliverance:** {1} In You, O LORD, I have taken refuge; Let me never be ashamed; In Your righteousness deliver me. 31:1

**B2 A Plea for Rescue:** {2} Incline Your ear to me, rescue me quickly; Be to me a rock of strength,<sup>1</sup> A stronghold to save<sup>2</sup> me. 31:2

### A2 DAVID'S EXPRESSION OF CONFIDENCE IN YAHWEH 31:3-8

**B1 As a Place of Defense:** {3} For You are my rock and my fortress; For Your name's sake You will lead me and guide me. 31:3

**B2 As a Deliverer from a Snare:** {4} You will pull me out of the net which they have secretly laid for me, For You are my strength. 31:4

**B3 As the Final Resort of Security:** {5} Into Your hand I commit my spirit;<sup>3</sup> You have ransomed me, O LORD, God of truth. 31:5

**B4 As Worthy of Trust, in Contrast with Idols:** {6} I hate those who regard vain idols, But I trust in the LORD. 31:6

### B5 As Promoting Joy Because of His Empathetic Preservation 31:7-8

C1 Promoting Joy in His Loyal Love: {7} I will rejoice and be glad in Your lovingkindness, 31:7

C2 Fostered by Empathy

D1 Because You have seen my affliction;

D2 You have known the troubles of my soul,

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<sup>1</sup> 31:2 - rock of strength, stronghold (see also rock, fortress in 31:3): David, from his vast military experience compared God to big rocks and actual fortresses, from behind which a group of men might defend themselves from a superior number of enemies.

<sup>2</sup> 31:2 - save (*yasha'* 3467): This is to be taken as a request to be rescued (see the first half of this verse) from enemies (see 31:4, 8, 11, 13, 15, 17-21) rather than a request for preservation from an eternity of hell fire as is often popularly meant in evangelical Christian circles today. In that sense David was already saved because of his faith in God. He does, however, express regrets for his sins (31:10).

<sup>3</sup> 31:5 - commit my spirit: Compare Jesus' words from the cross in Luke 23:46.

C3 Resulting in Preservation 31:8

D1 {8} And You have not given me over into the hand of the enemy;

D2 You have set my feet in a large place.

### A3 DAVID'S DIRE DISTRESS 31:9-13

**B1 His Plea for Mercy Because of His Distress:** {9} Be gracious to me, O LORD, for I am in distress; 31:9a

**B2 His Description of His Distress 31:9b-10a**

C1 His tears: My eye is wasted away from grief, 31:9b

C2 His emotional exhaustion: my soul and my body *also*.

C3 His seemingly perpetual sorrow: {10} For my life is spent with sorrow And my years with sighing; 31:10a

**B3 The Causes of His Distress 31:10b-13**

C1 Personal Sin 31:10b

D1 Resulting in loss of energy: My strength has failed because of my iniquity,

D2 Resulting in loss of appetite and weight: And my body has wasted away.

C2 Complications Arising from Multiplied Enemies 31:11-13

D1 Social stigmatization: {11} Because of all my adversaries, I have become a reproach, Especially to my neighbors, And an object of dread to my acquaintances; Those who see me in the street flee from me. <sup>4</sup> 31:11

D2 Loneliness: {12} I am forgotten as a dead man, out of mind; I am like a broken vessel. 31:12

D3 Slander: {13} For I have heard the slander of many, Terror is on every side; 31:13

D4 Plots of Murder: While they took counsel together against me, They schemed to take away my life.

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<sup>4</sup> 31:11 - reproach: I'm sure Saul's unending pursuit of David engendered a debilitating effect upon many of David's friends. They were fearful of retaliation from Saul if they fraternized with David. To protect themselves, they isolated themselves from him!

**A4 DAVID'S PLEA FOR DELIVERANCE 31:14-18**

- B1 His Expression of Confidence:** {14} But as for me, I trust in You, O LORD, I say, "You are my God." 31:14
- B2 His Request for Deliverance:** {15} My times are in Your hand; Deliver me from the hand of my enemies and from those who persecute me. 31:15
- B3 His Request for Yahweh's Beneficent Attention:** {16} Make Your face to shine upon Your servant; Save me in Your lovingkindness. 31:16
- B4 His Request That The Wicked, Not Him, Be Put to Death 31:17-18**
- C1 For Their Shame, Not His: {17} Let me not be put to shame, O LORD, for I call upon You; Let the wicked be put to shame, let them be silent in Sheol. 31:17
- C2 For Their Silence: {18} Let the lying lips be mute, Which speak arrogantly against the righteous With pride and contempt. 31:18

**A5 DAVID'S PRONOUNCEMENT OF PRAISE 31:19-22****B1 General Praise 31:19-20**

- C1 For Yahweh's Great Goodness for Those Who Fear Him: {19} How great is Your goodness, 31:19
- D1 Which You have stored up for those who fear You,
- D2 Which You have wrought for those who take refuge in You, Before the sons of men!
- C2 For Yahweh's Protection of the Righteous 31:20
- D1 {20} You hide them in the secret place of Your presence from the conspiracies of man;
- D2 You keep them secretly in a shelter from the strife of tongues.

**B2 Personal Praise 31:21-22**

- C1 For Yahweh's Protection in a Besieged City: {21} Blessed be the LORD, For He has made marvelous His lovingkindness to me in a besieged city. 31:21
- C2 For Yahweh's Answer to His Faith-Challenged Cry of Distress: {22} As for me, I said in my alarm, "I am cut off from before Your eyes"; Nevertheless You heard the voice of my supplications When I cried to You. 31:22

**A6 DAVID'S EXHORTATION TO LOVE YAHWEH AND HOPE IN HIM 31:23-24**

**B1 To Love Yahweh 31:23**

C1 {23} O love the LORD, all you His godly ones! The LORD preserves the faithful And fully recompenses the proud doer.

**B2 To Take Courage in Yahweh 31:24**

C1 {24} Be strong and let your heart take courage, All you who hope in the LORD.

Expanded Analysis of Psalm 31  
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