

Psalms 19-01-31

This is Thursday, the 31st of January, 2019. We continue our study in the book of Psalms. And lest you think I am too predictable, we're going to be picking up tonight in Psalm 31.

Psalm 31. We recognize that my particular lifetime is not long enough to cover all 150. So having done the first 24 Psalms, accepting Psalm 17, we're now going to start going forward and selecting Psalms that for whatever reason strike me as being of particular interest, not the least factor being that they appear in allusions in the New Testament.

The Lord Jesus referring to it or another one of the apostles in the New Testament scriptures referencing back, that would lead me to believe that it is important for us. Psalm 31. And having said that, we're actually going to take a quick look at Psalm 30 because although I don't want to spend an entire session on it, it has its own points of fascination, which I'm just going to cover in passing.

So a quick look at Psalm 30 and then Psalm 31 tonight. Let's go to the Lord in prayer and ask his blessing on our study. Father, we are so privileged to have the Old Testament scriptures preserved for us down through the centuries and even the millennia.

It is miraculous that words that were originally set down by Moses and by the prophets of the ancient day have come down to us in a form that allows us to benefit from the revelation of your inspired word. We thank you for this portion that we look at this evening. We ask your blessing on it as your Holy Spirit brings it to each heart.

I pray that each of us will be motivated and encouraged and find a source of application as we glean these truths and seek to make them a part of the resources in our soul. We pray these things in Jesus' name, amen. Let's take a look at Psalm 30 right quick.

It's not a long psalm, but we having now covered a couple of dozen psalms, we'll begin to note repeating themes, threads that run throughout the hymn book of Israel in terms of looking to God in times of trouble, going to God as our refuge and our strength, putting distance between ourselves and those who choose to go a different way, those who become adversaries, who rely on other things for their security and their own personal value. And so as you look at Psalm 30, you will see some familiar things. We're gonna see them also in Psalm 31, and it isn't so much that we are getting fresh revelation, but we're going to see it ordered and applied in perhaps a new and interesting way.

Let's take a look at Psalm 30. It is a psalm, a song at the dedication of the house. It says of David, but this is a psalm of David at the dedication of the house.

Great questions have pertained. Was this something David composed in advance and handed to Solomon and said, have the Levitical singers perform this when the temple is complete? Is this for the dedication of the temple? Was it the dedication of some earlier house or place of

rest for the Ark of the Covenant? Or is this yet some other house and we are reading into it the temple or something similar because of course in David's day, there was no temple. There was no tabernacle.

And for quite a bit of time, there was no presence of the Ark of the Covenant. You remember that story? And David eventually bringing it into his relatively new capital city of Jerusalem. But when it says the house, and anytime we see this, I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

We wanna spend a little time reflecting on what house is this? There's a lot of houses in Israel, everything from the house of bread to the house of figs, you know, Bethphage, Bethlehem. There is the house of the Lord, but in what sense? Is this a literal house? Is it the one in heaven? And when he talks about God's tents and God's tabernacles, God's holy hill, what are we really talking about? So what we know so far is that the superscription of this Psalm is for the dedication of the house. And yet there is no hint of dedication or house or let's enjoy this place of worship, or aren't we glad the building fund finally topped off and we got it done.

Just notice the seeming disparity between this superscription and the content of the Psalm. Psalm 30, I will extol you, O Lord, for you have lifted me up and have not let my foes rejoice over me. O Lord, my God, I cried out to you and you healed me.

O Lord, you brought my soul up from the grave. You have kept me alive that I should not go down to the pit. Not the first choice of passages in a modern day dedication Sunday service in the new building, is it? This is a celebration, a praise and thanksgiving for deliverance from a life and death situation.

Verse four, sing praises to the Lord, you saints of his, and give thanks at the remembrance of his holy name. For his anger is but for a moment, his favor is for life. Weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning.

And that's one of the reasons I wanted to cover this. You've heard this phrase, joy comes in the morning. Anybody listens to gospel music will have heard this.

Continuing in verse six, now in my prosperity, I said, I shall never be moved. Lord, by your favor, you have made my mountain stand strong. You hid your face and I was troubled.

I cried out to you, O Lord, and to the Lord, I made supplication. And here's the supplication. See how they've put single quotes in your New King James there? So on this reading, this is the supplication that he made, colon.

What profit is there in my blood when I go down to the pit? Will the dust praise you? Will it declare your truth? Hear, O Lord, and have mercy on me. Lord, be my helper. You have turned for me my mourning into dancing.

You have put off my sackcloth and clothed me with gladness. To the end that my glory may sing praise to you and not be silent. O Lord, my God, I will give thanks to you forever.

Begins and ends with extolling, praising, thanking God for deliverance from a dire situation. It is an encouragement to others to sing praise to the Lord, you saints of his. This is one of those psalms where it's helpful to pay attention to the direction.

What are the pronouns? It begins in the first person talking to the second person, which is the Lord. I will extol you, O Lord. You have lifted me up.

You've not let my foes rejoice over me. Then in verse four, he turns to the assembly of saints and encourages them to sing praises and give thanks at the remembrance of his holy name. Then we have this interesting verse five, and this is the only thing we're really gonna dwell on here because I wanna get to 31 and it's a rather lengthy psalm.

For his anger is but for a moment, his favor is for life. Now, what do you do with that? God's anger is but for a moment, his favor is for life. Observe, interpret, apply.

What application are you gonna make of this? Why does God get angry? What angers God in the first place? And is there such a thing as God's wrath not being for a moment, but being more or less perpetual, enduring, and I mean, ask the Amalekites if God's wrath is but for a moment. Pretty sure he wiped out their memory from under heaven and that's an ongoing punishment. So what does this mean? What are we supposed to do with this? Give thanks at the remembrance of his holy name for his anger is but for a moment.

You notice there's quite a few italics in there. His favor is for life, and is for is also in italics. Well, I was intrigued by this and so I thought, well, let me just try to take a look at it in Hebrew and see exactly what's going on here.

So we begin with the phrase for his anger. And this is the word because, *ki*, K-I in Hebrew, which means for or because or on account of. And then it says his anger.

And this is literally his nose. This is *Afo*, A-F-O-A-P-H, it talks about the nostrils. And we first really explored this in our Job study talking about Elihu when he comes in and he's expressing his nose getting red over listening to these other guys talk.

So it literally says, *ki*, because, and then a moment. This is *rega*, R-E-G-A, and this means something that is momentary, a moment. It's translated that way all over the Old Testament.

So because a moment, his anger. And it's really in or with his anger, *B-A-F-O*. B is in or with, Af is literally the nose but comes to mean having something up your nose in the sense of being angry or your nose turning red as it evidently did in the ancient day when people got upset.

And then the masculine singular possessive on the end. So, because a moment in or with his anger. That's what we start with, a moment in or with his anger.

The next word is *chayim*, *chay* is the word for life. *Chayim* is the plural. And it is an adjective, it's the adjective form here which means the living.

When you see the phrase, the land of the living in the Old Testament, the living there is this exact identical form. It is the living ones, plural. So, for a moment, in or with his anger, the living ones, in, ratson, oh.

Which is favor, ratson is the word that means pleasure, delight, acceptance, goodwill. If you string that all together and try to make the shortest distance between the points as a straight line, you have because a moment in his anger, living ones in his favor. Living ones are accepted by him.

I don't see how they make the leap to his favor is for a lifetime. Lifetime is not typically chayim. Chayim is, as an adjective, is the living, the living ones.

So, we can probably get context and sort this out by finishing the verse. What does the rest of it say? For a night, ba-erev, may endure weeping. For a night, may endure weeping, but in the morning, joy.

I find this interesting because the words for night and morning are actually evening and morning. Erev and bokr are exactly the words that are used in Genesis chapter one, verse five, when God separates light from the darkness and he calls the light day, yom. In the darkness, he calls night, lila.

And the evening, erev, which is our word here, and the morning, bokr, were the first day, yom echad. Well, here you have weeping may endure, which means to abide or lodge or pass the night as the idea of something that stops over, something that gets a room at the motel. So weeping comes to stay in the evening.

Weeping takes a room in the evening, but in the morning, then you have joy there, but it's the word re-na, and re-na means to sing. If you have ever paid any attention to the song Hava Nagila, you know, Hava Nagila, Hava Nagila, et cetera. Hava means let's, let's do something.

And Nagila means rejoice. So let's rejoice, let's rejoice. Ve nesmecha means and be happy.

Then the next part, after you've repeated that, then you say Hava Naranana, Hava Naranana, Hava Naranana, remember that? Well, ranan means to sing. It says, let's sing. Let's sing ve nesmecha and be happy.

So ranan, that's our word here. So you have this notion of weeping in the evening and singing in the morning. And God starts out his sketch of human history with the evening and then the morning.

And there's a picture here of the way our lives are. We start out in the relative darkness of this world and this life, and there is going to be a measure of weeping. But in the morning of the resurrection, in the day of the Lord, there is going to be singing.

I could even really stretch and say, maybe the reason the angels didn't sing at Christmas is this

is not yet the time for singing. When do you have definite, no questions about it, singing in the Bible by heavenly entities? Where do you see that? In the revelation before the throne of God, they sang a new song, right? That's the morning. That's the time of singing.

So we should not find ourselves unduly mystified if we've got weeping that takes place in this beginning time. This is the evening before the morning. And we have singing to look forward to in the morning.

Now back to the first half of the verse here. For his anger, the expression and the reflection of God's wrath on sin, judgment on sin, is in this moment of human history, right? But his favor for all the living ones, his favor is going to be for all of those who have eternal life and are going to be living ones, laolam, under the ages, right? So yes, there is a time in our life where God's anger or God's judgment or God's penalizing of sin is going to be in view. But what is beyond that? The living ones are going to experience his favor after that.

That's the morning. That's the time of singing. So it shouldn't throw us that in this world, we will have tribulation, as Jesus said.

Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world. Where is the fulfillment of that overcoming? It's with the overcomers when the Lord Jesus takes us and we move into that wonderful morning of the day of the Lord, right? So I think that's the thrust of what's going on here in Psalm 30, verse five. And rather than sort of an abstraction about, well, God may be angry for a minute, but he's going to basically be gracious all through your life.

It's really larger than that. And you get the clue from Erev and Boker and from the sweep of history that began in the first week of human history and goes forward from there, or the first week of the history of the world. I guess I should say Adam didn't show up till day six.

So you always wonder all of the descriptions of what happened on the first five and a half days. Somebody had to tell Adam and the rest of the people that wrote it down because you didn't have a human observer. I think it'll be fun if God shows reruns in the future and we get to see.

I would love to catch the instant replay and see from God's perspective. We think time is a constant. I am persuaded beyond any reasonable doubt in my own mind that time is not a constant for God.

And in the same way that you can speed through the commercials, God could have speeded through the first umpteen million years of human history, he and the angels, and then slow it down as slow as they want when there's a world full of believers that are praying, there are needs that need to be met, and what angels are going to go where and what provision of God and how will this all be woven together and what believer can be a blessing to another believer and what gift should I give for this baby that's going to eventually come to faith. And God can take millennia to analyze, you know, as a human accommodation, to analyze one second of human history and detail angels and make his plans and provisions and then one frame

forward and do the same thing again. It's our limited human way of understanding just how vast God is.

But what he suggests here is, look, you may be seeing the evening, things may be looking dark, and he doesn't say there's anything wrong with the weeping. What does he say? Trust it, there's going to be singing in the morning, not just joy, but express joy, fulsome joy. Singing is music with words.

We will be expressing concepts. And that's part of what we're going to see in Psalm 31. So having done really sort of a, I remember pastor used to say people that just occasionally go to church and it's a nod to God.

I feel like we just did a nod to Psalm 30 and I apologize for that, but I really want to get to 31. This one is described in your New King James as the Lord, a fortress in adversity. And there is quite a bit of allusion to security and safety by physical means here.

So let's read it. In you, O Lord, I put my trust. Let me never be ashamed.

Deliver me in your righteousness. Do you notice already the association that we've seen in the past? He leads me in paths of righteousness or he leads me to staying places of righteousness for his name's sake. In Psalm 23, watch here.

Deliver me in your righteousness. Bow down your ear to me. Deliver me speedily.

Be my rock of refuge, a fortress of defense to save me. For you are my rock and my fortress. Therefore, for your name's sake, lead me and guide me.

He leads me in the staying places of righteousness for his name's sake. For your name's sake, lead me and guide me. Now, do you notice that there is something David already knows in Psalm 23 and he describes it? He says, the Lord is my shepherd and this is what he does with me.

Here in a prayer, David takes what he knows and turns it into the form of a request and sends it to God. This is by nature of an appeal. There is an outline structure here for the Psalm that I will give you right quickly.

It's in five parts and this first part that we're looking at now, verses one through eight and in my New King James, there is a break between verses five and six and a break between verses eight and nine but you can just draw a little squiggly line or however you wanna do it right after verse eight. It's a natural transition point in the Psalm and this first part of the Psalm, I would describe as prayer and confident trust. Prayer and confident trust.

Verses one through eight. So you can see this at the very outset, in you, oh Lord, I put my trust and here's a request. Let me never be ashamed.

Request, deliver me in your righteousness. Request, bow down your ear to me. Request, deliver

me speedily.

Request, be my rock and refuge. How many times have we seen that God is a refuge? He that dwells in the secret place of the Most High shall abide in the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of my God, he is my what? My refuge and my fortress, my God, in him I will trust.

So these are known things and yet notice how David turns them into the substance of prayer. Point of application here, pray what you know. Oh God, please heal Uncle Joe.

You don't know if that's in the will of God or not. But if God has said that he is an ever-present help in time of trouble, that they who wait on the Lord will renew their strength, they will mount up like eagles and run and not be weary and walk and not faint, then pray that. That's what David does.

Look at the content we've already seen in those earlier Psalms being reflected back what he has given as statements before he is putting in terms of request and appeal to God here. Lord, do as you have promised. Be the God I know you to be.

I know you are my fortress and he's gonna do it right here in the Psalm, look how it proceeds. He says, bow down your ear to me, deliver me speedily, be my rock of refuge, be my fortress of defense to save me for you are my rock and my fortress. Therefore, for your name's sake, lead me and guide me.

It's a very interesting turn there. He says, be my refuge, my rock and my fortress because you are my refuge, my rock and my fortress. And so because that is your name, I'm arguing that you should deliver me.

Otherwise, it's gonna reflect badly because everybody knows you're my refuge, my rock and my fortress. And if I'm not fortress-ified and if I'm not delivered, I'm not rock-ified and if I'm not defended, it's your name that's on the line. This is David giving God a reason to answer his prayer, claiming what he knows.

And it's the key to successful prayer, pray what you know. Pray what can't be contradicted, pray what can't be rebutted. Is God gonna say, I'm not your rock, I'm not your fortress.

I never said I would defend you. He's not gonna do that. So take these things, ye have not because ye ask not.

Look at the lady who was the Syrophoenician and comes to Jesus and he says, I'm sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And she says, and he says, I shouldn't take the food intended for the children and give it to the little dogs. And she says, well, look, if the little children are knocking crumbs off the table, why can't the dogs eat them? And Jesus smiles and applauds her faith and grants her request.

She took what she knew. She didn't stop at a momentary setback. She says, wait a minute, this

is right, this is fair.

This is the God of mercy and the God of grace. And he's not going to deny me on a technicality. And you would think, well, Gentile versus Jew, is that a technicality? It is when it comes to God's grace.

It is when it comes to God's faithfulness to those who call upon him. This lady is calling upon the Lord and the Lord responds. So we pick up now in verse four, pull me out of the net, which they have secretly laid for me.

So now we find out that the nature of the distress that is calling forth this request is sourced in human opposition, human adversaries. Sometimes we're trapped by our impulsiveness or our giving into our nature or making our own mistakes. Sometimes we're caught between a rock and a hard place of some impersonal forces beyond our control.

But in this particular case, the occasion for the prayer and the occasion for the appeal and the occasion for confident trust is human opposition. These are people. Pull me out of the net, which they have secretly laid for me.

Now, he doesn't say, oh Lord, as I walk down the road, help me to see the net in advance and not step in it. Does he? Where is he vis-a-vis this net? Where is David? He's in it. He's already stepped in it.

He's already been snared. And what does he say? Pull me out of this net. I'm already suffering the effects.

They've pulled the trip cords and I'm snared. I can't get myself out. If David could get himself out, he wouldn't be asking God for deliverance, right? So he has become, think about this.

Does this ever happen to you? He has become entangled in a circumstance of human manufacture, human design. People have been pulling these strings and laying this trap, hoping to trip David up. And to some extent they have succeeded.

And he says, I'm without the ability to get myself out of this. He can't just take one step back and be fine. He's ensnared.

And he says, Lord, you must pull me out of this net. So rather than looking for his pocket knife and trying to cut his way out or some other human machination, when David realizes that he has been ensnared by adversaries, he turns to God and he says, you must pull me out of this net. They secretly laid it for me.

It was deceitful. It was hidden. It came out of my blind side.

You are my strength. I'm not, you know, cursed is the man who trusts in man and makes flesh his strength, whose heart departs from the Lord. David's heart has not departed from the Lord.

That's where he's looking for the wisdom that he doesn't have. That's where he's looking for the strength and the deliverance that he cannot provide for himself. Now, verse five, into your hand, I commit my spirit.

You have redeemed me, O Lord God of truth. Well, we don't have to go far to remind ourselves that this was quoted by the Lord Jesus on the cross. And we remember from past studies that typically when you see a New Testament allusion to Old Testament scripture, it is a footnote.

Go back to page such and such and get the whole context. What does this suggest to us? That Jesus, as he worked through the agony of bearing our sins on the cross, fortified his soul and looked for strength in the words of his forefather, David. David wrote this down.

David had been in an analogous, certainly not as intense or severe experience, but David, going through this particular kind of test, wrote these words that are now an inspired resource and inspired motivation and encouragement to the Lord Jesus in the most severe hour that any human being has ever faced, never had before and never will again. And what a privilege you could imagine when David discovers that his experience, never dreaming what it would mean and how it would provide comfort and encouragement and application for the Lord Jesus Christ himself, went through what he went through and then set down these thoughts in a hymn lyric. You don't know what God is doing with your life.

There's no way we could know. We couldn't appreciate it if he tried to tell us. It's in realms and dimensions beyond our comprehension.

But what we do know is we have a faithful and loving God. And if we are having to weep in the evening, we can have confidence that there will be singing in the morning. And not just us, it's gonna be all the saints.

All the saints praise him. Look at his provision. Look at his grace.

Look at how he enables a man who lives a thousand years earlier to be a blessing to his several greats grandson, who happens to be the Lord God incarnate and the savior of mankind. That's David's privilege because God programmed suffering and heartache into his life. He couldn't possibly comprehend how God would use his response and his faith in times of trial to be a blessing, not only to the Lord Jesus, but to everyone else, including us, who comes to these passages.

Well, as God has done for David, as God has done for the other biblical figures of faith, he is doing for us when we are faithful and we are obedient. And it is a matter of trust that there will be singing in the morning. So what do we do? How do we do what David did and persevere and glorify God in the hour of trial? Well, number one, pray what you know.

You have to know something to pray it. That's why we're in Bible class and why we keep on coming to Bible class. It gives us grist for our spiritual mill.

Pull me out of the net which they have secretly laid for me. How does this resonate when you think of the Lord Jesus and the plotting of the chief priests and the scribes and the Pharisees and the elders of the people who were trying to bring about his death, were willing to buy a traitor's information who would do anything to kill him and Lazarus. Lord goes to the trouble to bring Lazarus back from the dead.

They're ready to kill him again. Can't have that walking around as a testimony to the validity of this man's claims to be the son of God. You have redeemed me.

And you have to think that at a minimum, when the Lord Jesus quotes the first part of this verse, into your hand, I commit my spirit, that the next part was in his mind, whether or not it could escape his lips. You have redeemed me, O Lord God of truth. You have redeemed me, O Lord God of truth.

It's interesting to look at that very last phrase in various translations. And Bob Thieme said, you have redeemed me, O Lord God of doctrine. Because the word here is emeth, E-M-E-T-H.

And there are a lot of words that are used to translate this when you read this verse in other versions. But here, we've got a good one in the New King James. O Lord God of truth.

Emeth is truth. And it means faithfulness, because what is true is unchanging. The truth is your reference point.

Truth is what you go to. It is the plumb line. It is the level.

It is the reference for measurement of all things. So it's variously translated firmness, faithfulness, sureness, reliability. Not only is God the source of truth in the scriptures, but it is reliable.

You can count on it. It doesn't break down. It doesn't become impertinent or irrelevant.

It doesn't fail. It doesn't fade. It doesn't belong to another time.

God is a God of reliable truth, established truth, eternal truth. It was true then. It was true in Jesus' day.

It's true now. And His redemption is certain and irrevocable. It is established and sure.

So a lot of things can be in flux, but there are certain things that never change. And this is one of them. God's faithfulness, God's surety, His truth and truthfulness.

What a comfort it is. If God gave us promises now, but then changed His mind, this is one of the arguments that is brought forward for those who don't believe there's a literal millennium. If there is not a literal 1,000 year reign of Christ on this earth in the physical land of Israel, what that means is that God made promises to Abraham, to Isaac, to Jacob, to David, all of those Old Testament covenant promises, and then changed His mind.

And converted them from literal promises to spiritual promises fulfilled in the church. And the church is gonna go to heaven and that's gonna be the land. And Jesus will be the king in heaven.

And it's all spiritualized away. And the way Abraham understood it and waited for a city whose founder and builder is God in the land, and that's why he dwelt in tents, well, his faith was misplaced because God was gonna change His mind later. God is truth.

If God tells Abraham, every part of this land that you put the sandal of your foot on is gonna be yours and your descendants, and through you all nations of the earth are gonna be blessed, He's not kidding. He's not gonna spiritualize it away and make it some ethereal thing to be fulfilled in a immaterial realm of the church. Israel is coming back.

They're gonna stand on the ground. They're gonna pass under the rod and they're gonna inherit those literal promises in a literal kingdom for a literal 1,000 years. That's why we are millenarians.

We believe in the millennium. And we are premillennialists. We believe that the Lord Jesus is going to come back and set up His own kingdom.

He's not Kevin Costner, and if we build it, He will come. Some literal field of dreams. We are pre-tribulational and pre-millennial and unabashedly, unashamedly so.

God is a God of truth. You can take His promises to the bank, and that's what David is doing here. He is rehearsing and repeating what he knows to be true of God.

Not only is this a good form of prayer to bring before the throne of grace, but it also knocks the rust off of what we know in our own soul. And as we bring these things forward, anybody that's done any teaching at all, whether you've homeschooled or done instruction or given a class on anything to people that didn't know, you know that there's no preparation and no way to learn a thing as there is by teaching it. Preparing to teach and preparing to present a thing, you really get to know it well.

The biggest privilege is to be a teacher because you learn more than you ever present, and it cements it into your mind and into your heart. Well, the same thing is true in prayer. When we dig into our reserve stock of promises, principles, and doctrines and known truths about God, and organize them and stack them and present them in our prayers, we are the first and foremost beneficiary of that.

The strength and the radiation quality of that divine truth, the power of God's word, emanates and spreads and warms and encourages and strengthens our soul in the act of putting it together into a prayer. The very act of praying and composing the prayer and bringing those confident assertions before God is a big part of God's provision to strengthen us and to stabilize us and to set our feet on the rock. The rock is his promises.

The rock is the Lord Jesus Christ and everything that is said about him and all of God's salvific grace personified in him. Well, you compose that prayer, you have absorbed the energy from it and have been strengthened by it because it is God's all powerful inspired truth. He is the God of truth.

So it's easy to rip through these psalms and read the phrases, but if you slow down and think about what it means for God to be a God of truth, is Buddha a God of truth? Is Muhammad a God of truth? Are you going to get salvation and sustenance and inspired supernatural strength in your soul by repeating some mantra or some human creed? The only source of power in the life of believers in this age is the word of God in the hands of the Holy Spirit of God. And this is how we do it. This is gold here.

This is how it is done. This is where the power comes from, where the peace and the singing in the morning originates is you get your weeping out of the way and then you go back to the plans and the purposes and the character of God and bring them before him in prayer and say, Lord, I need you. I need that refuge.

I need that fortress. I need that rock. And in the act of asking, before you ask, I will answer.

As you ask, I will answer. The asking is half of the answer. Have mercy on me, verse nine.

Oh Lord, for I am in trouble. My eye wastes away with grief, my soul and my body. For my life is spent with grief, my years with sighing.

And here, it doesn't mean that he's been sighing for years. It means that the potential future years, you know, it's shortening my life. My years are being used up with the energy of trying to stay alive right now.

And, you know, they talk about what stress can literally do to your health and your lifespan. And when he says my years are being used up, he says, these are his potential years. I'm not gonna get much older in this state.

That's how we would say it. My life is being spent with grief. My years are being spent with sighing.

My strength fails and it says because of my iniquity. This is the Masoretic text reading, but when you go to the Septuagint and other translations, there was a change of a letter here. And this is from the root oni, which doesn't mean iniquity.

It means, remember Ben-oni? Jacob wants to name his son, Rachel's second son, Ben-yamin, son of the right hand. And all the guys turned out to be left-handers. But she says, no, he is son of my pain, Ben-oni.

Well, that's the word here. It doesn't mean my iniquity. This isn't a Psalm about deliver me from my own mess ups.

There's plenty of Psalms that do that, but this is not one of them. This is affliction. So cross out iniquity, it's not right.

It is affliction. My strength fails because of my affliction and my bones waste away. Why? I am a reproach among my enemies, especially among my neighbors and am repulsive to my acquaintances.

This is a very devastating thing to happen where you feel like even those that should be close to you and should be in your camp and in your corner and arguing in your favor, stand far off. And you've become a pariah and a leper in your own circles. And even those you thought were your friends are like, well, I didn't know that was gonna happen.

And look at what they're saying. I can't be associated with you. I don't wanna be tied to you.

I don't wanna be tied with that brush and go down with your ship. And it's a very lonely feeling when under these kinds of human machinations, even your neighbors and acquaintances look askance and step away. And you think about the Lord Jesus on the cross and those who are passing by and hearing these accusations and these mocking derisive comments.

Well, he said he was the son of God and God delights in him. Well, let God deliver him then. Where's God now? Where's your God now? You know, you that heals the blind and so on.

When you need him, he seems to be busy somewhere. And I mean, just the temptation that the Lord had, I think even Satan in the desert with the temptations was nothing compared to the temptation the Lord Jesus must have faced on the cross. How easy it would have been.

Like that song says, it always comes to my mind on this subject. He could have called 10,000 angels to destroy the world and set him free, but instead he died alone for you and for me. He could have called 10,000 angels, but he didn't.

But, you know, other than the little huddled group of women and John at the foot of the cross, even his own disciples were nowhere to be seen, fearing for their lives. John was the only one brave enough to go into the temple when Jesus was arrested and under trial. John was the only one standing at the cross so that Jesus could commit the care of his mother to him.

So continuing here now, I'm a reproach in verse 11, to neighbors, to acquaintances, those who see me flee from me. Verse 12, I'm forgotten like dead men, out of mind. I'm like a broken vessel.

I hear the slander of many. Fear is on every side. While they take counsel together against me, they scheme to take away my life.

And it's interesting to me that there is sort of a reverse order here. If you think about the Lord on the cross and we can't help but do so, he's already said back in verse five, into your hand I commit my spirit. But why does that statement, why does that action come to the Lord's mind?

Because he's already been thinking through all the rest of this psalm.

And what is the application of the psalm? Well, I'm not gonna get help from anybody around here. God is my strength. God is my redeemer.

God is my fortress and my rock. I will commit my spirit to him. Verse 17, do not let me be ashamed, O Lord, for I have called upon you.

Let them be silent in the grave. Let the lying lips be put to silence, which speak insolent things proudly and contemptuously against the righteous, remembering that he is not gonna be remaining in the grave. His lips are not gonna be silent.

Three days, he's gonna be back and he's gonna be speaking and encouraging and teaching his disciples. Oh, how great is your goodness, verse 19, which you have laid up for those who fear you, which you have prepared for those who trust in you, in the presence of the sons of men. You shall hide them in the secret place of your presence from the plots of men.

You shall keep them secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues. Blessed be the Lord, for he has shown me his marvelous kindness in a strong city. I said in my haste.

Now think back, my God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Why are you so far from helping me? You remember that? I said in my haste, verse 22, I am cut off from before your eyes. Nevertheless, you heard the voice of my supplications when I cried out to you. Oh, love the Lord, all you his saints, for the Lord preserves the faithful and fully repays the proud person.

Be of good courage and he shall strengthen your heart, all you who hope in the Lord. It's a tremendously powerful psalm. What a wonderful message from across the centuries, across 2,000 plus years for us, to the days of David, 3,000 years to him, 2,000 years back to the Lord Jesus.

And what an encouragement it is. Seldom do we face the physical circumstances that either one of them face, but we can feel like it, can't we? We can feel oppressed. There are people who are oppressed by circumstances to the point of severe clinical depression and contemplation of suicide.

There's a time when you think, I just can't face it anymore. And it is often the humans around us and we feel like we can't escape the net. What do we do? Where do we turn? Where is the strength? We know that it is with God and we know that we can appeal to God.

What we sometimes forget is that in the composition and in the presentation of our prayers, we absorb the strength of God's word and the power of his promises and the comfort and assurance of his character. We can't just say, oh yeah, I know God is my savior, but I know God is a rock, but take the time to pray the prayer, to work through the steps. We saw Daniel doing this.

Daniel read the prophecy of 70 years in Jeremiah and what did he do? He prepared himself and he went before the Lord and he prayed it and he kept on praying it and he had to keep on praying it because the angel got delayed trying to get there and say, your prayers have been heard, but he didn't give up. He kept on praying and that's what strengthened him. That's what encouraged him.

So don't miss the steps. It's one thing to know the truth, but you've got to work the truth. You've got to pray the truth.

You've got to express your confidence verbally to God in the truth to get the full benefit the way David does here and to be able to call for praise and celebration and enjoy that singing in the morning that comes after the weeping in the night. Well, let's close here in a word of prayer. Father, thank you for the truth of your word and the powerful encouragement that we have in these psalms to avail ourselves of what you have revealed to us and what the Lord Jesus Christ has done for us.

We pray that your Holy Spirit will enliven and activate these observations and these pieces of truth in our souls. Help us to be the people that you saved us to be and that you would have us to be that we can reflect your glory both now and in the ages to come. We know that this celebrates and vindicates the work of the Lord Jesus Christ on our behalf and we pray these things in his name, amen.