

# My Life Is In Your Hands

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[ 0 : 0 0 ] You can turn your Bibles, please, to Psalm 31. Psalm number 31. I believe that one of God's greatest gifts to his church is good hymn writers, good songwriters.

! A good songwriter can do in just a few stanzas what takes even the best preachers to accomplish in half an hour.

That's not at all to diminish the supremacy of preaching in our gathered worship services. Of course, we understand that's how God has chosen to work. That's how he uses his word.

That's how he accomplishes his work in our hearts. I don't mean to diminish that in any way. I only mean to say that God has a unique purpose for music in the life of his people, a unique purpose for songs of the Lord.

I want you to think about your life. How many sermons have you heard in the course of your Christian life? Some of you, perhaps thousands of sermons you've listened to over the course of your Christian life.

[ 1 : 1 1 ] And I wonder how many of them you actually remember. Do you remember even last Sunday, right? Can anybody remember where we were last Sunday? Can you remember the outline of the text and the key emphasis of where we were there in 1 Peter 5?

I preached it and I can't hardly remember it. And yet, we understand that through that, God nourishes us, doesn't he? He shapes us.

I dare say you probably don't remember the vast majority of the meals you've eaten in your life. And yet, those meals do what? They nourish you and they feed you and they strengthen you and they form you.

That's what preaching does, isn't it? But we don't typically remember preaching except in really unique circumstances. That's not the case with good songs, with good songs of the Lord, is it? We remember them. We can go to the deathbed of people we love who have been Christians for a long time.

[ 2 : 1 2 ] They probably don't have many sermons or statements from preachers on their minds in those moments. But even those whose minds have deteriorated at the end of life might recall a hymn that they've sung and carried with them through their lives.

They may not even remember the people in their room with them. But they'll remember that song. Why? Because God has created music to work that way.

He's created for the songs of the Lord to play a significant role in our worship. And he has chosen to use them for our good. And that becomes especially clear in the book of Psalms, which is where we're going to spend our time this summer.

The Psalms aren't merely songs, of course. They are inspired scripture. They're part of God's revelation of himself and of his salvation, voiced through the actual personalities and the actual experiences of the men he chose to write them.

They are deeply theological, teaching us about the nature and the character of God. They're uniquely Christological.

[ 3 : 3 0 ] Meaning that they point us forward to the person and the work of Jesus Christ. And yet, despite being deeply theological and uniquely Christological, they are still immensely practical.

They teach us what it looks like to truly praise God from the heart. To pour out our hearts to God in adoration.

They teach us to do that. They teach us what it looks like to truly confess our sins to the Lord and cling to his mercy in the midst of our iniquities. As Andy read just a few moments ago, Oh Lord, if you should count iniquity, who could stand before you?

What is that Psalm teaching us to do? It's teaching us to recognize how humble we are to appear before the Lord. How we are to confess our sins and cling to his steadfast love. They teach us how to grieve. How to voice our sorrows to God. How to lament them and bring them to him while still remaining faithful.

[ 4 : 39 ] They teach us how to seek God's blessings in prayer. And all the Psalms do this. They do all of this with an unparalleled beauty.

It's a glorious book. A unique book. And one that I think will be helpful for us as we've done the last few summers to spend our time in this summer.

And we're going to kick off here with Psalm 31. Let's read it together. To the choir master, a Psalm of David. In you, O Lord, do I take refuge.

Let me never be put to shame. In your righteousness, deliver me. Incline your ear to me. Rescue me speedily. Be a rock of refuge for me.

O strong fortress to save me. For you are my rock and my fortress. And for your namesake, you lead me and guide me.

[ 5 : 38 ] You take me out of the net they have hidden for me. For you are my refuge. Into your hand I commit my spirit. You have redeemed me, O Lord, faithful God.

I hate those who pay regard to worthless idols. But I trust in the Lord. I will rejoice and be glad in your steadfast love.

Because you have seen my affliction. You have known the distress of my soul. And you have not delivered me into the hand of the enemy. You have set my feet instead in a broad place.

Be gracious to me, O Lord. For I am in distress. My eye is wasted from grief. My soul and my body also.

For my life is spent with sorrow. And my years with sighing. My strength fails because of my iniquity. And my bones waste away.

[ 6 : 39 ] 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.

I've been forgotten like one who is dead. I've become like a broken vessel. For I hear the whispering of many. Terror is on every side.

As they scheme together against me. As they plot to take my life. But I trust in you, O Lord. I say, you are my God.

My times are in your hand. Rescue me from the hand of my enemies. And from my persecutors. Make your face shine on your servant.

Save me in your steadfast love. O Lord, let me not be put to shame. For I call upon you. Let the wicked be put to shame. Let them go silently to Sheol.

[ 7 : 44 ] Let the lying lips be mute. Which speak insolently against the righteous. And pride and contempt. O how abundant is your goodness.

Which you have stored up for those who fear you. And worked for those who take refuge in you. In the sight of the children of mankind. In the cover of your presence you hide them.

From the plots of men. You store them in your shelter from the strife of tongues. Blessed be the Lord. For he has wondrously shown his steadfast love to me.

When I was in a besieged city. I had said in my alarm, I'm cut off from your sight. But you heard the voice of my pleas for mercy. When I cried to you for help.

Love the Lord, all you his saints. The Lord preserves the faithful. But abundantly repays the one who acts in pride. Be strong.

[ 8 : 45 ] Let your heart take courage. All you who wait for the Lord. Amen. As we meditate on this psalm. There's a couple of things we need to be careful of.

We need to be careful that we don't approach it as a spectator. Spectator almost voyeuristically just kind of peeping in on the emotional struggle of another person.

This isn't a secret entry from David's personal diary. That's not what this is. He wrote the psalm and he sends it, we see in the superscription, to the choir master.

So that all of God's people might employ it in personal and in corporate worship. We're not meant to read it simply as David's prayer.

We're meant to pray it as our own. So our approach then is not as a spectator. Our approach then is that of a worshiper seeking to express our faith to our God, especially in the midst of our distresses.

[ 9 : 55 ] Now that it is a psalm of David is always of special interest to us as well. David, the king of Israel, writes not only as the representative of God's people, but as the one whose life in particular foreshadows Jesus, the greater David.

If we were to borrow Paul's language to the church in Colossae, we would say, David is the shadow of which Jesus Christ is the substance.

His life is given to us. And what is given to us about his life is meant to point us forward to the Lord Jesus. So Psalm 31 is truly David's prayer.

It's his true lament and his praise based on his real experiences. And yet it is fulfilled in its fullness in the person and work of Jesus.

You say, well, how can you actually tell that? Wasn't this like hundreds of years before Jesus ever came? And yeah, that's true. But Jesus himself taught us to read the Psalms this way in Luke 24.

[ 11 : 09 ] And to make it even easier for us in Psalm 31, we find a phrase here. Jesus is quoting this Psalm from the cross just before he takes his final breath.

Now, is Jesus in that moment just relating to the Psalm in some way? Maybe. But I think it's more than that. And I think Jesus teaches us to think of it as more than that.

He is voicing this Psalm from the cross as the fulfillment, finally, of what the Psalm is all about. Now, all of that is to say that the fullest understanding of Psalm 31 and many Psalms that are like it will only come as we see its ultimate fulfillment in the Lord Jesus.

So what then is the Psalm ultimately about? Psalm 31 represents the prayer of the weary soul who is yet strong in faith.

It's a weary soul beaten down in great distress and yet simultaneously with a strength of faith that is somewhat unrivaled, isn't it?

[ 12 : 25 ] The aim of the Psalm is to show us how we might trust and obey God in the midst of terrible distress. It calls us to be strong in faith, particularly as we await God's salvation and God's ultimate deliverance of our lives.

And the question then becomes as we get into it is, are you weary? I don't just mean do you have a newborn that didn't sleep well last night and you're a little tired today, right?

I mean a weariness of soul. Are you in distress? Are you desperate for God's intervention in your life?

Not just for menial things. But there's a depth of darkness and struggle in your soul. You're desperate for God to intervene in some way.

Well, this Psalm is for you. God teaches us how to pray to Him when we are in the midst of that kind of trouble. And I just have a simple way of approaching it.

[ 13 : 42 ] Maybe three different movements that we find in the Psalm that will help us understand how to pray when we have this deep darkness of the soul. First, in the first eight verses, we see we are to express our confidence in God alone.

Express your confidence in God alone. Let's just look at it again. Verse 1.

Into your hand I commit my spirit because you have redeemed me, O Lord. You are the faithful God. I reject entirely those who pay regard to worthless idols, but I trust in the Lord.

I will rejoice and be glad in your steadfast love because you've seen my affliction. You've known the distress of my soul. You've not delivered me into the hand of the enemy, but have set my feet in a stable place and in a broad place.

What is this? It's an expression of confidence in the Lord, his God. Now that the context of the prayer is imminent danger is clear from the very beginning, isn't it?

[ 15 : 18 ] David's pleas for God to, quote, deliver me and rescue me speedily and save me. They come immediately in the first two verses. We understand right away this is a form of lament.

David has a complaint. He has a distress. He's bringing his problems before the Lord. And yet the emphasis in the first eight verses is not on the details of David's troubles.

That's not where he begins. It's clear that's where he's going, but it's not where he begins. The emphasis is on his singular trust in the Lord as the source of his salvation.

Just consider the opening line once again. How does he begin the prayer? He burst at the very beginning. In you, O Lord, do I take refuge. That's an expression of faith.

Before he ever brings us trouble, you are my refuge, Lord. And I am coming to you as the refuge of my soul. Let me never be put to shame.

[16:21] In your righteousness, deliver me. Emphasis not on deliver me, but emphasis is on God's righteousness, forgiveness, his faithfulness to follow through with his people.

It's an expression of deep faith, a declaration that David knows God to be his only hope. In this context, shame is to be publicly shown to have relied on a false basis for hope.

When David says, let me not be put to shame, what he has in mind there is not emotional embarrassment. What he has in mind there is to put all of his eggs in the basket of the Lord, only to find at the end that there was nothing there.

That he put his hope in the wrong place. That's what it means to be put to shame in this context. But David roots this hope in the righteousness of God to fulfill his promises to his people.

He's not actually concerned about being ashamed. He doesn't pray this because he thinks God isn't going to come through. He's praying this as an expression of his trust. In you, I find my refuge.

[17:41] My hope is in your righteousness to deliver your people. Therefore, let me never be put to shame. I will not be put to shame because God will be faithful. That's how he begins.

From the very beginning, he's expressing full confidence in the Lord. And he prays in such a way as to lay hold on the promises in his heart that he knows to be true in his mind.

He understands who God is. And now as he prays, he's laying hold on that in faith. The prayer of the faithful is nothing less than confidence in God's righteousness.

It is hope in God's promises and that God will be faithful to those promises no matter how bleak the circumstances of our lives become.

And this expression of faith, it doesn't end with verse 1. It actually continues all the way through verse 8. Perhaps in some reflection on God's faithfulness in the past, David declares that God is his rock and fortress.

[18:51] It's a picture there of a flood and a high place where he's able to seek refuge from the flood. And he says that the only refuge that I have, my rock in the midst of this distress, in the midst of this flood, is the Lord God, Yahweh.

He trusts God's wisdom. He has to be led by it so that God's name would be glorified in his life. He speaks of rescue due to God's faithfulness, the faithful God.

He speaks of gladness and rejoicing in the steadfast love and mercy of the Lord. He rejoices in the fact that he knows God sees him and knows the distress of his soul and will not abandon him ultimately to the enemy.

Gives him stability. And for all of these reasons, because of his total confidence in God's righteousness, David is then able to proclaim in verse 5, Into your hand I commit my soul.

Into your hand I commit my life and my spirit. And you may be sitting there and thinking, you know, I think I've heard that before.

[20:05] And you have. These very words are on the lips of our Savior. Just before he breathes his final breath on the cross, he quotes this psalm.

Into your hands I commit my spirit. And he breathes his last, Luke tells us in that moment. Such was Jesus' confidence in the Father that even in death, he trusted his soul entirely to God's plan.

And indeed, God was faithful to deliver him, raising him up on the third day so that our hope might rest in him. Do you see?

Jesus is the fulfillment of the psalm. Who suffers the fullness of this distress. And yet at the same time, fully entrusts his soul to the faithfulness of God the Father.

And God's faithfulness is proven in resurrection. Therefore, we can look not only to David, but as we look to David, David says now, look to Jesus.

[21:17] And we might know God is our refuge because he's proven himself to be the refuge of Christ. He will be faithful to us because he's been faithful before.

And the world says that to be strong in our distress means you're going to have to really believe in yourself. You know that's a lie.

If your trust is in yourself, you're only going to have more distress. To be strong in distress is actually to set your confidence in the one who is truly reliable.

It's to set your hope on God alone, rooting your confidence in his divine character, in his righteousness, in his faithfulness, in his steadfast love.

And this expression of hope is central to the prayer of those who are strong in faith. So in all your prayers of lament, in your troubles that you bring to the Lord, and you do need to bring them to the Lord, maybe don't begin with the trouble.

[ 22 : 34 ] But begin by voicing your singular hope in God as the sole source of life and salvation.

And do it not only as a means of worship to the Lord, maybe supremely as a means of worship, but not only. Do it also in order that you might remind your own soul of where your hope truly lies.

Isn't that the wonderful thing that God does in our prayers to him? It's a supernatural work of the Spirit, I think, that we can come and fall before the Lord in prayer, pour out our hearts to him, and get up from that prayer, having nothing in our lives that have actually changed.

And yet, our souls can be full, and our faith can be strengthened, and our trust can be stable. Why? Because this is how God works in our prayer.

So maybe don't begin with the trouble. Maybe begin by just reminding yourself of where your hope really is. It's in the Lord God. But it's not the only thing that David does.

[ 23 : 44 ] The second thing we see here is we see we are to submit our distress to God's sovereign care. We are to submit our distress to God's sovereign care.

And we get this in verses 9 through 18. Now, contrary to what those in the prosperity movement would have you believe, fully trusting God will not exempt you from terrible distress.

Are you surprised? Of course you're not. You know this, don't you? If anything, trusting God may actually be a cause of your earthly troubles.

Isn't that what we just spent the last several months studying in 1 Peter? James Johnston says this prayer is wonderful because it's realistic.

You can pray in faith and still dissolve in a flood of tears. Have you ever been there? Your heart is steadfastly trusting in the Lord and yet you can't help but weep and grieve over your experience.

[ 25 : 01 ] The intensity of David's distress is seen in verses 9 and 10. Just look at it. Be gracious to me, O Lord, for I'm in distress.

My eye is wasted from grief. My soul and my body also. For my life is spent with sorrow and my years with sighing. My strength fails because of the iniquity of my iniquity and my bones waste away.

It's intense, isn't it? He asks for God's gracious intervention because he feels he's reached the end of his rope. His grief is so great and has continued for so long that his whole being, body and soul is exhausted, wasted, spent.

My eye is wasted with grief but it's not just my eyes, Lord. My soul, my body, I've got nothing left. The tank is empty.

He's immersed in sorrow that has gone on for years and he's desperate, desperate for divine help. And perhaps you know that kind of darkness of soul.

[ 26 : 19 ] You're not alone in it. David helps us here. Now, what are the causes of his distress? Those are explored in 10 to 13. On the one hand, there is sorrow that results from personal sin.

We'll get that specifically in Psalm 32. But for now, he doesn't say what the sin is. He doesn't say much else about it. He just says that there is a part of this suffering that he feels, this wasting away that is the result of his own iniquity.

The deceitfulness of sin is such that it offers far more than it can ever deliver on. And when we forsake God's laws, when we forsake God's wisdom, we face the consequences of that.

And that includes deep sorrow. Sorrow that comes from the condition that we find ourselves in beyond our sin. Verses 11 to 13, they continue it on.

They show another cause of distress. Perhaps it's even best to understand this backwards.

Reading it backwards. 13 then to 12 and 11.

[ 27 : 27 ] David is surrounded by enemies who are intent to take his life. That's 13. I hear the whispering of many. There's terror on every side. They're scheming together against me so that they might kill me.

They plot to take my life. And that has led to him being forsaken even by those who were supposed to love him and be there for him.

In verses 11 and 12, because of my adversaries, because of all of these enemies that have surrounded me that seek to take my life, I've become an approach even to my neighbors.

I'm an object of dread to acquaintances. They see me come down the street and they cross to the other side. They don't want to have anything to do with me. They've forgotten me like someone who's dead.

I've become like a broken vessel, which is useless and good for nothing. It just gets tossed in the trash. David says, that's how I've become as a result of this. Of course, we understand true

friendship to be born in adversity.

[ 28 : 31 ] But when David's enemies were multiplied in strength and he felt abandoned, forsaken, forgotten. Have you ever been there?

There are those who you love and who you think will love you. And so long as things are good in your life, they're there with you.

But as soon as something becomes difficult or controversial or you begin to, there begins to be a stigma around you that they're afraid might pass on to them. What do they do?

Distance themselves. They back away. Feel forgotten. Now, interestingly, when we read this and we read the stories of David's life, we understand the feeling of abandonment.

But we also understand that he was never ultimately fully abandoned, was he? In every scenario, and he had tremendously difficult scenarios in his life.

[ 29 : 31 ] But in all of them, there were some who stuck very closely to David's side. He had his mighty men. He had those who served him faithfully, even as his own son is driving him out of the kingdom, taking advantage of him, seeking his own life.

But there is one who knew this kind of forsakenness in its fullest. It wasn't David. And it won't be you.

It was the Lord Jesus, wasn't it? Those who at one time wanted to make him a king eventually cried out for him to be put to death.

In his hour of greatest need, his closest friends, all of them, forsook him.

They ran. Why? Because he had become a reproach, and they needed to save their own skin. Isn't that why they ran? They were afraid to be associated.

[ 30 : 38 ] The nature of what his atonement on the cross accomplished led him to cry out a quote from another psalm.

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? It was necessary that Jesus be forsaken so that we could truly be received.

He experiences this in its fullness. And yet notice what David and therefore Jesus does after detailing the nature of his distress.

He submits it all to the sovereign plan and purposes of God. Notice the next verse, 14.

But I trust in you, O Lord. Here's all my problems, and they're bad. But my trust is in you. Here's what I say. You are my God.

[ 31 : 42 ] And therefore, my times are in your hand. My life is in your hand. I submit my distresses to you, David says.

Yeah, those who trust in God are not free from trouble, but they do submit all of their troubles to God's sovereign care. Do you see what David means here?

He means, yes, there's all these enemies, but even what the enemies are doing are within the sovereign purposes and plan of the God that I trust. He not only is allowing the suffering in my life, he is bringing the suffering in my life.

And I just choose to trust him, David says. Now, we need to understand this rightly. And I want you to see what David is doing in verse 15 in particular.

Notice the declaration of trust. My times are in your hand. My life is in your hand. You are sovereign over every detail of my life, God. And then he still turns around and asks something of God.

[ 32 : 47 ] It seems backward, doesn't it? He says that and then he says, but rescue me from the hand of my enemies, from my persecutors. Make your face shine upon me. Save me in your steadfast love.

Don't let me be put to shame. Let the wicked be put to shame. Let the lying lips be muted and those who speak against me in pride and contempt. Judge them, Lord. You know, what's happening here?

How are we to understand this juxtaposition of trust, of recognition that God is sovereign over it all, and then still asking God to do something as if we have some kind of control over what he's decided?

How are we to understand this? Well, trusting God doesn't mean we become indifferent to grief. Neither does it mean that a trusting God's sovereignty is fatalistic.

It doesn't say God is going to do what God's going to do, so my prayers and actions are ultimately irrelevant. No, that's not what this means.

[ 33 : 53 ] That's not what we're to understand here. We trust that the God who ordains the ends also ordains the means to that end.

And insofar as it's consistent with God's character and God's truth and God's nature and God's word, we then are to submit our troubles to God, and then we act and we pray and we pursue deliverance from those troubles.

Here's what this looks like. God, I trust you to provide for my hunger, and now I'm going to go to the kitchen and find something to eat.

It doesn't say, God, I trust you to feed me, and then you sit on the couch and just hope that magically your stomach gets full, right? No, that's not what this is. What is David doing?

He's saying, I'm in all of this trouble. Lord, I submit it to you. I know you're in control. My life is in your hand. I trust my life to your purposes. But now I'm going to pray that you would do some specific things, if you'd be willing, if it would be part of your plan, if it would be good and glorifying to you, that you would do this for me, and you would provide this for me.

[ 35 : 10 ] That's what he's doing. That's what it means to submit our distresses and our troubles to the sovereignty of God. Submitting our distress to the Lord is ultimately the fruit of the faith that was expressed in the first eight verses.

It's trusting that even in death itself, God is faithful, and his providence is for our good and his glory, and he will not let us be shamed.

Remember what I told you the context of shame is here. Do you see that's part of David's prayer? Verse 17, let me not be put to shame. What is he saying? Lord, I know you're faithful, and I'm going to pray in accordance with that faithfulness that you'll come through, that you'll prove yourself like I know you will.

This trust, it pours out its heart to God, and then it says, my life is in your hands. It follows the pattern of the Lord Jesus, who in the garden of Gethsemane said, Father, if it be possible, let the cup pass from me, but not my will.

Your will be done. So we see we are to express our confidence in the Lord God alone. We are to submit our distresses to God's sovereign providence and to his sovereign care.

[ 36 : 47 ] And then thirdly, this third movement, we see we are to praise God for his goodness and his steadfast love. Praise him for his goodness and his steadfast love.

Verse 19, oh, how abundant is your goodness. It seems out of place, doesn't it? Is this supposed to be another psalm and it just got numbered the wrong way? He just said that his life has so hard and it's been so hard for so long that he doesn't know if he can carry on anymore.

He's wasted away with grief. And at the same time, he's able to say, oh, Lord, you've been so good to me. Is that possible? Is that foolish?

You've stored up this goodness for those who fear you, he says. You've worked for those who take refuge in you in the sight of the children of mankind. In the cover of your presence, you hide them from the plots of men.

You store them in your shelter from the strife of tongues. Blessed be the Lord, for he has wondrously shown his steadfast love to me when I was in a besieged city. I said in my alarm, I'm cut off from your sight, but you heard the voice of my pleas for mercy when I cried to you for help.

[ 38 : 06 ] It's all praise. He asked nothing of God here in these verses. It is unrestrained praise for God's goodness and steadfast love. Don't ever think for a moment that deep grief and great sorrow preclude joyful praise.

Make impossible joyful praise. It doesn't. Remember, this is a prayer song. It's written to be voiced to God all at once. We're not cutting out a verse here of this hymn.

We're singing all of them, which includes an expression of trust, an enumeration of distress, and then an abundance of praise. We're doing it all at one time.

And most of our prayers, most of our experiences in life, they have this kind of layering to them, don't they? And we go wrong when we don't work to pair our laments with our praise.

David's praise is, I actually hear less about a particular moment than it is about God's proven faithfulness. He's witnessed how God has stored up goodness for those who take refuge in Him.

[ 39 : 24 ] He protects His people from the enemy, and then David says, storing them, that is storing His people in His shelter. It sounds remarkably like Peter, doesn't it?

Who said, God stores up an inheritance for His people beyond this life while at the same time securing His people in order that they might receive that inheritance in their future?

It's almost as if Peter was reading Psalm 31 when he wrote his letter. In fact, he quotes it at one point, if you remember that a few weeks ago. David continues his praise for God who hears our prayers and comes to our aid.

He says, there are times that our distress leaves us feeling as if we're a besieged city. We're totally cut off from God and from God's goodness and from God's blessing, and yet even there, God sees us and He hears us and He works His good for us.

In the moment, that's hard if it's not impossible to see, and yet we know in our own experience of life that in those moments we can look back and we know God actually did hear me and He did see me and He was working for my good.

[ 40 : 42 ] And therefore, we praise Him in our distress because we know how He works for our good and for His glory. The point is that we need to persist in praise even in great distress.

The point is that worship is not rooted in the emotions of any given moment. Worship is rooted in the reality of who God is at all times.

Now, can we just let that marinate for a second? Worship is not rooted in the emotions of any given moment, whether that's a bad moment or a great moment.

That's not where our worship is ultimately rooted, and we need to be careful not to attach true worship to a particular feeling, even though we understand feeling, to be significantly important to our worship.

Where is it rooted? It's rooted in the reality of who God is and who He is all the time. Therefore, we can praise God in distress and in blessing, in life and in death, because though our circumstances change and our feelings change, He does not, and He is always worthy of abundant praise.

[ 42 : 13 ] Though He lead us through dark trials, His goodness and mercy remain. William Cooper wrote about that this way in a classic hymn, God Moves in a Mysterious Way.

Here's what he wrote, Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take. The clouds you so much dread are big with mercy and shall break with blessings on your head.

Judge not the Lord by feeble sense, but trust Him for His grace. Behind a frowning providence, He hides a smiling face.

You can praise Him in your distress because He is just as good in your distress as He is in your blessing. We get to verses 23 and 24 and we see how David concludes.

He turns his address to the worshiper himself. Love the Lord, all you His saints. The Lord preserves the faithful, but abundantly repays the one who acts in pride.

[ 43 : 26 ] Be strong. Let your heart take courage, all you who wait for the Lord. And herein lies the simple purpose of the psalm.

It calls us to love the Lord in all our distresses because God preserves those who trust in Him, which necessarily means that He judges those who do not.

and that's where all of this ends up, isn't it? It all ends up in a final judgment and at that time, the faithful will not be put to shame.

God will prove Himself faithful in our salvation and deliverance ultimately. But those who trust in themselves or as David says, in worthless idols, in some other thing indifferent to God or an enemy of God will stand before Him in judgment.

They are the ones who will be ashamed, will not receive God's blessing. They will receive His judgment. Well, what does that mean for us?

[ 44 : 41 ] Well, it means that for those of you who are in Christ, who know the Lord, in your current trouble, be strong, strong of heart, take courage, wait for the Lord.

What do you mean wait? Wait for His salvation. He gives us a taste of it in our experiences now. But we understand ultimately we're waiting for that, not here, we're waiting for it beyond this life. Wait for Him. Be faithful to Him. Take courage, be strong. because truly your life is in His hands. Be faithful to His hands.