

Sheltered in the Rock

Psalm 31: 1-5

Like several others, this psalm has been the subject of debate. While most agree it is a psalm of David, others aren't convinced; and of those who agree on the author, disagreement remains on the timing. Some believe it was written as David fled from Saul. Others contend David penned these words as he was crowned in Hebron, king of Judah. Some attribute the psalm to Jeremiah, and others to King Hezekiah.

While the timing and author may be debated, the significance of the psalm cannot be ignored. It is referenced by Jeremiah, Jonah, and Jesus. The last words of our Lord, as He willingly laid down His life for our sin, are recorded in this psalm. *Rotherham says this psalm is a mosaic of misery and mercy. Clarke sees faith fighting with feelings. Scroggie pictures David riding now the crest, now the trough of the wave. Hull reminds us that the psalm ultimately speaks of Jesus and urges us to read it in the light of that.*ⁱ

For our study, we will consider the psalm, assuming David to be the author. I want to examine the [insights](#) revealed in the text as we discuss: [Sheltered in the Rock](#).

I. The Position of David (1) – [In thee, O LORD, do I put my trust; let me never be ashamed: deliver me in thy righteousness.](#) David spoke of the position he enjoyed. Notice:

A. His Admission (1a) – [In thee, O LORD, do I put my trust.](#) There can be no doubt that David faced much that was beyond his control. On numerous occasions, his enemies were much stronger and better equipped. Through his many trials, David had learned to trust in the Lord and Him alone. God had proven Himself faithful, turning David's impossibility into complete victory.

- Every human being desires a sense of security and comfort. We all face trials and adversity in life. We all need a source of strength when confronted with uncertain circumstances. While the world looks to many sources for strength and comfort, the believer has a source that is steadfast and sure. We too can rest in the Lord, placing our confidence and trust in Him!

B. His Appeal (1b) – [let me never be ashamed.](#) David had suffered much at the hands of his enemies, and even ridicule from those he loved and trusted. Often the physical attacks were preceded by mental or emotional abuse. David was often assaulted for his faith in the Lord, and utter dependence upon Him. Knowing the attitudes of others, David appealed to the Lord to guard his heart. He never wanted to be guilty of giving in to the emotional pressures of unbelievers, and

denying his faith in the Lord. He never wanted to give the impression that he was ashamed of his dependence and love for the Lord.

- These attacks come frequently to believers today. We are assaulted by those who lack faith in Christ the Lord. We are viewed as out of touch with society and belittled because of our faith. Pressure to conform and deny the Lord is abundant. I pray the Lord will guard our hearts, so that we never appear ashamed of our relationship with Him.

C. His Assurance (1c) – [deliver me in thy righteousness](#). David remained confident in the righteousness and sovereign power of the Lord. While this also is an appeal for deliverance, it reveals the assurance David had in the Lord. He knew the Lord would always respond consistent with His divine nature. The Lord would react according to His righteousness.

- There is great comfort for every believer within this principle. Our Lord is holy and righteous. He always works and responds consistent to His divine nature. We need not fear our Lord working within our lives in a manner that is inconsistent with His character. He responds with mercy and grace to those who belong to Him!

II. The Preservation of David (2-4) – Here David spoke of the Lord's mighty hand keeping him, even in the midst of impending defeat. Consider:

A. His Prayer (2a) – [Bow down thine ear to me; deliver me speedily](#). While we are uncertain of the exact circumstances, it is certain that David faced an immediate need. The enemy was advancing and David lacked the ability to overcome. He cried out for the Lord to hear his prayer and provide immediate help and deliverance.

- We are never forced to face our trials and adversity alone. The Lord is always near and ready to hear our prayers. This wasn't a long, or eloquent request. David cried out in a moment of desperation. We can come before the Lord at any moment, with any need, knowing He will hear our cries for help. We have access to the throne of grace any time we need it!

B. His Petition (2b) – [be thou my strong rock, for an house of defence to save me](#). David must have been in a vulnerable position, lacking needed shelter and protection from the enemy's assault. He desired the Lord to provide a shield of defense, a rock of refuge from the enemy.

- Aren't you thankful for the Rock of our salvation? When the enemy comes against us, we have the promise of the Lord's provision in our lives. The enemy does not have unhindered access to our lives. We are kept securely within the mighty hand of Christ our Lord.

C. His Provision (3) – *For thou art my rock and my fortress; therefore for thy name's sake lead me, and guide me.* David had faced much adversity in life, and God had proven faithful time and again. David knew he was secure within the hand of God. The Lord was his rock and fortress, his shelter from the advance of the enemy. The Lord had never failed, and David wasn't concerned during this time of need. He knew God would provide as He had done in the past.

- We all face adversity and pain in this life. We face the enemy's attack, and lack the ability to overcome. When the battle is too great and our strength is gone, we have a place provided by the Lord where we can rest in His grace. The enemy has power, but he cannot breach the shield our Lord places before us. We have a place beside the Lord, settled upon the Rock, a fortress that protects from the enemy and his attack!

D. His Protection (4) – *Pull me out of the net that they have laid privily for me: for thou art my strength.* David's enemies were relentless in their pursuit. They continually laid snares in his path, seeking to catch him unaware. David had no reason to fear being ensnared by the enemy as long as he walked with the Lord. God was able to deliver him from the trap of the enemy. He faced nothing the Lord could not handle or provide for him to overcome.

- If we aren't careful we can find ourselves in the snare of the enemy due to the choices we've made. However, as long as we walk in fellowship with the Lord, we have assurance that He will deliver us from the snare of the enemy. He will not allow us to languish apart from His strength and grace. We may have to endure trials and adversity, but we do not have to face them alone!

III. The Possession of David (5) – David realized he was never alone in the struggles he faced. He was never forced to stand within his own ability. He had been chosen by the Lord, and he belonged to Him. Notice:

A. His Submission (5a) – *Into thine hand I commit my spirit.* Bear in mind the adverse circumstances David faced. The enemy was close at hand, and David was unable to overcome alone. He placed his life in the hand of God. He found peace in the presence of the Lord and was content with whatever the Lord chose for his life. He was surrendered to the will of God. (We too must place our lives in the Lord's hand, trusting completely in Him.)

- Again I want to remind us, these were the last words Jesus spoke from the cross. He had lived a sinless life, continually pleasing the Father. He had endured the agonies of the cross, bearing our sin, and the judgment we deserved. As Jesus prepared to lay down His life to redeem humanity, He declared His submission to the Father and His will. He was pleased to obey the Father, providing salvation for us!

B. His Salvation (5b) – [thou hast redeemed me, O LORD God of truth](#). David acknowledged the hand of God, providing salvation for him. The Lord had redeemed him from death, making a way to live when no way seemed possible.

- This act of grace alone provides reason for every believer to rejoice and offer praise unto the Lord. He redeemed us from the bonds of sin. We too faced condemnation and death, but the Lord intervened on our behalf. He paid the debt we owed, purchased our redemption, and provided the means of our salvation! He provided eternal life for those who deserved death.

C. His Sovereign (5b) – [thou hast redeemed me, O LORD God of truth](#). Again David revealed the source of his hope and strength. He was not depending on human wisdom, strength, or resources; he rested in the grace and provision of his Sovereign. When the enemy came against him, David rested in the grace and power of the Lord.

- We often fail to realize our position in Christ. The enemy comes against us, and we are tempted to flee in fear. We tend to believe that defeat is certain, and we will never overcome. We may lose a battle now and then, but victory has already been won. The believer has nothing to fear. The enemy is limited by the power of Christ, and we are secure in His mighty hand. Regardless of what we face, we belong to Him. He paid the price for our redemption on the cross, and He is preparing for our eternal future. If you are in Christ, you are eternally secure in Him!

Conclusion: This has been a comforting passage to consider. If you are struggling with adversity, seek the Lord to provide for you. You are never alone, and He is able to provide the grace and strength necessary to endure. If you are yet unsaved, come to Christ for salvation. He endured the wrath of God in your place, paying your sin debt on the cross. There is forgiveness and reconciliation available in Christ!

ⁱ John Phillips Commentary Series, The - The John Phillips Commentary Series – Exploring Psalms, Volume One: An Expository Commentary.