

PSALMS: DIARIES OF GODLY OLD TESTAMENT SAINTS

Psalm Thirty-One: Finding God's Help While Facing Personal Conspiracy Threats (Psalm 31:1-24)

I. Introduction

- A. If others accept us and our actions, life hums along quite smoothly. However, one of the most frightening experiences we can humanly face is to know that a conspiracy is about to unseat us from a job or position in a group, and we don't know enough information or have the relationship "in" to do anything about it!
- B. David faced this problem, and recorded his solution in the Thirty-First Psalm as follows:

II. Finding God's Help While Facing Personal Conspiracy Threats, Psalm 31:1-24.

- A. This psalm was written under the conditions of David's facing a secret conspiracy by townspeople to kill him while he was hiding presumably from Saul in their town, Psalm 31:20-21:
 - 1. Verse 20 speaks of David's being hid by God from the conspiracy of man. The NIV correctly uses the word "intrigues" in place of the KJV's "pride".
 - 2. The problem David faced while he was in a city, verse 21. The NIV has "besieged" as though there is a battle waging and the people are planning possibly to surrender David to the attacking force in order to be relieved of the conflict.
 - 3. In any event, David faced the threat of conspiracy to be given over to his mortal enemies!
- B. In this condition, Psalm Thirty-One records David's prayer for help as a pattern for us in similar straits:
 - 1. David described the discomfort he felt in being the object of a mortal conspiracy:
 - a. He described the fact that when he walked about on the streets of the city, people would go out of their way not to be seen with him, Ps. 31:11.
 - b. He described hearing of the lies against his character and of the conclusions of others that there was no hope for David's life, Ps. 31:13.
 - c. David felt trapped, like he was in a narrow vice and couldn't move, not knowing what to do, 4, 9a.
 - d. Emotionally, this impossible relationship situation had David weeping so much that his eyes felt weak (31:9b) and his whole body wasted away through the stress, Ps. 31:10.
 - 2. To handle the problem, David turned in prayer to God, Ps. 31:1-2, 15.
 - 3. He requested that God protect His **own** divine reputation as personified in protecting His name in leading David through this difficulty with gentle care, Ps. 31:3-4, 7, 16, 19-20. **In other words, God's promise to make David Israel's king as the anointed one (1 Sam. 16) is what David asks God to protect in saving his life by defending him from false accusations in this situation!**
 - 4. David then committed his spirit to the Lord for safe-keeping, Ps. 31:5.
 - 5. David expressed confidence that God **would** help him as he recalled a **past** similar rescue by God 31:7f.
 - 6. David also reminded the Lord that He took refuge in God instead of false idols for security, an indication of righteousness so necessary for answers to prayer, Ps. 31:6 with Ps. 66:18.
 - 7. David then requested that his enemies be put down in their efforts to destroy him, Ps. 31:17-18.

Lesson: *When facing the emotionally and physically draining pain of unjust slander designed to unseat us from a job, position or relationship with an important support group, we need to do the following: (1) check our fellowship with God status and confess any unconfessed sins to God to be positioned for effective answers to prayer, Ps. 66:18 with 31:6; (2) then, pray for the Lord's help, Ps. 31:1-2,15: (a) In particular, request that God keep HIS purposes regarding our life's outcome for Him by dealing with the harmful slander, Ps. 31:3-4,7,16,19-20. (d) Commit ourselves to God's keeping in view of those purposes for us, Ps. 31:5. (e) Request that the opponents be neutralized in their efforts that harm us in the situation, Ps. 31:17-18. (3) Finally, take encouragement from the fact that God will help us now in this crisis based upon His past deliverances in similar events and for the same reason (implied), Ps. 31:7-8.*

Application: *To get answers to prayer in facing conspiracies, go beyond getting God to help by just expressing the pain felt, for that assumes a subjective and potentially errant BASIS for God's help. Rather, count on GOD'S purposes FOR us as that puts VALID interests at stake, bringing relief!*