

O Come, Let Us Adore Him!

45

TIDINGS OF COMFORT & JOY

PSALM 31

FOR THE GROWING CHRISTIAN:

In Psalm 31:6, the psalmist says he “hates” those that worship false idols. Later (v.17-18), he asks that the “wicked be put to shame,” even calling for their death (*Sheol*). This is what we call imprecation (*a curse*) in the Psalms. But this appears hard to reconcile with Jesus’ teaching to love our enemies (*Matt. 5:43-48*). Are the Psalms wrong? No.

The Psalms communicate the full range of human emotion, including the anger we feel against those that cause trouble because they live in rebellion against God. If there is anger in our hearts, it behooves us to get it out in open dialogue with God. This allows our mind & heart to be renewed, and to submit the situation to God for Him to deal justice in His own way & time. Read Rom. 12:1-2, 14-21; Eph. 4:26-27; James 1:19-20.

It’s not a problem to feel angry or to pray about it. The problems start when we do not submit our anger to God. Thankfully, the Psalms are an example of how to do that!

FOR THE MATURE CHRISTIAN:

Is it selfish to pray for healing, for a longer life? The Psalms seem to reveal that it isn’t! Read Psalm 6:4-5; 30:8-9; 88:10-12. While there is some revelation of the afterlife in the Old Testament, its fullest revelation awaited the teachings of Jesus and His apostles. So when the psalmists approach God with the argument that praise is only possible in this life, they are thinking about aspects of worship and ministry particular to this world. Only while we are alive on earth can we declare God’s faithfulness to others that they might return to a relationship with their Creator & Savior. And the Psalms reveal that there is a privileged opportunity to praise God on this earth that brings God a distinct sense of joy! So, while “to die is gain,” to request more time to live for Christ on this earth is definitely valid and encouraged! After all, “Costly in the sight of the Lord is the death of His godly ones.” - Psalm 116:15

December 2024 Growth Goals

- ✦ Read at least 50 Psalms.
- ✦ Memorize one of the weekly memory verses.
- ✦ Watch the Bible Project videos on the Book of Psalms (available on the website).
- ✦ Plan for a moment alone in prayer or to read a memory verse before each “event” this month (party, concert, family get-together, etc.).

FOR CHILDREN:

Build yourself a fort out of some chairs, pillows, and blankets. Then take a seat inside and read Psalm 31:1-5. As a shepherd and soldier David often found himself in situations where he needed the shelter and protection of a mountainside cave. More importantly, David realized that God was like a fortress for his heart. God could always be trusted to protect David spiritually throughout his life. To make God our refuge means that we turn to God first for strength, comfort, and guidance in life. Say a prayer of thanks to God for being your refuge, and then have fun in your fort!

WEEKLY MEMORY VERSE:

“Into Your hand I entrust my spirit;
You have redeemed me, Lord, God of truth.”

PSALM 31:5

WEEKLY AFFIRMATION:

*God Will Be
My First Source
of Refuge!*