



## ***My Times Are in Your Hand***

Psalm 31

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**Overview:** The Psalmist finds himself in a difficult situation that forces him to plead desperately with the Lord to preserve his life. Though the specifics are unknown, the context suggests an ongoing conflict that has taken a physical, mental, and emotional toll upon him such that he believes his life is about to expire. In his cry for help, he confesses the attributes of God, distances himself from those who do evil, and entrusts himself completely to the Lord. He then gives thanks to the Lord for his deliverance, admits his struggle between faith and fear, and reminds the people of God that the Lord is trustworthy for all who serve Him. Like the Psalmist, we too can face our fears and struggles with confidence, knowing that our times are in His hand.

**01. Recognizing that our times are in God's hand does not relieve us from affliction but assures us that He is always near to us and nothing can happen to us apart from His fatherly care.**

**02. Confessing that our times are in God's hand should lead us to make the most of our time in this life and entrust ourselves fully to the Lord for the life to come.**

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1. What does it mean to take refuge in the Lord? Does it mean that we will never face difficulties because of our faith? What indications from the text remind us of how difficult life can be even for (and maybe, especially for) believers? In what ways have you suffered or faced affliction due to your faith?

2. Note how the Psalmist says, "my eye is wasted from grief; my soul and my body also" (verse 9), and "my strength fails ... and my bones waste away" (verse 10). Has your body ever been impacted by worry and fear? What does this connection between body and soul suggest about the need to watch our health as we guard our hearts from worry and fear?

3. Trace the attributes of God as listed in this text. How does our knowledge of God as a "rock of refuge" and "strong fortress" (verse 2) help us to realize the power of God more concretely? How do God's graciousness and mercy offer confidence to us when we struggle with our own weakness and sin? In what ways is God's faithfulness evident from this text? What attributes of God do you rely on when you are fearful?

4. The Psalmist says that he heard "whispering of many—terror on every side!—as they scheme against me, as they plot to take my life" (verse 13). Consider this passage from a non-literal perspective. How often have you imagined what people might be saying about you or imagined what might happen to you? What is the best remedy for getting such thoughts under control?

5. Why did Jesus quote verse 5 from the cross in Luke 23:46? He had entrusted His life to God also, and yet He was not delivered from the cross. What does this suggest about trusting God with the entirety of life, including the life to come? Have you entrusted yourself to God through Jesus Christ? Pray that you may be able to share stories of God's deliverance in your life with someone who is struggling with doubt and fear.

**For Further Reading: John Piper and Justin Taylor, eds. *Suffering and the Sovereignty of God* (Crossway, 2006)**

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