

# Exposition on Psalm 31

by St. Augustine

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*The Psalmist expresses his trust in God's strength and refuge, and calls on Him for deliverance and protection in the midst of trouble and persecution.*

**Scripture:** Psalm 30:1-10

**Topics:** "Faith In God", "Persecution And Hope"

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## Description

St. Augustine preaches on Psalm 30, where David, the Mediator strong of hand in persecutions, expresses trust in God amidst trouble and persecution. The Psalm reflects the panic and failing faith of God's people facing persecution. David acknowledges God as his strength, refuge, and protector, seeking deliverance and salvation. Despite reproach and fear from enemies, David remains hopeful in God's mercy and protection, urging all saints to love the Lord and remain steadfast in faith.

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## Transcript

To the end, a psalm of David himself, an ecstasy.

1. To the end a Psalm of David Himself, the Mediator strong of hand in persecutions. For the word ecstasy, which is added to the title, signifies a transport of the mind, which is produced either by a panic, or by some revelation. But in this Psalm the panic of the people of God troubled by the persecution of all the heathen, and by the failing of faith throughout the world, is principally seen. But first the Mediator Himself speaks: then the People redeemed by His Blood gives thanks: at last in trouble it speaks at length, which is what belongs to the ecstasy; but the Person of the Prophet himself is twice interposed, near the end, and at the end.

2. In You, O Lord, have I trusted, let Me not be put to confusion for ever Psalm 30:1. In You, O Lord, have I trusted, let Me never be confounded, while they shall insult Me as one like other men. In Your righteousness rescue Me, and deliver Me. And in Your righteousness rescue Me from the pit of death, and deliver Me out of their company.

3. Bend down Your ear unto Me Psalm 30:2. Hear Me in My humiliation, near at hand unto Me. Make haste to deliver Me. Defer not to the end of the world, as with all who believe in Me, My separation from sinners. Be unto Me a God who protects Me. Be unto Me God, and Protector. And a house of refuge, that You may save Me. And as a house, wherein taking refuge I may be saved.

4. For You are My strength, and My refuge Psalm 30:3. For You are unto Me My strength to bear My persecutors, and My refuge to escape them. And for Your Name's sake You shall be My guide, and shall nourish Me. And that by Me You may be known to all the Gentiles. I will in all things follow Your will; and, by assembling, by degrees, Saints unto Me, You shall fulfil My body, and My perfect stature.

5. You shall bring Me out of this trap, which they have hidden for Me Psalm 30:4. You shall bring Me out of these snares, which they have hidden for Me. For You are My Protector.

6. Into Your hands I commend My Spirit Psalm 30:5. To Your power I commend My Spirit, soon to receive It back. You have redeemed Me, O Lord God of truth. Let the people too, redeemed by the Passion of their Lord, and joyful in the glorifying of their Head, say, You have redeemed me, O Lord God of truth.

7. Thou hatest them that hold to vanity uselessly Psalm 30:6. Thou hatest them that hold to the false happiness of the world. But I have trusted in the Lord.

8. I will be glad, and rejoice in Your mercy: which does not deceive me. For You have regarded My humiliation: wherein You have subjected me to vanity in hope. Romans 8:20 You have saved my soul from necessities Psalm 30:7. You have saved my soul from the necessities of fear, that with a free love it may serve You.

9. And hast not shut me up into the hands of the enemy Psalm 30:8. And hast not shut me up, that I should have no opening for recovering unto liberty, and be given over for ever into the power of the devil, ensnaring me with the desire of this life, and terrifying me with death. You have set my feet in a large room. The resurrection of my Lord being known, and my own being promised me, my love, having been brought out of the straits of fear, walks abroad in continuance, into the expanse of liberty.

10. Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I am troubled Psalm 30:9. But what is this unlooked-for cruelty of the persecutors, striking such dread into me? Have mercy on me, O Lord. For I am now no more alarmed for death, but for torments and tortures. My eye has been disordered by anger. I had my eye upon You, that You should not abandon me: You are angry, and hast disordered it. My soul, and my belly. By the same anger my soul has been disturbed, and my memory, whereby I retained what my God has suffered for me, and what He has promised me.

11. For my life has failed in pain Psalm 30:10. For my life is to confess You, but it failed in pain, when the enemy had said, Let them be tortured until they deny Him. And my years in groanings. The time that I pass in this world is not taken away from me by death, but abides, and is spent in groanings. My strength has been weakened by want. I want the health of this body, and racking pains come on me: I want the dissolution of the body, and death forbears to come: and in this want my confidence has been weakened. And my bones have been disturbed. And my steadfastness has been disturbed.

12. I have been made a reproach above all mine enemies Psalm 30:11. All the wicked are my enemies; and nevertheless they for their wickednesses are tortured only till they confess: I then have overpassed their reproach, I, whose confession death does not follow, but racking pains follow upon it. And to my neighbours too much. This has seemed too much to them, who were already drawing near to know You, and to hold the faith that I hold. And a fear to mine acquaintance. And into my very acquaintance I struck fear by the example of my dreadful tribulation. They that did see me, fled without from me. Because they did not understand my inward and invisible hope, they fled from me into things outward and visible.

13. I have been forgotten, as one dead from the heart Psalm 30:12. And they have forgotten me, as if I were dead from their hearts. I have become as a lost vessel. I have seemed to myself to be lost to all the Lord's service, living in this world, and gaining none, when all were afraid to join themselves unto me.

14. For I have heard the rebuking of many dwelling by in a circuit Psalm 30:13. For I have heard many rebuking me, in the pilgrimage of this world near me, following the circuit of time, and refusing to return with me to the eternal country. Whilst they were assembling themselves together against me, they conspired that they might take my soul. That my soul, which should by death easily escape from their power, might consent unto them, they imagined a device, whereby they would not suffer me even to die.

15. But I have hoped in You, O Lord; I have said, You are my God Psalm 30:14. For You have not changed, that You should not save, Who dost correct.

16. In Your hands are my lots Psalm 30:15. In Your power are my lots. For I see no desert for which out of the universal ungodliness of the human race You have elected me particularly to salvation. And though there be with You some just and secret order in my election, yet I, from whom this is hid, have attained by lot unto my Lord's vesture. John 19:24 Deliver me from the hands of mine enemies, and from them that persecute me.

17. Make Your Face to shine upon Your servant Psalm 30:16. Make it known to men, who do not think that I belong unto You, that Your Face is bent upon me, and that I serve You. Save me in Your mercy.

18. O Lord, let me not be confounded, for I have called upon You Psalm 30:17. O Lord, let me not be put to shame by those who insult me, for that I have called upon You. Let the ungodly be ashamed, and be brought down to hell. Let them rather who call upon stones be ashamed, and made to dwell with darkness.

19. Let the deceitful lips be made dumb Psalm 30:18. In making known to the peoples Your mysteries wrought in me, strike with dumb amazement the lips of them that invent falsehood of me. Which speak iniquity against the Righteous, in pride and contempt. Which speak iniquity against Christ, in their pride and contempt of Him as a crucified man.

20. How great is the multitude of Your sweetness, O Lord Psalm 30:19. Here the Prophet exclaims, having sight of all this, and admiring how manifoldly plenteous is Your sweetness, O Lord. Which You have hid for them that fear You. Even those, whom Thou correctest, You love much: but lest they should go on negligently from relaxed security, Thou hidest from them the sweetness of Your love, for whom it is profitable to fear You. You have perfected it for them that hope in You. But You have perfected this sweetness for them that hope in You. For Thou dost not withdraw from them what they look for perseveringly even unto the end. In sight of the sons of men. For it does not escape the notice of the sons of men, who now live no more after Adam, but after the Son of Man. You will hide them in the hidden place of Your Countenance: which seat You shall preserve for everlasting in the hidden place of the knowledge of You for them that hope in You. From the troubling of men. So that now they suffer no more trouble from men.

21. You will protect them in Your tabernacle from the contradiction of tongues Psalm 30:20. But here meanwhile while evil tongues murmur against them, saying, Who has come thence? You will protect them in the tabernacle, that of faith in those things, which the Lord wrought and endured for us in time.

22. Blessed be the Lord; for He has made His mercy marvellous, in the city of compassing Psalm 30:21. Blessed be the Lord, for after the correction of the sharpest persecutions He has made His mercy marvellous to all throughout the world, in the circuit of human society.

23. I said in my ecstasy Psalm 30:22. Whence that people again speaking says, I said in my fear, when the heathen were raging horribly against me. I have been cast forth from the sight of Your eyes. For if You had regard to me, You would not suffer me to endure these things. Therefore You heard, O Lord, the voice of my prayer, when I cried unto You. Therefore putting a limit to correction, and showing that I have part in Your care, You heard, O Lord, the voice of my prayer, when I raised it high out of tribulation.

24. Love the Lord, all you His saints Psalm 30:23. The Prophet again exhorts, having sight of these things, and says, Love the Lord, all you His saints; for the Lord will require truth. Since if the righteous shall scarcely be saved, where shall the sinner and the ungodly appear? 1 Peter 4:18 And He will repay them that do exceeding proudly. And He will repay them who even when conquered are not converted, because they are very proud.

25. Quit you like men, and let your heart be strengthened Psalm 30:24: working good without fainting, that you may reap in due season. All you who trust in the Lord: that is, you who duly fear and worship Him, trust ye in the Lord.

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