

INTO YOUR HANDS

Thursday, March 8

Reading: Psalm 31

Psalm 31:5 *Into your hands I commit my spirit; deliver me, LORD, my faithful God...* **14** *But I trust in you, LORD; I say, "You are my God."* **15** *My times are in your hands; deliver me from the hands of my enemies, from those who pursue me.* **16** *Let your face shine on your servant; save me in your unfailing love.*

One hundred years before Martin Luther started the Protestant Reformation, men like John Hus were preparing the way. Hus was a Roman Catholic priest in Bohemia who opposed the abuses prevalent in the church. For speaking out against the pope and doctrines that were contrary to the Word of God, John Hus was sentenced to be burned at the stake as a heretic. As he was bound to the stake the bishop said, "Now we commit thy soul unto the devil." John Hus replied, "But I do commend into Thy hands, O Lord Jesus Christ, my spirit which Thou has redeemed." ¹

Psalm 31:5 has been a source of comfort and strength for saints throughout the ages. It was the first prayer Jewish mothers would teach their little children at bedtime. It has been the last words on the lips of dying saints as they entrust themselves to God's care. After hours of agony on the cross bearing the sins of the world, the Lord Jesus uttered these words before dying, "Into Your hands I commit my spirit."

This is the ultimate prayer of trust! When we read Psalm 31 we feel the emotional impact David's troubles have had on him. He describes his life as being "consumed by anguish" and his body growing weak and approaching death from grief and distress (31:9-13). His distress had even tempted him to believe that God did not care, but instead he rests in God's love and encourages others to "be strong and take heart, all you who hope in the Lord" (31:22-23).

Along with the confidence of placing our life in God's hands, David also reminds us that "my times are in Your hands" (31:15). This is an awesome thought! The pioneer African missionary Dan Crawford (1870-1926) stated it this way: "All my life's ways and whens and wheres and wherefores are in God's hands!" ²

In 1 Peter 4:19, the apostle echoes these words: "So then, those who suffer according to God's will should commit themselves to their faithful Creator and continue to do good." Maybe you feel like David? You feel surrounded on every side and there is no way out! David encourages us to stop living on feelings and instead live by faith.

¹ Foxe's Book of Martyrs. Chapter VIII - Persecution of John Hus

² John Philips. Exploring the Psalms, volume 1, p. 236