

SOUTH GROVE FREE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH LONDON

Lord's Day Evening

Date 2nd January 2022 Hymns: Ps 31v1-6,14-15 T Kilmarnock, 570, 472 Read: Psalm 31:1-15 Text Psalm 31:15 Title My Times Are In Thine Hands.

Psalm 31 was written by David, but like other Psalms written by David there is no clear time period specified.

(Some have suggested this Psalm could refer to three occasions in David's life, and what he is doing is going back to the past, listing different times in his life that apply to his current situation.

Such as when Saul continually hunted him down to take his life. Or when his son Absalom rebelled against his own father, wanting David dead to take his father's throne. Or when his trusted councillor Ahithophel betrayed him and last after the time These are some of the suggestions for the background to the psalm.)

What we do know from this Psalm David prayed in **verse 9** "...! am in trouble, mine eye is consumed with grief, yea my soul and my belly."

the word **trouble** means **distress, afflicted**. The idea is *to be restricted, cramped, bound in were there seems to be a tightness, no room to breathe, no escape.*

(The phrase mine eye is consumed with grief, in the original Hebrew reads *I am wasting away with grief*. David tears flowed from grief, hurt.

(The word **grief** means **to sigh with hurt, to be vexed**.)

Verse 12 "I am forgotten...I am like a broken vessel."

Whatever the background, David was in trouble, distressed, he was vexed, grieved, his heart broken, he lived under the threat of death.

For a time David thought his enemies might actually accomplish their goal, when he said in **verse 13** “...*they took counsel together against me, they devised to take away my life.*”

Yet David amazingly survived all their evil plans and attacks to take his life, because there was one above the plans and work of men and that is the LORD, the eternal God of heaven.

Therefore, David said in **verse 15** “*my times are in thy hand....*”

God’s infallible wisdom defeats the limited wisdom of men, His ways, plans and thoughts are higher than men’s. His ways are perfect.

Nothing takes place in our life without His permission. The affairs of mankind are under His control. He does all things well and for His own glory according to His own divine pleasure.

I say this because the year 2022 has been a challenging, changing, anxious, and troublesome year for many.

A year of added grief, tears, sorrow, sickness and death for many reasons but particular as the coronavirus has left its mark.

I understand that not everyone has been inflicted with the virus, but all at some point have been impacted by it.

However, those that have been inflicted with it, some displayed mild symptoms and recovered quickly.

Some suffered severe symptoms believing it would lead to their death but recovered after long periods in hospital, and to over 148,000 in the UK alone, coronavirus was the means of their death.

There are questions often asked why did I not get coronavirus? why did I get the coronavirus, why did I not die from it, when I

believed I would, why did others die from it when they seemed healthy or seemed to be making a recovery.

Why did David experience trouble and escape death at that time of his life when it seemed death was facing him.

The answer to life's questions are found in God's word. David said in **verse 15** "**my times are in thy hand...**"

These words apply both to the Saved and Lost, as we ended one year and have entered into new year, these words must be kept ever before us, "**my times are in thy hand...**"

I FIRST DAVID'S COURSE.

The word **times**, as used by David means **seasons, events circumstances, periods all that David will experience throughout the course of his life.**

From the moment of conception to the moment of death, David said "**my times are in thy hand...**" This is not just a single event or circumstance that arose.

Rather, David includes a whole range of times in his life, with all of it's changing circumstances, details and events.

These changes include what is often termed good times and bad times; health and sickness, happy times and sorrowful times.

When life is given by the Lord, and when life is taken away by the Lord.

All these times are in the hand of the Lord, who arranges and appoints according to His to His own divine will.

King Solomon reminds us in **Eccles 3:1** that "...**to everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven.**" This includes as verse states "**a time to be born and a time to die...**" So included in our times, is our birth and death. This means **David's course was under divine control.**

David depended upon God, therefore, every detail in life was arranged and planned under divine control. From the smallest detail to the grandest event those times are in God's hand, under his divine control. All things are ordained of God, and are settled by Him.

David said in **1 Samuel 20:3** "*there is but a step between me and death.*"

Whatever course the Lord has led us until now, and will lead us from now in life, our times are in His hand, **and He will lead us by the right way for His way is perfect.**

Job 23:10 *But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold."*

Remember in the life of the Lord Jesus Christ His times were also in the hand of God. From His Birth to His death, all the events in between were ordered and arranged by God to fulfil His redemptive purposes.

He carries out His eternal, infinite and unchanging decree, plans, purposes at all times, in all people and in all places, as stated by **Psalm 135:6** "*Whatsoever the LORD pleased, that did he in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places.*"

The time, place and events surrounding Christ's birth, and the time, place and events surrounding Christ death were in the hands of God.

The sorrows He experienced even at the death of Lazarus when He wept, the loneliness He faced when betrayed and tempted alone in wilderness, forsaken by those closest to Him and His father upon the cross, the pain He suffered were all in God's hand.

Christ times were filled with trouble, temptation, persecution, sorrow and suffering, that's why He identifies and understands

what you are going through. He has infinitely experienced on your behalf.

Whatever path, or trial you have passed through last year, whatever you will pass through this year.

Everything our times, my times, your times, are under the control of God's eternal infinite wisdom under the control of His hands.

When all seem out of control humanly speaking, it is never out of control heavenly speaking, because **my times are in thy hand.**

II DAVID'S CONFIDENCE

When you read the life of David, there were many times when his life was in danger. Please see the connection at the end of **verse 14 into verse 15** "***thou art my God, my times are in thy hand, deliver me from the hand of mine enemies and from them that persecute me.***"

Though at times it seems like our times, lie in the hands of other, our enemies, or in sickness the doctors hands, but ultimately David shows our times in God's divine hand.

It appeared to his enemies David was in their hand. At the start it appeared to David that he was in the hands of his enemies.

Remember King Saul one of David persecutors, thought he finally caught David to execute his plan, **1 Samuel 23:7** "***Saul said, God hath delivered him into mine hand; for he is shut in, by entering into a town that hath gates and bars.***"

David was shut in, trouble, it seemed no escape, Saul was on his way to end David, but **verse 14** "***And Saul sought him every day, but God delivered him not into his hand.***"

Since David's times were in God's hands, then **verses 7-8** the hand of his enemies were powerless to do anything against him that was not permitted by the Lord.

If God's will for David was to die at that time by the hand of His enemies He would have died, nothing could have stopped the plan of God's hand being carried out.

However, if it was not David's appointed time to die by the hand of his enemies, nothing could stop the purpose of God's hand being carried out.

Oh grasp this, our times, life, trouble, joy, death, are in God's hand, not our own, not another, not even Satan.

Again, see in the life of Christ, His life was not in the hand of his enemies not even Satan.

His enemies persecuted Him in various ways, right from His birth to His death. His enemies planned against Him. At times they attempted to take him, but they could not as He was delivered out of their hands until delivered up by His father.

During Christ's childhood, Joseph was told in **Matthew 2:13** ***"...Herod will seek the young child to destroy him."*** His enemies wanted to throw Him off the cliff. **John 7:1** ***"the Jews sought to kill him."*** **John 8:37** ***"...but ye seek to kill me, because my word hath no place in you.*** Here it His times were ordered by the hand of God, **John 7:30** ***"Then they sought to take him: but no man laid hands on him, because his hour was not yet come."***

Matthew 26:45 ***the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners."***

At the hour that time permitted by God, **Acts 2:23** ***"Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and***

slain” His time had come to lay down His life. He said Himself no man could take it from Him, no man could stop the redeeming purpose of God to build His church.

David’s recognition & confidence is that his entire experience in life was in the Lord’s hand. This is the truth that needs to be noted and learned by all of us.

Here lies our confidence for 2022 and through life, whatever will take place in my life or family, such times are in God’s hands, therefore,

III THIRD, DAVID’S COMFORT

David is surrounded by anxieties, uncertainties, ever changing circumstances, yet his comfort or the answer to every anxiety comes from knowing that his times were in the hand of his God. He said in **verse 14 into verse 15** “***thou art my God, my times are in thy hand...***

Now we understand from **John 4:24** God is a spirit. that means he does not have bodily parts. These features are given in the Bible to help us understand and teach us spiritual truth about who God is, and His works.

The reference to **thy hand** meaning God’s hand means God’s power. His power is absolute omnipotent power, eternal, infinite, unchanging. He is almighty God. There is nothing too hard for to do, nothing is impossible with God. God has revealed Himself in the person of His Son, Jesus Christ.

This gave comfort to David in a time of trouble and it gives believers comfort to face a new year, a new trouble in our times.

Throughout scripture we learn

There is comfort in God’s Sovereign hand. David said ***my times are in thy hand.***

There is comfort in God's Strong hand. **Ps 89:13** "Thou hast a mighty arm: strong is thy hand, and high is thy right hand." **Ex 13:9** "for with a strong hand hath the LORD brought thee out of Egypt."

There is comfort in God's Supplying hand. **Ps 145:16** "Thou openest thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing."

There is comfort in God's Supporting hand. **Ps 18:35** "...thy right hand hath holden me up." the word **holden** means to support. **Ps 63:8** "thy right hand upholdeth me."

There is comfort in God's Saving hand. **Psalm 60:5** "That thy beloved may be delivered, save with thy right hand, and hear me."

There is comfort in God's Shepherding hand.

Ps 78:52 & 72 "But made His people to go forth like sheep, and guided them in the wilderness like a flock, **v 72** " He... guided them by the skilfulness of His hands."

There is comfort in God's Successful hand. **Ps 98:1** "his right hand, and his holy arm, hath gotten him the victory."

Above all here is where David's comfort rests. **There is comfort in God's Securing hand.** **Ps 22:16** "they pierced my hands and my feet." It is because of redemption by the shedding of blood, David is secure in the hand of God and enjoys every other blessing purchased by blood.

No matter what God David's times are, nothing shall separate Him from the hand of God, **John 10:11** Christ gave His life to Redeem His people , as **John 10:28** "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."

David's comfort as he faced his 'times' was that he was already in God's hand through redemption. Consequently, his times were as secure as a redeemed soul.

David refers in **verses 8**, to "...*the hand of the enemy*," and **verse 15**, "...*the hand of mine enemies*," plural.

David said of his enemies in **verse 13** "*they devised to take away my life*," due to redemption no power of hell or scheme of man can ever pluck us from His hand.

Ps 31:5 "*Into thine hand I commit my spirit: thou hast redeemed me, O LORD God of truth.*" What comfort.

The first part of David's words were prayed by Christ on the cross, **Luke 23:46** *Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, He gave up the ghost.*"

If 2022 is the year, the appointed time set by God to call us home to heaven, learn when a Christian comes to death, they are safe and secure in the arms of their Saviour, There is no need to fear the path ahead believer.

May 2022 be the appointed time for God to pour our plentiful blessings.

However, to live out of Christ means one will die out of Christ. But to the redeemed it is simply the vehicle that God uses to bring His people to Himself.

I don't know how this year will end or through next year, but I can say to my Saviour **my times are in thy hand**.