

March 9, 2023

## Complaining in Psalms?

### [Psalm 31:9-16](#)

Psalm 31 is introduced in the *New American Standard Bible* as “a Psalm of complaint and of praise.” It is attributed to David, though some think it may have been written by Jeremiah (NIV).

There surely is a lot of complaining, especially in verses 9-13! I wondered what the beloved King David had to complain about. As for Jeremiah, the “prophet of doom” during the reign of the last five kings of Judah, his message was a difficult one, and he was not popular in his time. In his case, complaining makes sense.

But, what about David? Verse 10 gives us some insight—“my strength has failed because of my iniquity.” Confession. I can relate to that.

When we live with an awareness of our own wrongdoings, surely, we’ve experienced times of breaking out in a cold sweat and feeling the horror of something we’ve handled terribly wrong!

Great shame and embarrassment settle upon us, and we may even become paranoid about how others (the adversaries and neighbors of verse 11) regard us.

What is there to do at such times?

Our inclination may be to hide, especially from God. But there is really only one thing to do, and this psalmist names it in verse 14—“as for me, I trust in thee, O Lord.”

We have a loving God. At times of deep despair when it may even feel as if we deserve for the world to turn on us, our God is longing for us to bare our souls and lay it all out. It is safe to do this, and we are comforted and often shown a path to reconciliation. Praise God!

Borrowing words from *What a Friend We Have in Jesus*, “O what peace we often forfeit, O what needless pain we bear, all because we do not carry everything to God in prayer.”

And from the next verse, “Can we find a friend so faithful who will all our sorrows share? Jesus knows our every weakness; take it to the Lord in prayer.”

***Prayer:*** *Lord God, friend Jesus and Holy Spirit—give us the courage to be honest and vulnerable with you. Open our heart with your love and our minds to your wisdom. Amen.*

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