

Psalms 31:24

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the LORD.

Analysis

Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the LORD. Psalm 31 concludes with exhortation to courage grounded in divine strengthening, addressed to all who hope in God. This provides pastoral encouragement for persevering faith—courage is both commanded and enabled by God's empowering grace.

Be of good courage (Hebrew *chazaq*—be strong, firm, courageous, resolute) appears in dual form: be strong and He shall strengthen—the command and enabling grace. God commands courage while simultaneously providing it. This is characteristic of biblical imperatives: God commands what He then enables. Believers are called to courage knowing God supplies strength courage requires.

And he shall strengthen your heart uses same Hebrew root (*chazaq*). God will make your heart (*leb*, inner person—mind, will, emotions) strong, firm, courageous. Heart represents core of personality and decision-making. God's strengthening isn't superficial or merely external but penetrates to center of being, fortifying from within. This is sanctifying grace—God working in us both to will and to do His good pleasure (Philippians 2:13).

All ye that hope in the LORD identifies recipients. Hope (*yachal*) means to wait expectantly, trust with confident expectation. This isn't vague wishful thinking but grounded confidence in God's character and promises. Those who hope in LORD (YHWH, covenant name) trust His faithfulness and wait for deliverance.

Exhortation addresses entire community of faith—not individuals in isolation but collective people of God encouraging one another.

This concluding verse provides pastoral application of entire psalm's testimony. David has modeled faith under pressure—honest lament, deliberate trust, grateful praise. Now exhorts others to follow this pattern: be courageous in trials, knowing God strengthens those who hope in Him. Reformed theology emphasizes sanctification includes corporate encouragement—believers don't persevere individually but within community, exhorting and strengthening one another.

Historical Context

Command to be strong and courageous echoes Moses' and God's repeated exhortation to Joshua (Deuteronomy 31:6-7,23; Joshua 1:6-7,9,18). As Joshua faced conquest challenges, he needed courage grounded in God's presence and promises. David invokes this tradition, calling God's people to Joshua-like courage as they face opposition and trial.

Phrase he shall strengthen your heart appears in Psalm 27:14 in nearly identical form. This repetition suggests common liturgical exhortation in Israel's worship—refrain that concluded psalms of trust and lament. Community would sing these words together, mutually encouraging perseverance and hope. Worship wasn't merely vertical (individual to God) but horizontal (believer to believer), building corporate faith.

Early church applied this exhortation to Christian discipleship. Paul repeatedly commanded believers to be strong in Lord and in power of His might (Ephesians 6:10), to be strong in grace in Christ Jesus (2 Timothy 2:1), to stand firm (1 Corinthians 16:13). Peter exhorted that God of all grace would perfect, establish, strengthen, settle them (1 Peter 5:10). New Testament continues Psalms' pattern: courage commanded, God's empowering promised.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How does knowing God will strengthen your heart enable obeying command to be of good courage?
2. What is relationship between hoping in LORD and receiving divine strengthening?
3. In what specific circumstances do you need courage today, and how can you trust God to provide it?
4. How does corporate encouragement (all ye that hope) help believers persevere where individual effort might fail?
5. How does David's psalm model pattern of honest struggle leading to strengthened faith and then encouraging others?

Interlinear Text

ה זקוּ	וַיֹּאמֶר	לְבָבְךָ	כָּל	ה מְיֻחָל יִם
Be of good courage	and he shall strengthen	your heart	H3605	all ye that hope
H2388	H553	H3824		H3176
לִיהוָה:				
in the LORD				
H3068				

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 27:14 (Good): Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD.

Psalms 146:5 (Hope): Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the LORD his God:

Colossians 1:11 (Parallel theme): Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness;

Psalms 29:11 (References Lord): The LORD will give strength unto his people; the LORD will bless his people with peace.

Psalms 138:3 (Parallel theme): In the day when I cried thou answeredst me, and strengthenedst me with strength in my soul.

1 Peter 1:21 (Hope): Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God.

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