

A Bible without Psalms would not be a complete Bible. The Psalms without Psalm 34 would not be a complete book of Psalms. This psalm is one of the favorite psalms of the book because it is a great psalm for us when we are in trouble.

Psalm 34 is a psalm that honors God. In fact, you will notice that the noun “LORD” (Jehovah) shows up in 16 of the 22 verses. Only six verses do not name God (v. 5, 12, 13, 14, 20, 21), but these verses do refer to God.

In the superscription, we see who wrote the psalm and the situation that existed when it was written. Psalm 34 is written by David and the background of it is I Samuel 21:10-15. David pretended to be insane because he was afraid of Achish. The name “Abimelech,” that occurs in the superscription, was the royal title of a Philistine king much like Pharaoh was a title for an Egyptian king or Caesar a Roman king. Achish was the actual name of the king involved in the backdrop of this psalm.

David pretended to be insane and as a result he escaped. In the aftermath of this ordeal he wrote Psalm 34. The main message is this:

GOD’S PEOPLE SHOULD CONTINUALLY PRAISE GOD AND FEAR GOD BECAUSE GOD DELIVERS HIS FAITHFUL PEOPLE FROM ALL THEIR TROUBLES.

No matter what troubles God’s people are in, the circumstances surrounding the troubles always give an opportunity for praise because they are the very opportunities which enable us to see God’s powerful deliverance from troubles. **You will carefully notice that it is repeated multiple times that God will deliver from “all” troubles (34:4, 6, 17, 19).**

There are four parts to this psalm:

PART #1 – Those who desire deliverance from all troubles offer praise to the LORD. **34:1-3**

David begins in **verse 1** by saying that he will bless the LORD at “all” times continually. Let us remember that when he wrote this psalm, Saul was determined to put David to death. David had hoped that he would find a safe refuge in Achish, but he did not find that refuge. In fact, he ended up hiding in caves and dens.

We cannot help but admire David’s commitment to God and to the worship of God. No matter what he personally experienced, he continued to praise God and, as we shall see, with good reason. Troubled times are wonderful times to worship God and praise God. In fact, when we find ourselves in trouble we should immediately strive to praise and worship God.

Now in **verse 2** we learn that David would not only praise the LORD, but he would also boast in the LORD. In the backdrop of this story, David had outfoxed Achish, but he was not boasting in the fact that his shrewdness saved him; he was boasting in the fact that God delivered him.

We can and we should do everything by way of preparation, but we should always realize that victory and success come from God. David did not boast in his ability to outthink or outsmart Achish. In fact, his thoughts were given to him by God. David boasted in God.

Mr. Spurgeon used to say sometimes when I hear people give testimony, all they want to do is boast in themselves or in their foolish former way of life. What they ought to be doing is boasting in God.

According to the last part of **verse 2**, David believed that those who were humble, not proud, will join him in praising God and magnifying God and exalting God (**verse 3**). People who are right with God are humble people. Notice at the end of **verse 3** that the worship is corporate as well as individual. In other words, humble people who exalt God gather together for worship.

People who are right with God have a passion to magnify and exalt God, especially when they learn that one faithful like David has been delivered by God. This was an expectation David had concerning people he knew.

PART #2 – Those who desire deliverance from all troubles seek the LORD and seek deliverance from the LORD. **34:4-7**

David sought the LORD and God answered and delivered him from “all” his fears and from “all” his troubles (34:4, 6). David expected those right with God to do the same thing. The pronoun “they” of **verse 5** refers to faithful people who humbly look to the LORD in the midst of their trials and troubles.

We must remark here that in order for God’s deliverance to come to His faithful people, He expects that His people will seek Him for that deliverance. When God’s people find themselves in trouble, God wants His people coming to Him in prayer. When we find ourselves alone in trouble, we need to get ourselves alone with God. Those who do that may have the following seven expectations:

Expectation #1 - They will see many answers to prayer. **34:4a, 6a**

Expectation #2 - They will have deliverance from all fears. **34:4b**

Expectation #3 - They will have a radiance. **34:5a**—a bright, bold, free look in the midst of troubles

Expectation #4 - They will not be ashamed. **34:5b**—one who looks to God will not be ashamed

Expectation #5 - They will have deliverance from all troubles. **34:6b**—poor in spirit, not proud

Expectation #6 - They will have the personal protection of God. **34:7a**—Jesus Christ & angels

Expectation #7 - They will be personally rescued by God. **34:7b**

All of these benefits come to one who seeks the LORD in times of trouble.

PART #3 – Those who desire deliverance from all troubles must try the LORD and fear the LORD. **34:8-10**

These are great verses of Scripture. When David says, “Oh taste and see that the LORD is good,” he is personally challenging faithful people of God to put this matter of going to God in times of trouble to the test.

In other words, he wants people to see whether or not if they will go to God and totally rely upon God in moments of trouble, God will deliver them and bless them. David wanted every troubled believer to experience this firsthand. You have to taste something before you know how good it is.

Those who fear God and take refuge in God will be blessed by God (34:8) and will have no want of “any good thing” (34:9-10). David challenges faithful people to try depending on God and see for yourself. See if this does not turn out to be true. Fear God and seek God when in trouble and see whether or not good things in life happen to you.

PART #4 – Those who desire deliverance from all troubles must live life with a fear of the LORD. **34:11-22**

David was a famous warrior, musician and politician. We may notice that he was not interested in instructing people in the ways of war, music or politics, but he was interested in instructing people into a “fear of the LORD.”

David gave instruction and he expected people to listen to him. He believed that the teaching of God’s Word was the important thing and in **verse 11** he makes that point clear. It is important to see that in order for people to “fear the LORD,” they must be taught. Fearing the LORD requires careful teaching from God’s Word. Now there are three main topics that David develops:

Topic #1 - What a man who fears the LORD may expect in life. **34:12**

The man who fears the LORD can expect to live a “full” life and a “long” life. The word “life” in Hebrew is plural, which refers to life at an excellent or majestic level. If a person wants to live life at its fullest level and have it last the longest, he must “fear the LORD.”

Topic #2 - What a man who fears the LORD must do in life. **34:13-14**

There are four specific actions one who fears the LORD must take:

(Action #1) - One who fears the LORD must carefully guard his speech. **34:13**

Proverbs 18:21 says, “Death and life are in the power of the tongue.” One who fears God is careful about what he says. There will be integrity in speech. Speech will be true and not deceptive. The tongue is a good readout of the heart.

(Action #2) - One who fears the LORD must continually turn away from evil. **34:14a**

One who fears God will continually stay away and turn away from evil people, places and things.

(Action #3) - One who fears the LORD must continually turn to good. **34:14b**

It is not enough to stop doing evil, but one who fears God will start pursuing good. Years ago, there was someone I knew who went to Alcoholics Anonymous because he had a drinking problem. Through these meetings he turned away from the evil of being a drunkard. However, he did not turn to the Lord and did not turn to the Word of God. So his departing from evil was not based on a fear of the LORD.

(Action #4) - One who fears the LORD must pursue peace. **34:14c**

This is not a peace at any cost issue, but it is a peaceful pursuit that first is interested in being at peace with God and then with others in a way that is consistent with a “fear of the LORD.”

Topic #3 - What a man who fears the LORD will receive in life. **34:15-22**

There are at least nine tremendous benefits that David presents for one who fears the LORD:

(Benefit #1) - One who fears the LORD receives God’s attention. **34:15a**

(Benefit #2) - One who fears the LORD receives answers to prayers. **34:15b**

(Benefit #3) - One who fears the LORD receives protection from evil enemies. **34:16**

God gives special protection to those who fear Him and He specifically targets those who are evil and eliminates them.

(Benefit #4) - One who fears the LORD receives deliverance from all troubles. **34:17**

Don’t miss this promise—one who fears God will be delivered out of all trouble.

(Benefit #5) - One who fears the LORD receives special emotional help when hurting. **34:18**

There is great value in having a broken heart: 1) It receives special attention and ministry from God (34:18); 2) It makes one very acceptable to God (51:17); 3) It brings a reviving from God (Is. 57:15); 4) It brings a healing from God (Ezek. 34:16). One who fears God can expect God to do some amazing things when one is emotionally hurting.

(Benefit #6) - One who fears the LORD receives complete deliverance from all afflictions.
34:19

This is one of my favorite verses in the entire Bible. Let me point out a couple things about it:

- 1) Righteous people will have many as opposed to few afflictions.
- 2) Righteous people will have complete and total deliverance from all afflictions.

(Benefit #7) - One who fears the LORD receives complete protection. **34:20**

This verse is a prophetic prediction of how God would watch over and keep track of even the bones when Jesus would die. It also is a wonderful promise of how God will protect His people and carefully watch over them, including all of their bones.

(Benefit #8) - One who fears the LORD will see hateful enemies destroyed. **34:21**

God will demolish the enemies of those who fear Him. Evildoers will be punished by God.

(Benefit #9) - One who fears the LORD will see both temporal and eternal redemption.
34:22

Here is a great verse for salvation—no one who takes their refuge in God will be condemned.

Let's say this another way—anyone who will trust totally and only in Jesus Christ to save their soul will be saved.

If you find that you are presently afflicted and suffering a lot of trouble:

- 1) Come to church and worship and praise God as often as you can.
- 2) Pray to God and ask God for His help and deliverance.
- 3) Fear the Lord and respond to conviction and make necessary changes.

“O taste and see that the LORD is good.”