

## Psalm 34

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- The word “Abimelech” in Hebrew means “of the king” and is intended to be a title, somewhat akin to Pharaoh - the title of the Egyptian monarch, usually with an identifying name added like Pharaoh Neco, or Rameses. The Abimelech referred to here is Achish, king of the Philistines.
- At one point as David was fleeing from Saul, in his desperation he sought refuge in the Philistine city of Gath. (**1 Samuel 21:10-15**)

Map:



Jerusalem - Gath - (Adullam.)

- David was immediately recognized. Achish asked “do you mean David, their king? The one they sing about” - “Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands?” It’s almost like Achish can’t believe that David has come to him, it doesn’t make sense. It doesn’t make sense because there is no sense in it.
- As David hears the conversation he realizes that he’s made a big mistake and he begins to fake insanity. He begins clawing at the doors and mumbling, letting his spittle run down his beard, and just kind of acting crazy.
- As Achish observes David’s behavior, he recognizes that David has lost his mind, he’s gone nuts - and casts him away, saying we’ve got enough nut jobs already - get him out of here. David then flees to the [Caves of Adullam](#).
- Bear in mind that he could just as easily have had David executed, but God...

**Proverbs 21:1** “The king’s heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water: He turneth it whithersoever He will.”

- This Psalm is a reflection of David’s heart as he once again see’s the hand of God keeping and protecting him, delivering him from his enemies.
- Have you every made a rash decision but didn’t really realize how bad it was until you pulled the trigger? Just as soon as you said something or made that commitment and at that moment realized what a mistake you’d made. Only to have the grace of God flood in and turn things around and save the day.
- God does that at times, just as He did it for David.

### Outline:

V: 1-3 Bless the Lord.  
V: 4-8 Seek the Lord.  
V: 9-16 Fear the Lord.

V: 17-22 Trust the Lord.

V: 1-3 **Bless the Lord:** David does! Thank you, thank you, thank you Lord for getting me out of that! Once again David experienced the hand of God helping him, delivering him from the enemy.

- David pretty much lived life on the edge, but God was always there for him. David would certainly have been quite a prize for the Philistines to capture, he had a infamous reputation amongst them. It's hard to believe that he got away the way he did - God's hand was obviously in it.
- David declares that he will bless the Lord, he is committed, purposing in his heart he's going to bless the Lord.
- Then he says how he's going to do it: by praising Him continually. That's one of the ways we too can bless the Lord by praising Him, He loves hearing us praise Him.

**Hebrews 13:15** "By Him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to His name."

- David doesn't say that he'll just bless the Lord in good times, but at all times, even the difficult times - which would make it a "sacrifice" of praise at times.
- C. H. Spurgeon wisely said, "*He who praises God for blessings will always have blessings for which to praise God.*"
- I believe that one of the reasons David was so blessed, and why he was a man after God's own heart was because he purposed in his heart to be a man who praised God at all times.
- So we see David blessing the Lord, praising the Lord, rejoicing in Him, inviting / **exhorting** others to join with him in praising the Lord.

V: 4-8 **Seek the Lord:**

V: 4 As soon as David heard Achish talking he realized what a mistake he'd made and he was afraid, and immediately he began to pray.

- And God delivered him.

V: 5-6 The Lord shined His grace upon David, the Lord smiled upon him and he wasn't ashamed.

- His face was “*lightened*” - “nahar” (H-5102) It describes a person who is glowing, beaming, radiant, overjoyed about something.
- I think about how Moses had been in the presence of the Lord and how He glowed, radiating, reflecting the glory of the Lord.
- This poor man, this desolate man cried, and the Lord heard him and saved him!

**Matthew 5:3** “Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”

V: 7 The “*angel of the Lord*” is often a reference to a pre-incarnate appearance of Jesus Christ in the Old Testament and here it’s the idea that the Lord Himself is encamped all around them that fear Him and love Him, he delivers us.

**Psalm 125:2** “As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about His people from henceforth even for ever.”

V: 8 (2<sup>nd</sup> [exhortation](#)) I love this exhortation; he’s saying “check it out, give it a try! Taste, partake” - and see that the Lord is good.

David found God’s Word to be sweet to his taste:

**Psalm 119:103** “How sweet are Thy words unto my taste! Yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth!”

- Analogy: “Rocky Road” - it can be described verbally, but no one listening will ever really know unless they take a bite and experience it for themselves.
- Blessed is the man who trusts, who takes that step of faith, who takes a bite of faith.
- Notice the order, “**taste / partake**” first, then you will “**see**”.

V: 9-16 **Fear the Lord:**

V: 9 Fear the Lord, reverence Him, love Him.

- Those who fear the Lord need fear nothing else, this is the fear, the love that drives out all fear.

**1 John 4:18** “There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear...”

“*Ye His saints...*” this is what the saints do, much like what we read in Psalm 33, this is just what believers do.

- “**Saints**” (H-6918) qādos; means sacred or holy, which is what we are by the blood of Jesus Christ!
- God takes care of his “saints” He meets their needs, He meets our needs.

This is the OT equivalent to:

**Matthew 6:33** “But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.”

V: 10 While God provides for the needs of His saints, at the same time the young lions, those that are strong and capable go hungry.

- Again, those that seek the Lord will not lack any good thing. (not just “any” thing...)

**Psalm 23:1** “The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want.”

**Psalm 84:11** “For the Lord God is a sun and shield: the Lord will give grace and glory: no good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly.”

V: 11 (4<sup>th</sup> exhortation) Come, hearken unto me: Let me teach you the fear of the Lord; the fear of the Lord can and should be taught.

- The way it’s taught is by a combination of speaking it out, reading the Word of God, then most importantly living it out, and talking about it as we do.

**Deuteronomy 6:4-7** “<sup>4</sup>Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God is one Lord: <sup>5</sup>And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. <sup>6</sup>And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart. <sup>7</sup>And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.”

**Proverbs 22:6** “Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.”

- You can’t teach what you don’t know, you can’t give what you don’t have:

**Psalm 51:10-13** “<sup>10</sup>Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. <sup>11</sup>Cast me not away from Thy presence; and take not Thy holy spirit from me. <sup>12</sup>Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation; and uphold me with Thy free spirit. <sup>13</sup>Then will I teach transgressors Thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto Thee.”

V: 12-14 What man desires, or doesn’t desire a good long life? Who will get that? The man who keeps his tongue from evil and from speaking lies.

- James has a lot to say about the tongue, such a small part of our overall body, yet capable of so much trouble and sin.

**James 1:26** “If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man’s religion is in vain.”

- We need to control our tongues.

**James 3:8-12** “<sup>8</sup>But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. <sup>9</sup>Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God. <sup>10</sup>Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be. <sup>11</sup>Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter? Can the fig tree, my brethren, bear olive berries? Either a vine, figs? So can no fountain both yield salt water and fresh.”

- No man can do this on his own, but in Christ it is possible.

**Philippians 4:13** “I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.”

- (5<sup>th</sup> exhortation) Depart from evil and do the right thing; seek peace and pursue it, not just with men, but make your peace with God.

Depart from evil:

**Proverbs 3:7** “Be not wise in thine own eyes, fear the Lord, and depart from evil.”

**Matthew 5:9** “Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.”

**Romans 5:1** “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

- Pursue what is right; abandon what is evil.

V: 15-19 The contrast between the righteous and the wicked:

V: 15 His eyes are upon the righteous, His ears are open to their cry - He’s listening.

**2 Chronicles 16:9** “For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew Himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward Him...”

- God is looking for opportunities to bless His children.
- Such a comfort just knowing that He’s there, that He’s watching and listening.

V: 16 Contrast: His face is against those who do evil, to completely cut them off so that no one will even remember them.

- God's eyes are on the righteous, but the face of the Lord is against or turned away from those that do evil.

**Isaiah 59:1-2** “<sup>1</sup>Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither His ear heavy, that it cannot hear: <sup>2</sup>But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that He will not hear.”

**Psalm 66:18** “If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me.”

- We can't exactly claim ignorance in these issues: We know what God desires of us.

**Micah 6:8** “He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God.”

- God has told us what is good, what is holy, what is pure: but there are always those who rebel against what God has said; that rebellion in your heart against what God declares to be right is evil.
- The evil of rebellion in my heart against the holiness of God, the righteousness of God. So when I set my heart against the law of God, the holiness of God, then having set my heart against Him, so then “the face of the Lord is against them that do evil.”

V: 17-22 **Trust the Lord:**

V: 17-18 Again, God hears the cry of the righteous and He saves those that have a contrite “crushed” heart.

vv:6 “This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles.”

- David is probably thinking of his escape from Achish, God's miraculous deliverance.
- The Lord is near to the broken hearted and saves such as have a contrite spirit, a crushed spirit.

**Psalm 51:17** “The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise.”

**Matthew 5:4** “Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.”

V: 19 Many are the afflictions of the righteous:

**John 16:33** “These things I have spoken unto you, that in Me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.”

**2 Timothy 3:12** “Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.”

V: 20 In the midst of this Psalm of praise David utters this prophesy concerning the Messiah, kind of a parenthetical break.

- This may describe David’s joy at not having all his bones broken by the Philistines, but when you fast forward 1,200 years - we see an obvious and direct fulfillment in Jesus.

**John 19:31-36** (Turn to / read)

- This was also a requirement for the Passover Lamb which was a type of Jesus the Messiah - which according to **Exodus 12:46** required that none of it’s bones were to be broken.

V: 21 Moving from this Messianic prophesy, right back to the subject at hand, which is the contrast between the wicked and the righteous. “*Evil shall slay the wicked...*”

**Romans 6:23** “The wages of sin is death....”

- Paul is describing the inherently destructive nature of sin and evil.

**Hebrews 11:25** “... the pleasures of sin for a season.”

- But as Paul previously described, every sin has a consequence which is the destruction of the person, their personality, and their character.
- Sin isn’t bad because it’s forbidden, it’s forbidden because it’s bad for us, it’s hurtful, and harmful, it is destructive in every way.
- Evil will slay the wicked; evil destroys relationships, it destroys your body, it destroys your mind, people literally lose their minds, no longer able to distinguish between good and evil.
- As evil destroys a person, soon too it destroys a nation.

**Proverbs 14:34** “Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people.”

- Those that hate the righteous shall be desolate

V: 22 The contrast: but the Lord redeem's the soul of His servants, those that trust in Him will not be desolate.

- “Desolate” in verses 21 & 22 could also be translated “condemned” - The wicked are condemned, but the righteous face no condemnation.
- What is the difference or the determining factor between the two? The Lord's redemption!

**Romans 8:1** “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.”