

## Try and Find Out that the LORD is Good

### Psalm 34

#### Introduction:

Have you considered why it is that we do not fulfill our aspirations—including goals, visions, or missions—in life?

Fear brought on by external terrors which threaten will keep us from starting a work, engaging in a work, or continuing a work.

Foes distract us, trouble us, and drive us crazy such that we abandon the work.

Foreboding about fortune in wealth, health, and good holds us back from greater progress. (This means, we are inwardly convicted that something bad is going to happen to prevent us from being successful, so we hesitate, think twice, then compromise or concede.)

Why are we so afraid to trust the LORD to provide and deliver?

Psalm 34 praises God for freeing the psalmist from his fears and foes, then asserts that the LORD always watches over the righteous!

The superscription to the psalm says it is “A Psalm of David when he feigned madness before Abimelech, who drove him away and he departed.”

If David had a specific event of deliverance in mind as he wrote this psalm it was the occasion of 1 Samuel 21:10-22:1.

While David was seeking refuge from Saul in the Philistine city of Gath, he fears what the king of Gath might do to him, so he pretends to be insane.

He escaped to a cave and his father’s household came to him.

If this event in David’s life was not the background of the psalm, it certainly provides a graphic representation of what the psalm depicts.

God looks after those who trust in Him and fear Him.

#### I. The psalmist learned of God’s presence.

David learned that God delivered him from his fears and foes.

In Psalm 34:4, the psalmist wrote, “I sought the LORD, and He answered me, And **delivered me from all my fears.**”

These fears are external terrors which threaten.

Psalm 31:13 illustrates this use; “For I have heard the slander of many, Terror is on every side; While they took counsel together against me, They schemed to take away my life.”

God delivered the psalmist from those who caused him to fear.

The psalmist witnessed the oppressed who looked to God (v. 5).

They were glad and joyful.

He wrote, “Their faces will never be ashamed” because they will not be disappointed or disillusioned.

Shame comes because of misplaced trust (Job 6:20; Isaiah 1:29).

The one who trusts in God will never be put to shame.

In verse 6, the psalmist wrote, “This poor (afflicted) man cried, and the LORD heard him And **saved him out of all his troubles.**”

The poor, afflicted, or humbled man cried out to the LORD.

It was the LORD who saved or helped the man out of his distress, anguish, or troubles.

“The angel of the LORD,” according to verse 7, draws off or draws out and rescues “those who fear the LORD.”

Did you notice when God delivered David from his fears?

He said (in verse 4), “I sought the LORD, and He answered me, And delivered me from all my fears.”

“**I sought the LORD**” represents going to the Lord in prayer and worship.

“He answered me” shows that Yahweh responded to the psalmist’s prayer by doing what the psalmist asked him to do.

Did you notice when God delivered David from his foes?

He said (in verse 6), “This poor man cried, and the LORD heard him And saved him out of all his troubles.” (Whether the poor man was the psalmist or someone else the psalmist observed...)

“**This poor man cried**” indicates the man approached God in prayer.

“The LORD heard him” points out that God heard the man’s prayers.

“And saved him out of all his troubles” demonstrates that the man prayed about deliverance and God responded to his prayers.

Both considerations lead to one conclusion: The LORD always watches over the righteous.

God delivered the psalmist when the psalmist feared the LORD (v. 7).

When David revered the LORD, God’s presence encamped around him and rescued him.

God’s presence took care of David’s fears and foes.

## **II. The psalmist proclaimed, the LORD is our provider and deliverer.**

The righteous should learn that God will give them their needs (vv. 8-9).

David exhorts his people to try for themselves and find out “that the LORD is good.”

To test what the psalmist is instructing, we must take refuge in God and fear Him.

The young lions, thought of as the strongest of all animals, want food and suffer hunger, “But they who seek the LORD shall not be in want of any good thing” (v. 10).

God will provide what is needed by the righteous—those who take refuge in Him and revere Him.

The righteous should learn that God will grant them long, good lives if they live in the fear of the LORD (vv. 11-15; read 11-12).

Learn from those who have experience trusting God; He works in His perfect timing, He gives what is good and perfect, and He often goes against our thinking.

We think a long enjoyable life has some secret to it, but God reveals it as simple as fearing the LORD, being honest, avoiding evil, doing good, and seeking and pursuing peace.

This is a balanced life.

It has more good in it than bad, more positive than negative aspects.

“Keep your tongue from evil And your lips from speaking deceit” (v. 13) means avoid malicious talk and lies.

“Depart from evil and do good” (v. 14) means do not go looking for evil, instead look to cause good for people.

“Seek peace and pursue it” (closing out v. 14) means to work with conditions to “make for prosperity, health, happiness, and the common welfare.”<sup>1</sup>

God watches over the righteous and listens to their cries for help (v. 15).

God’s provision of a long enjoyable life for those who fear Him is so important that Peter quoted this passage while instructing believers in how to conduct themselves considering what Christ has done for us (1 Peter 3:10-12).

The righteous should learn that God will rescue them from their troubles (vv. 17-20, 22).

God hears the cry of the righteous “And delivers them out of all their troubles—or anguish” (v. 17).

God is attentive and watchful toward the brokenhearted or discouraged and the contrite spirit that has lost all hope, such that He saves—helps, or delivers them (v. 18).

“Many are the afflictions of the righteous” shows that the righteous are not free from troubles, difficulties, bad things, sufferings, or misfortunes; they are freed from or rescued from these things.

“But the LORD delivers him out of them all” (v. 19).

God will not let us be defeated or destroyed by our afflictions.

He will deliver us from them, often by being present with us through them, providing what we need to address them, or guiding us through them until we come out on the other side of them.

Verse 20 talks about the great care God provides; it says, “[God] keeps all [the righteous man’s] bones, Not one of them is broken.”

In the end, verse 22 explains, “The LORD redeems the soul of His servants, And none of those who take refuge in Him will be condemned—held guilty.”

“The LORD redeems the soul of His servants” is presented as a timeless present.

His redeeming of our souls is timely, now and at the judgment.

Those who trust in God for protection will not be condemned.

In contrast to the blessings received by the righteous, the unrighteous should learn they will suffer the face and fury of God.

Verse 16 reads, “The face of the LORD is against evildoers, To cut off the memory of them from the earth.”

God’s hostility toward evildoers will result in them not being remembered after they die.

Two other psalms mention this conclusion of life for evildoers.

Wicked nations and cities suffer the same fate, Psalm 9:5 and 6, “You have rebuked the nations, You have destroyed the wicked; You have blotted out their name forever and ever. The enemy has come to an end in perpetual ruins, And You have uprooted the cities; The very memory of them has perished.”

Family names of evildoers will be forgotten; Psalm 109:14-15, “Let the iniquity of his fathers be remembered before the LORD, And do not let the sin of his mother be blotted out. Let them be before the LORD continually, That He may cut off their memory from the earth.”

Verse 21 reads, “Evil shall slay the wicked, And those who hate the righteous will be condemned.”

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<sup>1</sup> Robert G. Bratcher and William David Reyrburn, *A Translator’s Handbook on the Book of Psalms*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1991), 324.

The evil or wicked “who hate the righteous will be condemned—held guilty.”

Evil may bring down evil, but divine punishment provides justice and delivers the righteous.

### **Application:**

Do we think about the LORD as often as we should?

There are only five verses in this Psalm that do not include the word “LORD.”

One of those five, however, uses a pronoun referring to Him.

Eighteen out of twenty-two verses mention the LORD.

It is too easy in this world to get caught up in the fears, foes, and foreboding of fortunes while not remembering the LORD is our provider and deliverer.

Do we trust God for what we need?

There are things in life that we cannot provide for ourselves.

God satisfies the legitimate needs of our bodies and souls.

Are we proclaiming the majesty and might of our God, His greatness and glory; or do people even hear us speak of what God has done?

Do we consider the Christian life to be the best way to live this earthly life?

God has given us the key to a long and enjoyable life while we are here.

Thus, we must revere Him.

Do we trust God to deliver us from fears—external threats, foes—things that distract us, trouble us, or drive us crazy, and our own foreboding about fortune—in health, wealth, and good?

Do we trust God to redeem us as His servants?

Do we trust God when He promises to oppose evildoers and condemn them?

### **Conclusion:**

Once we have learned of God’s presence and proclaimed Him as our provider and deliverer, we become crazy about the LORD, like David in Psalm 34:3 “magnify the LORD with me, And let us exalt His name together.”

The LORD God is our provider and deliverer.

We must seek Him, take refuge in Him, and fear (revere) Him.

Will you seek the LORD for the good and legitimate things you need?

Will you take refuge in LORD from the fury of His justice against evil?

Will you respect and revere the LORD for what He has done to provide for you and trust Him to deliver you?

O taste and see—try and find out—that the LORD is good!