

## Psalms Chapter 34 Commentary

*A Psalm of David, when he changed his behaviour before Abimelech, who drove him away, and he departed.*

The scriptural reference for this Psalm is **1Sa 21:10 ¶ "And David arose, and fled that day for fear of Saul, and went to Achish the king of Gath. 11 And the servants of Achish said unto him, Is not this David the king of the land? did they not sing one to another of him in dances, saying, Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands? 12 And David laid up these words in his heart, and was sore afraid of Achish the king of Gath. 13 And he changed his behaviour before them, and feigned himself mad in their hands, and scrabbled on the doors of the gate, and let his spittle fall down upon his beard. 14 Then said Achish unto his servants, Lo, ye see the man is mad: wherefore then have ye brought him to me? 15 Have I need of mad men, that ye have brought this fellow to play the mad man in my presence? shall this fellow come into my house?"** But the Title says Abimelech and the scripture says Achish. Achish is the king's actual name and Abimelech is his title.

David has fled from the hand of Saul, king of Israel, who intends to destroy David, because God, through Samuel, has anointed David to be king over Israel, and Saul has found this out. King Saul does not want David to be king. Saul wants his own son, Jonathan, to be king in his stead. Isn't this always the way of unregenerate mankind? They always want what God does not, and therefore they fight against God. I am reminded of a poem I heard quoted by an old minister one time: "*As a rule, a man's a fool; When it's hot, he wants it cool; when it's cool, he wants it hot; Always wanting what is not.*"

Thus, David flees from the presence of Saul to the Philistines. David, being recognized for who he really is, plays the madman and escapes from the Philistines. Thus, the following Psalm.

There are two things I would like to point out in the 1 Samuel text: First, the Philistines had heard of how they sang and worshipped David as king, after he killed Goliath, the Philistine champion. Reminding us that others, who we do not expect, hear of what we do. Wherefore, it behooves us to walk uprightly before the Lord, so that others hear of the goodness of God in our lives. Secondly, Achish knew that David was playing the mad man, but he let him go anyway. Reminding us that God providentially protect us, even when we do dumb things, and get ourselves into bad situations.

**Ps 34:1 "I will bless the LORD at all times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth. 2 My soul shall make her boast in the LORD: the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad. 3 O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together. 4 I sought the LORD, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears. 5 They looked unto him, and were lightened: and their faces were not ashamed. 6 This poor man cried, and the LORD heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles. 7 The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them. 8 O taste and see that the LORD is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him."**

Because God has saved the life of David from Saul, and the Philistines, David says of God: I will bless the LORD at all times, and his praise shall be continuously in my mouth. David says I will boast in the LORD, having no hope in the strength of my own hands, nor my skills which God has given me. David declares that the humble shall hear thereof and be glad. Who are these humble? Those who desire the will of God to be done, for they have learned that David is chosen by God to be their next king, and Saul is showing that he is not God's chosen king, and he is not serving the LORD, but his own self, just as God told them Saul would do.

**Ps 34:3 "O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together."** Why would the people want to join David in magnifying the name of the Lord? Because Israel also knew that David was to be their future king, and they were to rejoice because God was protecting David and them. This is why we sing together, as we are commanded in **Eph 5:19 "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;"** It takes more than one voice to make melody, with harmony, to the Lord, and our King, Jesus Christ is worthy of our praise. After all, God the Father protected King Jesus, even in death, so that he was resurrected from the dead, and gave us victory over death.

All the while David is playing the madman before Achish and the Philistines, God is convincing the Philistines to send David away. Because, when David saw what a mess, he had gotten himself into, he began praying fervently to the LORD, for God to deliver him. Therefore, David says to the humble ones: magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together, for I sought the LORD, and he heard and answered my prayers.

These poor were those who looked unto David to be their king. Their eyes were enlightened, and they were not ashamed to call David their king, even in the face of being slain by Saul. David tells us that I am a poor man, yet God heard my prayers and saved me. Wherefore, you other poor men can pray to God, and expect that God will hear and answer your prayers for salvation.

David declares that the angel of the LORD, a picture of the preincarnate Christ, encampeth about them that fear God. Not only do angels guard us round about, but we are also indwelt with Jesus Christ if we are children of God. David tells us to taste the LORD and see that He is good. How do we taste the LORD? By recognizing the mercy and grace of God. By acknowledging that we are possessors of God's salvation and the joys thereof. He tells us: if we trust in the LORD, we are blessed people, because we have the surety of God's salvation in our lives.

**9 "O fear the LORD, ye his saints: for there is no want to them that fear him. 10 The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger: but they that seek the LORD shall not want any good thing. 11 ¶ Come, ye children, hearken unto me: I will teach you the fear of the LORD. 12 What man is he that desireth life, and loveth many days, that he may see good? 13 Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile. 14 Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it. 15 The eyes of the LORD are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry."**

Why is there no lack to them that fear the Lord? Because those who fear the LORD with the reverential fear, realizing they have been saved by God's marvelous grace and compassion toward them, they have everything already, because they have the indwelling Holy Spirit of God in them. They are also like the woman at the well to whom Christ said *Joh 4:14 "But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life."* And we are also told in *Ps 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."*

We are told in *Ex 20:12 ¶ "Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee."* This being the first commandment with promise. How would this apply to the New Testament Church? Who is the Father of those in the New Testament Church? God. And they are betrothed to Jesus Christ as the New Testament Church, which is a type of the mother. Thus, the gospel of Jesus Christ tells us in *Isa 55:3 "Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David."* Take up your cross daily and follow me, and I will teach you the ways of, and the fear of, the LORD. In so doing, you will desire life in Christ, you will love God with all your heart, mind, and soul, and you will see the LORD is good. You will keep your tongue from evil and speaking guile. You will depart from evil and do good, seeking peace with God and pursuing the paths of the righteousness of Christ. The LORD will keep his eyes upon you, and he will hear your cries for his deliverance in your life. Blessed be the name of the LORD!

**16 "The face of the LORD is against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth. 17 The righteous cry, and the LORD heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles. 18 The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit. 19 Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the LORD delivereth him out of them all. 20 He keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken. 21 Evil shall slay the wicked: and they that hate the righteous shall be desolate. 22 The LORD redeemeth the soul of his servants: and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate."**

The LORD is against all those who do not love him, because they do that which is right in their own eyes. The remembrance of them will be cut off from the earth, in that great day of the LORD, when all shall bow before God, and as we are told in *Mt 25:31-46; 31 ¶ "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: 32 And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: 33 And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. 34 Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: 35 For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: 36 Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came*

*unto me. 37 Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? 38 When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? 39 Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? 40 And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. 41 Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: 42 For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: 43 I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. 44 Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? 45 Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me. 46 And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal."*

This text needs no explanation.

***Ps 34:20 He keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken.***" Here is a prophetic picture that is fulfilled in Jesus upon the cross, for not a bone of his body was broken, thus fulfilling the prophesy of this scripture.

Therefore, in these last few verses of this Psalm, we see the fulfillment of the scripture in ***1Th 4:9-18; 9 ¶*** ***"But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another. 10 And indeed ye do it toward all the brethren which are in all Macedonia: but we beseech you, brethren, that ye increase more and more; 11 And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you; 12 That ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and that ye may have lack of nothing. 13 ¶ But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. 14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. 15 For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. 16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: 17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. 18 Wherefore comfort one another with these words."***

David's Psalm is a prophetic picture of this time of the eternal deliverance of God's people from the Philistines, who are a prophetic picture of all satanic and demonic powers. Wherefore, we can say with David in: ***Ps 34:22 "The LORD redeemeth the soul of his servants: and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate."*** And again, with David in ***Ps 34:1 "I will bless the LORD at all times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth."*** Hallelujah! Praise, ye the LORD!