

DAVID'S CONFIDENCE IN GOD

BIBLE TEXT : Psalm 34:1-22

LESSON 226 Senior Course

MEMORY VERSE: "The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit" (Psalm 34:18).

BIBLE TEXT in King James Version

Psalm 34:1-22

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.
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.
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

BIBLE REFERENCES:

I Psalm of Praise

1 The occasion of David's Psalm was an incident associated with Abimelech, king of Gath,

1 Samuel 21:10-15

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?

Proverbs 29:25

²⁵ The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the LORD shall be safe.

Ecclesiastes 7:7

⁷ Surely oppression maketh a wise man mad; and a gift destroyeth the heart.

2 David began his Psalm with heartfelt praise unto God,

Psalm 71:8

⁸ Let my mouth be filled *with* thy praise *and with* thy honour all the day.

Psalm 71:15

¹⁵ My mouth shall shew forth thy righteousness *and* thy salvation all the day; for I know not the numbers *thereof*.

Psalm 145:2

² Every day will I bless thee; and I will praise thy name for ever and ever.

3 David desired all to magnify the Lord with him, Psalm 34:3

Psalm 35:26-28

²⁶ Let them be ashamed and brought to confusion together that rejoice at mine hurt: let them be clothed with shame and dishonour that magnify *themselves* against me.

²⁷ Let them shout for joy, and be glad, that favour my righteous cause: yea, let them say continually, Let the LORD be magnified, which hath pleasure in the prosperity of his servant.

²⁸ And my tongue shall speak of thy righteousness *and* of thy praise all the day long.

Luke 1:46

⁴⁶ And Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord,

II Song of Deliverance

1 David declared that he prayed to God, and God answered him, Psalm 34:4-6;

Psalm 18:6

⁶ In my distress I called upon the LORD, and cried unto my God: he heard my voice out of his temple, and my cry came before him, *even* into his ears.

Psalm 22:24

²⁴ For he hath not despised nor abhorred the affliction of

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 afflicted; neither hath he hid his face from him; but when he cried unto him, he heard.

Psalm 10:17

¹⁷ LORD, thou hast heard the desire of the humble: thou wilt prepare their heart, thou wilt cause thine ear to hear:

2 Physical protection and deliverance is a heritage of the children of God, Psalm 34:7;

Psalm 91:9-12

⁹ Because thou hast made the LORD, *which is* my refuge, *even* the most High, thy habitation;

¹⁰ There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling.

¹¹ For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.

¹² They shall bear thee up in *their* hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.

Matthew 18:10

¹⁰ Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.

Hebrews 1:14

¹⁴ Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?

3 God's divine providence is declared to be exercised in favor of God's children, Psalm 34:8-10;

Psalm 23:5

⁵ Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

Isaiah 25:4

⁴ For thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat, when the blast of the terrible ones *is* as a storm *against* the wall.

Genesis 28:15

¹⁵ And, behold, I *am* with thee, and will keep thee in all *places* whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done *that* which I have spoken to thee of.

Psalm 37:28

²⁸ For the LORD loveth judgment, and forsaketh not his saints; they are preserved for ever: but the seed of the wicked shall be cut off.

2 Timothy 4:18

¹⁸ And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve *me* unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom *be* glory for ever and ever. Amen.

III Admonition to Serve God

1 David desired his people to learn through him the fear of the Lord, Psalm 34:11;

Proverbs 1:8

⁸ My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother:

Proverbs 4:1

¹ Hear, ye children, the instruction of a father, and attend to know understanding.

Ecclesiastes 12:1

¹ Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them;

2 David instructed those who desired to see good and length of days to learn from him, Psalm 34:11-14;

1 Peter 3:10-11

¹⁰ For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile:

¹¹ Let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it.

Job 28:28

²⁸ And unto man he said, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding.

3 God saves His people out of every affliction and trouble, but the wicked are destroyed, Psalm 34:15-22;

2 Chronicles 16:9

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. Herein thou hast done foolishly: therefore from henceforth thou shalt have wars.

Psalm 11:4-7

⁴ The LORD is in his holy temple, the LORD'S throne is in heaven: his eyes behold, his eyelids try, the children of men.

⁵ The LORD trieth the righteous: but the wicked and him that loveth violence his soul hateth.

⁶ Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest: *this shall be the portion of their cup.*

⁷ For the righteous LORD loveth righteousness; his countenance doth behold the upright.

4 David spoke prophetically of Christ's death, Psalm 34:20;

John 19:36

³⁶ For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken.

Exodus 12:46

⁴⁶ In one house shall it be eaten; thou shalt not carry forth ought of the flesh abroad out of the house; neither shall ye break a bone thereof.

Numbers 9:12

¹² They shall leave none of it unto the morning, nor break any bone of it: according to all the ordinances of the passover they shall keep it.

NOTES:**David's Trials**

David wrote this Psalm, which we know as the thirty-fourth, in remembrance of an occasion when God delivered him from a perilous situation. David had fled from his native land into the land of the Philistines, because of Saul's jealous hatred of him. David was becoming weary and discouraged with Saul's never-ending persecution; and in desperation he fled to the protection of Abimelech (Achish), king of Gath. The Philistines were enemies of Israel, for God had commanded Israel to wage war against the Philistines until they were exterminated. Therefore, for David, a servant of God, to place himself in their hands, and desire succor from them, was an extreme measure indeed. Such action reveals what desperate straits David felt himself to be in — that he believed there was more mercy at the hands of the enemies of Israel than there would be at the hands of King Saul.

David's faith in God was being tried greatly in those days, and it was tried still more when he chose such an unfortunate method to escape his troubles as seeking mercy at the hands of the wicked. The Bible says that "the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel" (Proverbs 12:10).

Because David sought refuge with the King of Gath, he overheard some soldiers talking about him and he became very fearful for his safety. These soldiers had recognized David as one of their most hated enemies. David had gained much fame by his slaying of Goliath and others of the Philistines; therefore, when he was recognized by some of Abimelech's men, David did not expect to receive much consideration from them. David's plight was so perilous that he feigned madness. The king commended his men to drive David away, thereby enabling David to escape with his life.

David gained experience, if nothing else, during this time;

and later, as he meditated on God's great salvation through these troubled years, he was inspired to speak of it.

In times of great trouble, spiritual stress, and physical danger, it takes great spiritual maturity and confidence in God to wait quietly for God to deliver us from our difficulties. From the theme of the thirty-fourth Psalm we know that David's faith in God became more enduring and confident than it ever had been before.

God's Salvation Remembered

David looked back on this trying time with the king of Gath, and thought of the action to which his desperation had driven him. His heart must have recognized the truth of the matter, that except God had somehow delivered him he would have perished. The constant theme of the thirty-fourth Psalm relates God's great goodness, His greatness, His loving protection of His people, and the destruction that is promised to the wicked.

No matter what methods David may have used — wise or unwise, born of desperation or not — David was thoroughly convinced that all would have been in vain unless God had intervened in his behalf.

David does not explain just how he knew that it was by God's help that he was enabled to escape the Philistines; nevertheless, he was fully persuaded that God had saved him. Such belief in the providential salvation of God, even though there be no clear explanation for such reasoning, is true faith.

The real eye of faith sees the hand of God working, whereas the carnal heart and mind can see no evidence of God at all. We know that this is true, not only from personal experience with the working of God in the lives of His people, but because it is according to the Word of God: "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Hebrews 11:1).

God's Providential Care

David tells us that "the angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them." He is not only near us, but he is encamped all around, surrounding us with his protection.

Somewhat the same idea is presented by Jesus when He spoke of God's protection over Jerusalem, which love and protection they refused. "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" (Matthew 23:37). Moses used a similar picture of God's protection over His people as he sang the Song of Moses to Israel: "As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings: so the LORD alone did lead him" (Deuteronomy 32:11, 12).

David further expounded his testimony of God's protection and providence with the statement, "There is no want to them that fear him," qualifying that with the following verse, "The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger: but they that seek the LORD shall not want any good thing." A young lion is considered as the king of beasts. Lions are among the most powerful of all the predatory animals. They are cunning and swift, and much of the time they are able to kill their prey with but one swift blow. They are sly, dangerous animals for men to hunt, and they command respect from all who happen to be in their vicinity. But despite their great ability and ruthlessness in getting game to feed themselves, they are often lean with hunger, and life is a constant hunt for food merely to sustain life.

QUESTIONS

- 1 What prompted David to write this Psalm?
- 2 Why did David fear the Philistines?
- 3 How did God deliver David from the Philistines?
- 4 Who were the children David was teaching?
- 5 How was Christ referred to in this Psalm?
- 6 In what way did David associate himself with the sufferings of Jesus Christ?

David doubtless was thinking of men whose characters were similar, in many respects, 'to lions. They were equally as cruel, swift, and ruthless in their never-ending hunt for more power and for more earthly gains. Even so, David spoke the truth when he said that despite their ruthlessness of attack they would be in want. The lot of the enemies of God is that they are continually in strife and battle with a world of men as vicious as themselves. There is no peace for the wicked, and they are as the troubled sea that-casts up its dirt and mire. (**Isaiah 57:20** ²⁰ *But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt*) Not so with the children of God, for "they that seek the LORD shall not want any good thing." The children of God are pastured in God's keeping, fenced in by His love which keeps all enemies at a distance, and are left to feed in peace and plenty.

Fear of the Lord

David felt that he was learning of the fear of the Lord, and learning that God takes care of His own. God's great truth and grace was like a sparkling stream in the heart and life of David, which made him the sterling character that he was. Therefore, as a leader of men and the anointed of the Lord to be king of Israel he felt his responsibility to tell others of God's great salvation.

David may actually have been teaching children, as he implies in this Psalm, but probably he gathered his men about him and told them in words similar to the easily understood words of Jesus when the disciples were instructed in the eternal mysteries of the Kingdom of God, "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 18:3).

Promised Salvation

David made mention of an event that could be nothing less than a realization, in part, of the day when God would provide Himself a sacrifice for man's sin. David's declaration, "He keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken," is actually speaking of the true Paschal Lamb. A condition of the preparation and eating of the Passover lamb was that not one of its bones was to be broken. This peculiar provision was remarkably carried out to the letter at the crucifixion and death of Christ. It was the custom of the Romans to break the legs of those who were crucified, to hasten death. The two thieves who were crucified with Jesus were treated in this manner; but the Romans, seeing that Jesus was already dead, broke not a bone in His body.

God inspired David to include this mention of the Passover, as a prophetic promise of Jesus Christ who would suffer all manner of indignity, and finally death at the hands of his enemies. Even so, God would raise Him from the dead, and exalt Him to a place of great glory. As David looked back on some of his own difficulties, he realized that he had suffered for a time but God had brought him through unscathed and unharmed. While David did not pretend to compare his sufferings with those His Lord and Master would endure, still he felt marvelous gratitude for the great deliverance of God. Then David with a heart full of praise unto God, closed his Psalm with the beautiful words, "The LORD redeemeth the soul of his servants: and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate."