

(How to Understand the KJV Bible) 16 Psalm 34

by Keith Simons

Psalm 34 is a powerful expression of David's gratitude and praise to God for his rescue and deliverance, and it teaches us the importance of trusting in God and seeking to do what is right.

Duration: 25:12

Scripture: Psalm 34:1

Topics: "KJV Bible", "Trust in God", "Praise and Worship"

Description

Keith Simons explores Psalm 34, emphasizing David's experience of seeking refuge in God during a time of fear and danger. He highlights how David, despite his deceptive actions to escape King Abimelech, ultimately honors God for His deliverance and goodness. The psalm serves as a reminder to praise God at all times, to trust in His protection, and to live righteously, as God watches over the humble and delivers them from their troubles. Simons encourages listeners to magnify the Lord and experience His goodness, reinforcing the importance of faith and respect for God in their lives.

Transcript

Welcome, my name is Keith Symons and this is a podcast on how to understand the King James Version of the Bible. Each week we take a psalm, today's psalm is Psalm 34, and we look at it word by word, verse by verse, looking at the meanings of every part of it, so as to understand the psalm properly and so as to learn just a little more about how the King James Version is put together. So let's turn now to Psalm 34 and there you'll see the heading, a curious heading, a psalm of David when he changed his behaviour before Abimelech, who drove him away and he departed.

That heading suggests something curious, it's in fact a reference to the passage in 1 Samuel chapter 21 beginning at verse 10 and what happened was that King Saul was trying to kill David and so David escaped, he escaped from Israel and went into the land of the Philistines. To the same place that Goliath had come from and when he reached there fleeing for his life he was recognised and the people brought him to the king and David was afraid that the king would kill him as an enemy and so David resorted to a strange tactic to get away from him. He acted as if he was mentally unstable, as if he was insane.

He did all sorts of strange things and the king called him a madman and insisted that he must be sent away from him. And David after that, it seems from this heading, wrote this psalm. He wrote a psalm not to praise his own clever scheme, not to say how clever he'd been to think of a way to get away from this king and Philistia and save his life.

No, he wrote this psalm to give honour to God and in it there's not a hint of anything other than giving honour to God who had rescued him again from his troubles. So although David's method was strange and it feels like it's based on deceit, yet David afterwards was focused on God and how good God had been to him. So turning to the psalm itself, this is one of the alphabetical psalms which means that in the Hebrew language the first verse begins with the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet, the second begins with the second letter and so on until the end.

Like there's about eight or nine alphabetical psalms, most of them are not quite perfect, by which I mean that there's the odd letter which doesn't match in with the Hebrew alphabet. That seems to have been a deliberate way in which these passages were put together. So the first verse which begins with the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet reads, I will bless the Lord at all times, his praise shall be continually in my mouth.

David says I'm going to bless God, I'm going to praise God, I'm going to praise him at all times. In the past maybe I used my mouth to speak foolish words, to play the fool, to give Abimelech the king from Philistia the impression that I was something that I wasn't, but that's not how I choose to behave. I choose to give honour to God at all times, I choose to praise him.

And you notice how the two halves of the verse say the same thing in different words. I will bless the Lord at all times, and then it repeats it, his praise shall continually be in my mouth. That's something we often see in the Hebrew poetry, that repetition of the same idea in two separate lines, but drawing it out, drawing it out to greater intensity.

He's not just blessing the Lord with his heart and with his mind, no, he's going to bless the Lord with his mouth, he's going to speak the words that give honour and praise to God. He continues verse 2 with a curious expression, my soul shall make her boast in the Lord, the humble shall hear thereof and be glad. Her boast means the boast of the soul, we often see this he and her taken from the Hebrew and put into the King James Version, where we would say my soul shall make its boast in the Lord.

So David's soul, his inner life is boasting, it's declaring the joy of the soul in God, and boasting is proud words. David is proud about his God, his God who rescues him from trouble, yet humble people are people who are not proud. What sort of boasting, therefore, would make humble people glad? Well of course the answer is David isn't boasting in himself, he's boasting in God, and that is what makes humble people, people who are not proud, to be glad.

Verse 3 continues with one of these strange expressions which seem almost contradictory, but you have to explore it to understand it. O magnify the Lord with me and let us exalt his name together. Magnify, make greater, like a magnifying glass makes what you're looking at greater.

O magnify the Lord with me make God greater. How can God be greater? He is greater than everyone and everything. How can he be greater? Where is he not great? Well he's not great in our hearts.

When we, when we don't trust him, when we trust ourselves, when we trust our own clever schemes, we're acting as if God is nothing. So we make God greater in our hearts. When we praise him and honour him, give him the respect that is due to him.

Let us exalt his name together. To exalt means to make higher. How can God be higher? God is higher than the highest heavens.

Oh but his name, his reputation, we can raise up high. If we give God a low reputation, lower than his reputation should be, we can exalt that. We can exalt his name.

We can give God the honour that he deserves. David continues with his personal testimony of what God did for him. Verse four, I sought the Lord and he heard me and delivered me from all my fears.

David prayed to God and God rescued him. When he was so afraid, when he thought that Philistine King would certainly kill him, God rescued him. God delivered him from his fears.

And David has already in verse four encouraged other people to praise God with him. Oh magnify the Lord with me and let us exalt his name together. And he now makes a statement about these other people who are glorifying God with him.

Verse five, they looked unto him and to God and were lightened and their faces were not ashamed. Lightened means filled with joy. When they looked to God, the people with David, they were filled with joy.

They were not ashamed that they trusted God. No, they were glad that they trusted God. They were pleased that they trusted God.

Verse two again, the humble shall hear thereof and be glad. The humble are glad to make their boast in the Lord because God doesn't, God doesn't let them down. God doesn't disappoint them.

They are not ashamed to be trusting in God. Verse six, this poor man cried. David who would soon be the King of Israel, how does he describe himself? He is a poor man.

That's how David describes himself. He is poor and weak and he, he uses foolish schemes to try and get out of trouble. But he also had the sense to cry or to pray to God.

And when he appealed to God, the Lord heard him and saved him out of all his troubles. This is the God who rescues his people. This is the God who cares for his people.

And when they are in distress, when they are fearful, they call to him and God rescues them. Verse seven, how does God rescue them? The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him and delivereth them. God sends his angel, his special servant from heaven, a powerful angel of the Lord who defends his people.

Like an army, the angel comes right round them. They're surrounded by the defending force of God's angel. They fear God, they respect God.

It's them who God sends his angels to protect and it's God who rescues them. Using his angels, yes, but it's God who sent them. They're acting at God's command.

They're acting in obedience to God to look after the people who fear or respect God. Verse eight, oh, taste and see that the Lord is good. Blessed is the man that trusteth in him.

How can you taste God? Well, you can taste that God is good. With everything that you eat, you taste that God is good. You experience God's kindness in providing for you.

And then you look with your eyes and you see around you what God is doing in this world, the good things that he has done. And so you taste and you see that God is good. But more than that, you experience

God.

You taste the sweetness of knowing him to be your rescuer, your saviour, your protector. That experience causes you to trust in him, but you already trust in him because blessed is the man that trusteth in him. Yes, it's true happiness to trust in God.

Verse nine, oh, fear the Lord, ye his saints, for there isn't no want to them that fear him. Fear the Lord, respect God. Give him his proper place in your life.

Give him the place that he deserves. He is a king of kings and the Lord of lords, the highest one who has authority over heaven and earth. Ye his saints, that's who he's speaking to.

The people whom God has separated to be his own people. I suppose David meant the nation of Israel when he referred to that then. Israel's people were separated from the other nations to be God's special people.

There's no want to them that fear him. They don't lack what they need. They're trusting God.

They're respecting God. So they don't need anything else. They only need God.

Verse 10, the young lions do lack and suffer hunger. Yes, you see the most fierce wild animals and yet they can be desperately hungry. They can be in trouble and needing help.

But what about those who seek God? They who seek the Lord shall not want any good things. Any good thing God provides for them. God looks after them.

Yes, they might lack certain things in this life. They might even be hungry but they can trust God to provide them what they really need because any good thing God will provide for them. Verse 11, David declares to his children, maybe to the children of his nation, maybe to the people of his nation, come ye children hearken unto me.

I will teach you the fear of the Lord. If you're like a child and you're ready to learn and you might go a good way or a bad way but you want to learn, then learn the fear of the Lord. Not to be so afraid of God that you can't do anything.

No, learn to respect God. Learn to honour him. Learn that he is the great God who deserves respect and honour.

Verse 12 asks us a question. What man is he that desireth life and loveth many days that he might see good? So if you're someone who likes life, if you want to see a long life and you want to see good things happen in life, then here's some advice for you from King David. Verse 13, keep thy tongue from evil and thy lips from speaking guile.

Verse 14, depart from evil and do good. Seek peace and pursue it. When you respect God, God teaches you the right way to live.

He teaches you how to live a good life. Desire what's good. Seek peace.

Desire to do the things that are right, that please God and work hard at that. Don't turn to speaking evil and guile. Don't deceive people.

Instead, seek to do what is good and then you'll be one of God's people. Verse 15, the eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous and his ears are open unto their cry. God's people are the righteous people.

They're the ones who choose to do what is right. But it's not just about human effort. In fact, it's not about human effort at all.

It's about respecting God and so being in the proper place, respecting what God has done, allowing God to change you, make you right with him. And when you do that, God's eyes are upon you and his ears are open to your cry. In other words, God's watching you.

He's watching you if you're one of his people. He's watching you all the time to show his kindness to you. He's listening to you because he wants to hear your prayer.

He wants to answer your prayer. He wants to meet your need. He doesn't want you to be in want.

Verse 9, he doesn't want you to want any good thing. Verse 10, so he's watching you. He's listening to you.

He might act even before you pray because he's watching you, but he wants you to pray because he's listening to you. So if God's eyes are upon the righteous, upon God's people and his ears are open to their cry, then God's turned his face towards them. So has he turned his face away from anyone? Verse 16 answers that.

The face of the Lord is against them that do evil to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth. God has turned away from the evildoers. God isn't giving attention to them.

He's not trying to help them with their problems. No, he's opposed them because of their evil acts. Their evil acts have brought his judgment against them and his final judgment is to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.

In other words, they have no proper place in the world. They might think that they're making money in this world, that they're successful and doing well. No, because God is against them and God is acting against them to cut off the remembrance of them so that they will be remembered no more.

Verse 17. The righteous cry and the Lord heareth and delivereth them out of their troubles. The words the righteous say are in slanted print italics because they're not in the Hebrew, but the King James translators wanted to make it clear that this wasn't still talking about those that do evil from verse 16.

So when God's people cry, God hears. God rescues them from their troubles. Why? Verse 18.

The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart and saith as such as be of a contrite spirit. The Lord is near his people. Why? They're of a broken heart, of a contrite spirit.

What does that mean? It means they're not trusting in themselves. They're not trying, like the evil people, to make themselves great. No, they're broken.

They're lowly. They don't consider themselves important because they give honour to God who is important. They give God his proper place in their lives.

Verse 19. We've got three verses now where the words the righteous refer to one person. We could translate them as the righteous one.

So I'll read those verses together. Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth him out of them all. He keepeth all his bones.

Not one of them is broken. Evil shall slay the wicked, and they that hate the righteous shall be desolate. In the Hebrew language, righteous is singular, one person, all the way through.

And these could be general statements like those we've just heard about how God defends righteous people, but it seems to be referring to the righteous one, God's King, the Messiah. He has many troubles, but God delivers him. Not one of his bones is broken, even in all his great troubles.

If you're a Christian, you'll recall how that was said about Jesus on the cross. He suffered so much, yet not a bone of his body was broken. Evil shall slay the wicked.

Their own evil acts will become like an enemy, chasing after them to kill them. Those that hate the righteous or the righteous one will have nothing. The Lord, verse 22, the Lord redeemeth the soul of his servants.

God rescues the soul or the inner life of his holy people. None of them that trust in him shall be desolate. We said, verse 21, they that hate the righteous shall be desolate.

That'll be the fate of no one who trusts in him. No one who trusts in him will be left alone. No one who trusts in him will suffer or go to hell, because they trust in God and God redeems them.

He rescues them. And though they might have done many, many wrong things, though they might have often trusted in themselves and in the wrong things, yet God rescues them. He saves them, he forgives them, he gives them a right relationship with himself.

He frees them from their evil behavior that they were formerly in. He makes them to please him. I would love for you to write to me.

My email address is 333kfv at gmail.com. You won't join a mailing list, you won't get any appeals for money. It's just for me to know where this podcast is reaching. Now let me read to you the whole psalm, Psalm 34.

A psalm of David, when he changed his behavior before Abimelech, who drove him away and he departed. I will bless the Lord at all times. His praise shall continually be in my mouth.

My soul shall make a boast in the Lord. The humble shall hear thereof and be glad. O magnify the Lord with me and let us exalt his name together.

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The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him and delivereth them. O taste and see that the Lord is good. Blessed is the man that trusteth in him.

O fear the Lord, ye saints, for there is no want to them that fear him. The young lions do lack and suffer hunger, but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing. Come ye children, hearken unto me.

I will teach you the fear of the Lord. What man is he that desireth life and loveth many days that he may see God? Keep thy tongue from evil and thy lips from speaking guile. Depart from evil and do good.

Seek peace and pursue it. The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous and his ears are open unto their cry. The face of the Lord is against them that do evil to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.

The righteous cry and the Lord heareth and delivereth them out of all their troubles. The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit. Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth him out of them all.

He keepeth all his bones, not one of them is broken. Evil shall slay the wicked and they that hate the righteous shall be desolate. The Lord redeemeth the soul of his servants and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate.

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