

Always A Time To Praise the Lord

Praising the Lord At All Times

Psalm 34

Main Idea: The Lord delivers and redeems his servants, so it's always a time to praise the Lord!

The context of Psalm 34 is found in 1 Samuel 21:12-22:1. The Lord blessed David's attempt to diffuse King Achish's judgment by acting like a madman while he was detained in the King's court. God delivered David from the hand of his enemies, and now David's heart was full of gratitude and praise. He couldn't help but lift his soul in worship of the Lord and to call and instruct others to do the same! Psalm 34 is a wonderful Psalm of praise that lays the foundations of the justification for why that praise is deserved at all times. God's people aren't immune from affliction, but God's people can trust that the Lord is at work in the midst of that affliction. This Psalm was focused on the events that David just experienced. The deliverance and redemption of the Lord spared his servant, but the Lord focused beyond David in this Psalm, pointing to the very Son of God, Jesus Christ, who would be afflicted and hang on a cross, giving his life before they could break a single bone (John 19:36), eternally redeeming the life of his servants and accomplishing the full and final forgiveness of sin to release his servants from everlasting condemnation under God's law!

At all times, praise the Lord, who in his goodness hears, answers, delivers, and saves those who take refuge in him (1-10).

David had just been delivered from King Achish, who was also called Abimelech, which was likely the royal title of Achish. David knew that it wasn't his cunning – as questionable as it may have been to deceive Achish in the way that David did – rather, it was the Lord's protection and deliverance that set David free. David fled Gath and hid himself in a cave in Adullam. His situation was still precarious, but his heart was full of praise. David vowed that he would praise the Lord at all times. David would praise, boast, magnify, and exalt the Lord from his soul and with his mouth because the Lord was good! The Lord had answered David. He had delivered David. God had kept David from being ashamed. He had heard David's cry and saved David from his trouble. The Lord protected David and saved him, so all that David wanted to do was to praise the Lord. He also wanted others to see the reality of God's goodness in his life. David's testimony was an example for others to see. David's life was a witness to God's provision and protection of his people. David's personal commitment was his call to all of God's people: At all times, praise the Lord, who in his goodness hears, answers, delivers, and saves those who take refuge in him! What about you? Is this your testimony? Are you praising the Lord who heard, answered, delivered, and saved you?

1. Read verses 1-3. Answer the questions below.
 - a. What was the personal commitment that David made in these verses? Why is this commitment important in the life of a believer? Have you made that commitment to the Lord?
 - b. What is the congregational call that David made in these verses? What does this tell you about God's desire for you to share your faith and join with others to worship him? Why is this important to the Lord and important for your life and faith?
2. Read verses 4-7. Answer the questions below.
 - a. Go through these verses and identify the actions of David. What are the things that David did?

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- b. Go through these verses and identify the actions of God. What are the things that God did?
- c. Does God still do these things today in the lives of those who seek him and fear him?

3. Read verses 8-10. Answer the questions below.
 - a. In verses 8-9, David called on God's people to do two things. What are those two things? What do these things look like in your life? How can you do these things?
 - b. In verses 8-10, David made definitive statements about how the Lord responds to those who take refuge, fear, and seek him. What are those statements? How have you experienced God's faithfulness in these things in your life? Who can you share these truths with in the coming week?

At all times, praise the Lord, living by faith in the one who redeems and justifies his servants and destroys and condemns his enemies (11-22).

In the second half of Psalm 34, David called the children to come and to listen to him. What followed was important instruction for their lives as God's people. Everyone wants a long and good life. That's certainly a desire and a hope for all, and David's instruction was practical: Live for the Lord. Run from evil and pursue righteousness. That doesn't mean that life is easy and without affliction. Actually, by the very testimony of David's life, that can't be what David meant, and verse 19 affirms the fact that afflictions are many in life in this world. But in the midst of that reality, God sees. God hears. God is near, and he saves those who take refuge in him. David experienced that in a temporal and physical way in the midst of this situation with King Achish, but the Lord intended these words to extend far beyond David's life and far beyond our temporal and physical life on this earth. The Lord redeems his servants not just from momentary afflictions in this life but through those affiliations into eternal life. The Lord destroys and condemns his enemies such that every temporal and physical victory of the enemy is defeated in the end. The Lord justifies those who take refuge in him, removing their condemnation! How? Not through David, but through Jesus Christ, who was afflicted for us, kept from having a single bone broken, and delivered from death into resurrected life so that through Christ – eternally and fully – "The LORD redeems the life of his servants; none of those who take refuge in him will be condemned."

1. In verses 11-14, what is the practical instruction of David in regards to the way that one should live his/her life? What are we to avoid? What are we to pursue? Why is this important?
2. In verses 15-18, what are the realities of God's interaction with men on earth? What does it say about God's actions for the "righteous?" What does it say about God's actions for those who do "evil?" What is the key in verse 18 in regards to the proper posture for a sinner before the Holy God of creation? How do these two heart conditions in verse 18 relate to the time in your life when the Lord saved you from your sin?
3. In verses 19-22, how do these verses point forward to the work of Jesus Christ? If afflictions in this life are many, what is the true deliverance that God gives to his people? Do you have this eternal deliverance through faith in Jesus Christ? If not, why not? Do you know someone who needs this deliverance through Christ? Pray for them, and commit to tell them your testimony and the gospel this coming week.