



Psalm 34:1–7

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A Psalm of David When He Pretended Madness Before Abimelech, Who Drove Him Away, and He Departed.

- 1 I will bless the LORD at all times;
His praise shall continually be in my mouth.
- 2 My soul shall make its boast in the LORD;
The humble shall hear of it and be glad.
- 3 Oh, 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 to Him and were radiant,
And their faces were not ashamed.
- 6 This poor man cried out, and the LORD heard him,
And saved him out of all his troubles.
- 7 The angel of the LORD encamps all around
those who fear Him,
And delivers them.

In vv1–7, David enlists help praising the Lord, recounting what the Lord has done for him.

In vv8–14, David urges other saints to trust in the Lord as he has.

In vv15–22, David assures them that his own experience has been according to the Lord's enduring character.

This week, we're considering the first seven verses.

Gladdened by Praise, v1–3.

When we talk about praising Yahweh at all times (v1a), or rejoicing in the Lord at all times, we understand it to mean especially the most difficult times.

When there is nothing in our circumstances to gladden us, yet the Lord is reason all by Himself. Indeed, sometimes it takes the habitual/principled use of our mouth (v1b) to stir up our soul to its proper attitude (v2a).

The Lord has designed that His praise in our mouths would lift up our hearts upon Him, even (and especially) when they have been brought low (v2b). In fact, when we are humble, His praise in either our mouth or our ear thrills us, because one who is humble is able to rejoice in the honor and glory of another. This is the gladness of the lowly—more for what has come to God in His saving us even than what has come to ourselves in His saving us.

That brings us to the generosity of v3. We have often noted places in the Psalms where our gratitude to God desires that He should be praised by more than just our solitary mouth and heart—the desire that He would get the praise of the assembly, the praise of a multitude. But in light of v2, we see how generous this is to others as well. We are desiring for them to experience this highest of enjoyments, the enjoyment of God Himself, the enjoyment of honor coming to Him Whom our heart loves.

Gladdened by Prayer, v4–6.

David had many fears (v4b), so what turned his heart from the fearing to the rejoicing and praising that we have just seen in vv1–2? He sought Yahweh, and Yahweh heard. Yahweh's "hearing" response fills us in on what it meant that David sought Him: he spoke to Him. Seeking the Lord does indeed mean trying to understand what His Word says and to do things His way. But it is also to address Him with our own words, for we are seeking not merely a power or a procedure but a Person. We seek Him by seeking *Him*.

This was also the case for David's men who were with him. They looked to the Lord along with David (v5). This looking to the Lord by itself changed the attitude of their hearts, not merely the condition of their circumstances. The saving from troubles in v6 is mentioned only after the elimination of fear in v4 and the production of joy and confidence in v5.

Gladdened by Presence, v7.

We would be quite mistaken to think that what Gehazi saw in 2Kings 6 was an unique circumstance for Elisha and his servant. This verse tells us that those who fear Yahweh have an entire encampment of the Angel of Yahweh around them. If we fear the Lord, we may always pray for ourselves, "Open my eyes, that I may see that those who are with me are more than those who are with them." Angels are "all ministering spirits sent forth to serve for those who will inherit salvation" (cf. Heb 1:14).

But it is not the legions of angels that are the comfort so much as the One Who is at their head. The Angel of Yahweh is nearly always—possibly, in fact, always—Yahweh Himself. We know Him as the One Who sits upon the white horse, the Captain of His angelic hosts. And that which was already so sweet for David in Psalm 34:7 is marvelously intensified by the fact that we now know Him as our Lord Jesus, Who loved us and gave Himself for us. What is the presence of hundreds of millions of angels by comparison to "His own dear presence to cheer and to guide"? And yet it is His sweet promise that even with all authority in Heaven given to Him so that He sits enthroned among angelic hosts as the God-Man, yet He is also "with you always, even to the end of the age" (cf. Matt 28:18–20).

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Our Father in heaven, how he thank you for the way you show your glorious and gracious, character, and our experience of you that our weakness, it gives opportunity to see and rejoice in the glory of your strength. Even our wickedness though, not excuse their buy as a displaying ground canvas on which you display, your patients your power to it, give us life and bring us to repentance and faith.

And so we thank you for the way that you have not only done this and your people's experience and guaranteed to us. That if we taste, we also will see that you are good. But you've also given a psalms like this one that we might have words to pray and to sing and to study, we pray for the help of your spirit.

Now as we consider the first seven verses or so, of this psalm that you would help us not only to understand but that you would help us and stir up our hearts towards you. So that we might be better prepared to come and know you in prayer and call upon your name together.

Who asked these things in Jesus name. Amen. Psalm 34 splits, either two ways versus one to 10, and then versus 11 to 22, I think it's splits three ways after studying it a little more closely versus one to seven and then versus 8 through 14 and then versus 15 through 22.

So in verses 1 through 7, which will hear in a moment and consider, tonight, David is enlisting, others help in praising, the Lord because he has enlisted the Lord's help and the Lord has helped him and he wishes for the Lord's to receive glory and praise, that is due to him.

And then in verses 8 through 14, which Lord willing, we would take next week, we have David urging other saints to experience the faithfulness of the Lord in trusting him and seeking him and fearing him as David has and enjoying the same faithfulness of God. And then in verses 15 through 22, David assures the the believer, the one fearing the Lord, the righteous that his experience of the Lord will be as David's was because what the Lord has done is not a an isolated incident, but the ordinary display of expression of his character.

And since God never changes the way that God was with, David has the way that we may, be sure that God will be with us. I was just marvelous to think about the things that are written in the scripture written for our example to become popular in some circles, the last 15, 20 years to.

If you make application from something that David did. Yeah. Wasn't at least internet famous preacher said. You're not David. Well, that's true. But David's God is my god. And and as first Corinthians 10, says these things are written for our example on whom the ends of the ages have come.

So God doesn't change. And David is making that point as a whole in this song. But for tonight in order to have bite-sized pieces that we can complete in these half hours or so that we have at the beginning is the prayer meetings. We just have the first seven verses and and read, of course the superscript as well.

Since that also is heavier scripture. So Psalm 34 versus 1 through 7. These are God's words, a psalm of David when he pretended madness before Abimelech, who drove him away and he departed. I will bless y'all way at all times. His praise shall continually be in my mouth. My soul shall make.

Its boast in Yahweh. The humble shall hear of it and be glad Oh magnify your way with me and let us exalt his name together. I saw Yahweh and he heard me and delivered me from all my fears. They looked to him and were radiant and their faces were not ashamed.

This poor man, cried out and Yahweh heard him and saved him out of all his troubles, the angel of your way, in camps all around those who fear him and delivers them so far. The reading of God's inspired and inerrant word In the first three verses we have David praising the Lord and being gladdened by the praise of God and declaring that others who so do will also be gladdened by the praise of God.

So we'll see in the first three verses Believers Gladdened by praise and the next four verse sorry the next three verses verses four through six. We see that believers are also gladdened by prayer and then very neatly setting up the the triple pee alliteration for seven that believeers may also be gladdened by.

And in this case it's delivered by but there's gladness and that deliverance up until this point, gladden by presence. Now, we are not the only ones who enjoy and use things like alliteration. If we were reading in Hebrew and the children had just learned their alphabets. They would look down the right hand side at the beginning of the column of verses and say, I know that I left that gimbal away to talk at the end.

It's a an what's called an acrostic poem and that would help you remember your psalm. 34 is you were beginning to learn it and pray it and sing it and get to a verse. And you can't quite remember how the next one starts. And you remember the next letter in your alphabet and you go along, it's a reminder that God loves his little children and wants to help us.

Remember and know his word there are times and ways in which the scripture is even written in such a way that God is communicating that he wants us to memorize his word and it's wonderful poem. Well, just take the first third. However, all though the the whole thing would hold together.

Gladdened by praise then. David was in a situation where he wasn't ready to praise. He was before a peace, one of the kings of the Philistines who also goes by the name. Abby Melech. I'll be my dad melodic king. We've seen Fliston rulers called Abenwick all the way back to Abraham.

So this isn't, you know, one dude who is alive from Abraham to David. My daddy is king is just an ordinary title for, for kings, like, Pharaoh applies to many of the kings of Egypt, and Caesar applies to many of the kings of Rome and so forth. So David had pretended madness because he was afraid of what they might do to him.

And you remember, the kings got upset with the people who dragged him before him said, you know, do we have a madman shortage that you've brought David David before me very interesting. Commentators are divided. Well depends on who you read the reformed orthodox, commentators like Calvin and Henry are all very hard on David which is interesting because they really like to give patriarchs in the godly to benefit of the doubt in the Old Testament.

But they they both are quite certain that David Fanning madness was a culpable and wicked lie and that one of the reasons he's praising God. Here is that not only is God's power? Had has God's power been displayed against the backdrop of David's, weakness and inability to do anything but also God's mercy has been displayed against the backdrop of his sin.

And I think probably David joins with them in that in in his summary and next week's portion, who desires life and loves many days. Etc. He specifically picks the wickedness of lying and deceit to highlight for putting to death and and walking with the Lord in verse 13. So more modern or non-reformed commentators are a little bit divided on what David should have done.

Whatever the case with what David had done. That's not David's. Focus. David's focus is on what the Lord has done, and David is gladdened by the praise of the Lord. He says, I will bless you all way at all times. So there was a time in his immediately recent memory.

When he wrote this song, according to the super script where he was quite frightened. And we'll see when we get to gladdened by prayer. That that the Lord had to remove or deal with his fears but now David knows that he ought to or has been reminded that he ought to blast Galway.

Praise the name. If y'all play at all times, I will bless you all way at all times. Has praise. Shall continually be in my mouth. My soul shall make. Its boast in Yahweh. Well, you can bless y'all way at all times. Because even if there's nothing in your circumstances to glad you that you can see the Lord by himself, is reason to rejoice.

This is what the apostle says in Philippians 4, which we had not too long ago, isn't it? Rejoice in the Lord always if the Lord himself is your reason for rejoicing, then you can never lose your reason for rejoicing. Nothing can separate us from the love of God and therefore nothing want to separate us from the praise of God and the joy of God.

Now there are some things that tend to do so and one of the things that the Lord gives us here, if you look at the second half of verse one, in the beginning of verse two to help us to rejoice in him is doing it with our mouth until it is worked into our hearts.

Now it is true out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks but when God puts his word in your mouth you can have in your mouth that which changes the heart. I've known people before said. Well you know I didn't do my devotions today because I just didn't really feel like it and I was I didn't want to be insincere before the Lord and I'm thinking and here we have some Bible support for that if I waited until I really felt like it, I would probably never feel like it until I backslidden, you know, into a spiritual grave.

We we worship God and part because that is a means by which he works on our hearts. And so his praise shall continually be in my mouth. My soul shall make, it's both in Yahweh. I think there's a bit of a causal relationship between those two things. They're mutually reinforcing.

I know my children have experienced this at times when they were supposed to obey, or say something honoring and a cheerful manner. And we're practicing the right thing in addition to have correct having corrected the wrong thing and we get to the part where they're supposed to say the right thing and and yeah, either they're able to come up with it themselves or they need help and we give

them something to say and they say it and it's not cheerful enough or they do what they're supposed to do and it's not cheerful enough.

And I'm gonna have flashbacks for most of the or little over half the children of the room. How I'll say now that wasn't cheerful, show me cheerful. And the child who may at least, be trying to nurse some darkness or soulness of heart. Will give a half-hearted smile as they.

How that's not cheerful enough. Show me cheerful and in almost every actually, I can't remember an instance in which as not worked, just being forced to smile bigger has eventually broken, the ice of the child's heart and there will be that that moment of us, something like a chuckle or something, and the smile will go to ear to ear and the eyes will smile and the manner will change.

God has given us his praise to do that to us. Spiritually to him. How can we sing the songs of God that he has given us the sacred Christ and not be forced as it were to show him cheerful. And how many a believer who has been tempted not to attend the public worship of God or not to participate in the family worship and this is one of the ways.

One of many ways that family worshipable transform household, is that you have to worship together. It's hard to maintain things. Like bitterness towards God. And bitterness towards one another. And here David here is acknowledging the blessedness of blessing the Lord and his name. And so when David gets to in the second half of verse two and then into verse three, the humble shall hear of it and be glad and that is the lowly.

Not only those of low position who have been brought low by providence, but of of low attitude, lowly attitude, the humble shall hear of it and be glad it takes humility genuinely to praise God because the natural man, the flesh wants to rejoice over our victories. Over our being honored and our being praised humility is that which can take delight in the admiration of another and the victory in the crediting of another.

And so it the one of the main parts. One thing that is really at the core of biblical, praise is humility. And if you can't be humble before God, if you can't enjoy, the fact, that God is getting praised and credit. Then how are you ever going to be humble with other men?

So the humble here, the praise of God and our glad. And so we see coming out of verse 2, into verse 3, the generosity of wanting others to praise God with you. Oh magnify your way with me and let us exalt his name together because in part and diverse two, this is how you can be glad.

And so you can see David as it were graphic, other believers who are fearing or are downcast. And dragging them to the praise of God. The the humble here, the praise of God, and our glad. So magnify y'all away with me, let us exalt his name together. I think we've seen many times in the psalms where the Lord has done something for the psalmist and he has wanted to respond, not just with his personal private worship, but with the public worship of God in which the sacrifices and and all those ordinances that looked forward to Christ would be so that God would be glorified in this picture of his son and the display of his son and God would be glorified, not just by one heart and one voice but the United hearts and voices of those who are an expression of what the heart and voice of Jesus is like.

And so we've seen many times that our desire for public worship is something that comes out of wanting God, to get the glory, do his name and we banished the idea that I can worship God as well by myself, you know, on on a mountain or out on the lake fishing, or whatever it is.

No, we want God to get the glory, do his name. Well, now there's this additional motivation because this is how God gladdens his afflicted. People, the humble shall hear of it and be glad oh magnify your way with me and let us exalt his name together and sometimes in situations where people are downcast.

We're tempted to be, how do I put this sympathetically? Overly understanding with their desire? Not to come to the public workshop. I think it's a precisely in those situations that they need to come to the public worship and here, his praise participate in his praise and be glad. So that's gladden by praise and second place.

Glad in my prayer. I sought y'all way and he heard me. Now there are a number of things in scripture that it means to seek the Lord and things like reading his word. Things like trying to repenting of walking according to our own ideas and instead walking according to the Lord's ideas.

But one of them must surely be audible prayer. I saw Yahweh, and he heard me. Well, if his response to my seeking him was his hearing me and that means I was talking and it's a marvelous thing that we have a God who has talked to us and we may seek him by reading his word.

But it has also a marvelous thing that we have a God who wants us to talk to him. And one of the things that he will do is he will deliver you from your fear, even before he delivers you from that of which you were afraid, that's how verse four reads.

It's not just that he delivered, David of what, David feared, he delivered David from fearing it. Now, this happens not only for David but he describes this. They in verse 5. They look to him and were radiant and their faces were not ashamed. That is to say they're happiness.

Their confidence came just by looking to the Lord. They're gladdened by the prayer itself. Now, in verse 6, he does describe the Lord's response to his praying in the providence of getting him out of the circumstance. This poor man, cried out and he always heard him and saved him out of all his troubles.

But before he describes being saved from the troubles, he describes being delivered from the fears. He describes for saints in general. In verse 5, acquiring joy and acquiring confidence by prayer itself. Fellowship with God. Calling on his name knowing that he hears us knowing that we are looking to a person looking to the Lord by itself changes, the attitude of the heart.

Not merely the condition of our circumstance. Finally gladdened by the Lord's presence verse 7. The angel of Yahweh in camps all around those who fear him and delivers them. Perhaps, some of you remember, it really stuck in my memory from very, very young childhood the story of Elisha and Gahazi and Gahazi being petrified of the Syrian army and and Elisha praying that Gahazi's, eyes would be opened and the Lord answering the prayer and has he seeing the mountains all around?

He thought that he and Elisha were just too. That were surrounded but he saw that it was really the enemy who was surrounded by these legions of angels feeling the mountains. Well, perhaps you, perhaps one of the reasons why that really stuck in my mind and perhaps a stuck in some of your minds is how amazing that would be to get to me.

Elijah has he and have all of those angels for us. Well, Psalm 34 verse 7, says your eyes may not be able physically to see it, but as just as true of you, the angel of Yahweh and camps all around those who fear him and delivers them. So that we know that there are myriads of myriads of these angels.

So tens of thousands of tens of thousands and the math people say, oh, that's hundreds of millions and yes, hundreds of millions. But the implication is that's a hyperbolic way of saying more than we could count or calculate. And this is true, not just for a lotion gasy. Some 400 years after David, maybe 300 and change after after David, but this is true for all who fear him and frankly, as nice as the hundreds of millions are there's just one who is there captain, who is their general?

That is really being highlighted here. The angel of Yahweh in camps all around those who fear him, because it's not the hosts of the Lord that is that are the, the great help of the believer. Although they serve at his command and they are all ministering spirits sent forth to serve, for those, for those who will inherit salvation, Hebrews 1, verse 14 says.

But here the one who is highlighted as the angel singular. That is the captain now almost every time. And I say this, every time that I teach a breach, on a passage that says the angel of y'all way, I don't think I've run into one yet. We're it couldn't be the Lord Jesus where it couldn't be Jehovah himself and almost every time it is almost certain that it is the Lord Jesus.

And here you get the picture as it were straight out of revelation of the man on the white horse and all of his holy armies. And yet they don't have anything to do ultimately in the last battle because the every member of the enemy is slain by the sword that comes from the mouth of the one who is in the lead, on the white horse.

And what after all are hundreds of millions of angels compared to Yahweh himself. And we now know not just as the angel of Yahweh, Psalm 34 verse 7, but whom we know as the son of David who became a man, so that loving us, he might give himself for us and we would know that what I had not seen or ear, heard nor the heart of man, been able to devise that the Lord of glory would be crucified for us that this is what he has done.

And even in his humanity. Yeah. Jesus. Matthew 28:18 says all authority. In heaven belongs to him. He sits on the throne, the angel. Armies are literally at has backend call as the God man as the resurrected ascended redeemer. And yet he says in that very context that he is with us, always even to the end of the age.

If Gahazi's eyes could have seen something that corresponded to that, then we would be approximating how encouraged how gladdened we ought to be by the presence of the Lord here verse 7. So gladdened by praising him gladdened by prayer. And gladdened by his presence, you get the picture so far that to belong to this God, and to seek him.

Call upon his name, praise him know. Him is to be gladdened by him.