

Psalms 34

Psalms 34:8 O Taste and see that the Lord is good: Blessed is the man that trusteth in Him.

This is a Psalm of David and it is set at the time when David attempted to seek refuge among the Philistines but the whole affair went wrong and David escaped harm by faking irrational behavior. This circumstance is associated with the Psalm but the faked behavior is not cited in the Psalm.

The psalm tells the story after the fact. It is a remembrance of thanksgiving. "I will bless the Lord at all times: His praise shall continually be in my mouth." This is an expression of gratefulness for what God has done. The continual blessing and praise of the Lord relies upon remembrance of what He has done. When God is praised, those who know Him and have an understanding of their own relationship with Him join in the celebration with a spirit of gladness. David invites the community to join his spirit of praise, "O magnify the lord with me and let us exalt His name together."

In verses 4-7, David rehearses the story. When he sought the Lord, he was heard and God delivered him. He was not alone in his

distress and so his companions shared the crisis experience. He calls himself a poor man who cried out to God and was heard and delivered by the Lord. The spiritual principle David discovered was that, "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them."

David issued an invitation, O taste and see that the Lord is good: Blessed is the man who trusts in Him. This is again a spiritual principle. In order to experience the benefits of faith, you must exercise your faith. Risk brings reward. He added this encouragement, "O fear the Lord, ye His saints for there is no want to them that fear Him." This connects the believer to the power of God - the only reliable source of power in life. Other powers fail, God's power will prevail.

David offers a lesson in the fear of the Lord, "What man is he that desires life, and loves many days, that he may see good? Keep your tongue from evil, and your lips from speaking guile. Depart from evil and do good. Seek peace and pursue it." The answer to the question posed by David would seem to be universal. Doesn't everyone desire long life and blessing? And yet, how many follow David's prescription? There are diets and prescriptions and

supplements advertised all the time that are supposed to deliver the answer but this is not what David prescribed. His path to long life had more to do with the spirit than the body. Control your tongue. Be guided by the commandments. Make choices based on what is right and what is wrong. Live peacefully with those around you.

The choice you make will be determinative in respect to God's attitude toward you. God watches over the righteous and He pays attention when they cry out to Him. But He resists the efforts of those who choose evil behaviors and He will cut off the remembrance of them from the earth. If you say, but what if I blow it and break the commandment? Is all hope lost? "The Lord is near unto them that have a broken heart and He saves those who have a contrite spirit." The Lord does not protect us from affliction but delivers us through them. He keeps us from debilitating harm.

On the other hand, evil shall slay the wicked. This is a statement of cause and effect. The nature of life is that bad choices will punish themselves. Good choices bring their own reward. God is always able to intervene. He often does but He does not usually need to do so for justice to be achieved.