

Psalm 34

Psalm 34:1–22

God Delivers Those Who Take Refuge in Him

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Introduction: Psalm 34 was written by David after he had escaped from Ahimelech, the ruler of Gath, a major Philistine city (1 Sam. 21:10–15). There is no telling whether this psalm began to formulate in David's mind as he feigned madness, but my thinking is, David named his sins to God after leaving Gath, thought back on this experience, and then wrote the psalm. As David has to be filled with the Holy Spirit or empowered by the Holy Spirit when he writes Scripture, it would not make sense for him to be out of fellowship (as he apparently is in 1 Sam. 21), and still to write this psalm (or Psalm 56, which was apparently written at the same time). That God would still protect him, even though he is not guided or empowered by the Holy Spirit testifies to the faithfulness of God, despite David's initial lack of confidence in God.

Psalm 34, interestingly enough, is thought to be one of the Messianic Psalms. Therefore, this leads us to the **Doctrine of the Messianic Psalms**, which we will examine first.

Psalm 34 is called an acrostic psalm, as each verse (more or less) begins with successive letters of the alphabet (*the Emphasized Bible* calls it an *alphabetical psalm*, which is a good English understanding). Interestingly enough, the wâw (ו), which is by far the most common letter to begin a sentence in Hebrew narrative, at first appear to be omitted. Psalm 25, also written by David, is also an acrostic psalm with the wâw missing (it's time frame is less well-defined). However, in this psalm, the wâw does occur in the midst of v. 6, after the hê, which is where it should be found. But the rest of the letters begin pair of lines. Also, the final verse, v. 22 (v. 23 in the Hebrew), does not begin with the next letter in the alphabet, as we have run out of letters at the previous verse. The 17th letter of the Hebrew alphabet, ש (pê'), which begins v. 16, is repeated. These verses are opposite sides of the same coin: in v. 16, we have the disapprobation of God to those who have rejected Him (*evildoers*); and eternal approbation toward those who trust in Him.

in this psalm, David both praises and blesses Jehovah God, and exhorts others to join him in this (vv. 1–3). He speaks of God delivering him, and how God provides protection for His own (vv. 4–7). David then exhorts those listening to or reading this psalm to taste Jehovah, to see that He is good (vv. 8–9). Even though lions might go hungry, the believer will be provided for (v. 10). Then David promises to teach the listening *the fear of Jehovah*, which includes avoiding sins of the tongue, avoiding evil and seeking peace (vv. 11–14). God pays attention to and protects those who are His (vv. 15, 17–18) and is against those who are not (v. 16). David warns that the righteous will suffer to some degree (v. 19), but that there will be limits on this suffering (v. 20). Those who stand condemned will be slain by evil (v. 21), but God will redeem the soul of the righteous (v. 22).

The outline of a psalm is occasionally given simply to help us break the psalm down into bite-sized pieces. However, here there are portions of this psalm which demand separation from the rest of the psalm. In **vv. 8–14**, we have a series of imperatives which all end with the word *good*. What David is giving here is the spiritual way of life for the Old Testament believer. Later, at the very end of this psalm, David takes a radical departure from his problems and how he has trusted God, and he takes us to the cross, and the basis of our salvation. What we find in these final 4 verses (**vv. 19–22**) is a stanza with a double-meaning; it can be applied to David and his situation and it also applies to the Messiah and His work on our behalf on the cross.

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Psalm 34 Inscription

Slavishly literal:

To David in his changing of his taste to faces of Abimelech and so he casts him out and so he goes.

Psalm
34 inscription

Moderately literal:

Belonging to David (when he changed his behavior before Abimelech and he drove him away and he departed.

Written by David when he changed his behavior before Abimelech, causing Abimelech to remove him from Gath.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Early translations:

The Septuagint

By David, when he changed his countenance before Abimelech; and he let him go and he departed.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV *[Written by David when he pretended to be crazy in front of Abimelech, so that Abimelech would send him away, and David could leave.]*

NLT *A psalm of David, regarding the time he pretended to be insane in front of Abimelech, who sent him away.*

TEV ***In Praise of God's Goodness*** [HEBREW TITLE: *By David, who left the presence of Abimelech after pretending to be crazy and being sent away by him*].

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Updated Emphasized Bible David's. When he disguised his sanity before Abimelech, —who dismissed him and he departed. [An alphabetical psalm.]

God's Word™ By David when he pretended to be insane in the presence of Abimelech; Abimelech threw him out, so David left.

JPS (Tanakh)

Of David, when he feigned madness in the presence of Abimelech, who turned him out, and he left. [This is v. 1 in the JPS, although presented as a title or inscription; all subsequent verses will be off by one].

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB

A Psalm of David when he feigned madness before Abimelech, who drove him away and he departed.

Young's Updated LT

By David, in his changing his behaviour before Abimelech, and he drives him away, and he goes.

What is the gist of this verse? This tells us that David wrote this psalm either while feigning insanity before Ahimelech, the king of Gath, or while thinking back about it while he was escaping.

Psalm 34 inscription a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^h]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced daw-VEED]	<i>beloved</i> and is transliterated <i>David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187

Translation: Belonging to David... As we have seen many times before, the lâmed preposition plus David means that David wrote this psalm.

Psalm 34 inscription b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
b ^e (בֵּ) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's# none BDB #88

When verbs in the infinitive construct are preceded by the b^e preposition, b^e acts as a temporal conjunction; that is, *in their being created* = *when they were created* (Gen. 2:4); *in their being in the field* = *when they were in the field* (Gen. 4:8).¹

shânâh (שָׁנָה) [pronounced shaw-NAW]	<i>to change, to vary; to transfer to another place; to deform</i>	Piel infinitive construct with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #8138 BDB #1039
ʿêth (אֵת) [pronounced ayth]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84

¹ The New Brown-Driver-Briggs-Gesenius Hebrew-English Lexicon; Hendrickson, ©1979, pp. 90–91.

Psalm 34 inscription b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ṭa'am (טַעַם) [pronounced TAH-gahm]	<i>taste, flavor of food; taste [in the sense of personal judgment], discretion; sentence of a king, a royal decree, behavior</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #2940 BDB #381
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l']	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
pânîym (פָּנִים) [pronounced paw-NEEM]	<i>face, faces; presence</i>	masculine plural construct (plural acts like English singular)	Strong's #6440 BDB #815
Together, they mean <i>upon the face of, before, before the face of, in the presence of, in the sight of, in front of</i> . When used with God, it can take on the more figurative meaning <i>in the judgment of</i> .			
ʾăbiyimelek ^e (אֲבִימֶלֶךְ) [pronounced ū ^b -vee-MEH-lek]	<i>my father is Melek, my father is king; transliterated Abimelech</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #40 BDB #4
We would have expected rather to find ʾākîysh (אֲכִישׁ) [pronounced aw-KEESH], which is transliterated <i>Achish</i> . Strong's #397 BDB #37.			

Translation: *...(when he changed his behavior before Abimelech...* The bēyth preposition combined with an infinitive construct gives us often a temporal sense; therefore, this psalm was written while thinking back to changing his behavior before Abimelech (it would have been difficult to write it while acting crazy). This takes us back to I Sam. 21:10–15.

In I Sam. 21:10–12, 14, the king of Gath is named *Achish* rather than *Abimelech*. Therefore, we need to explain that.

Why Do We Have Abimelech here rather than Achish?

Before we actually begin with the various theories, we ought to examine a few facts first:

1. The two names Achish and Abimelech are actually closer in the Hebrew than we might imagine. The first 3 letters are almost identical; the bēyth (ב) is often confounded with the kaph (כ).
2. We find Achish in I Sam. 21, 27–29 and in I Kings 2; although we are probably speaking of the same person in Samuel, it is likely a different king of Gath in I Kings (he is called the son of Maoch in I Sam. 27:2 and the son of Maacah in I Kings 2:39, which names are also actually pretty close).
3. There is an Abimelech, king of the Philistines, in Gen. 26:1, 8, during the time of Isaac.
4. In the Hebrew, Abimelech means *my father is Melek* or *my father is king*. It was not an uncommon name among the Jews—the son of Gideon had that name (Judges 8:31—he, by the way, was the actual first king of Israel), as did a priest during David's time (I Chron. 18:16).
5. There are *only* two names for Philistine kings given in Scripture: Achish and Abimelech.

Why Do We Have Abimelech here rather than Achish?

1. The simplest explanation, which I have not seen elsewhere is, Abimelech would be a natural designation for Achish, as Achish is the son of Maach and Abimelech means *son of a king*; it would be a play on words. Maacah may come from the Hebrew word for *to press, to oppress*; which could also designate a ruler of sorts. Given the friendship which apparently blossomed between David and Achish, David may not have wanted to specify his friend by name, so he calls him son of a king instead.
2. Given the meanings for this in the Hebrew, it is very reasonable that Abimelech is actually a Jewish designation for the king of Gath. This designation could be based upon the play of words referenced above.
3. Since we find Abimelech king of Gath in Gen. 26 and in Psalm 34, we might reasonably suppose that this is a title more than the personal name for the king of Gath, which is the standard explanation which is given by most commentators. The title *Abimelech* for the Philistines is similar to the title *pharaoh* in Egypt. Gleason Archer gives us additional illustrations of Persian and Mede kings as well in *The Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties*; Zondervan Publishing House; ©1982; p. 244. Given that this was the case for many kings of surrounding nations, this gives us added reason to assume that this is true for the Philistines.
4. A fourth explanation is that *Abimelech* was just another name for *Achish*, just as Solomon had two names (*Jedidiah*—II Sam. 12:25) and as Gideon had two names (*Jerubbaal*—Judges 6:32 7:1).
5. The final possible explanation is that this was simply a blunder on the part of a copyist later on down the line or an error on the part of someone who added these titles to the psalms long after the fact. This is the least likely explanation.

A reasonable question is: *okay, so David uses a different name for Achish here; in Psalm 34, David calls him Abimelech; why?* At the time that David wrote this psalm, he was in fear for his life and he feared Achish (I Sam. 21:12). However, after that point in time, David actually became friends with Achish and they trusted one another (I Sam. 27–29). So, David's final memories of Achish were as of a friend. However, writing a psalm about fearing a friend makes little sense; so David gave Achish the more formal title of being king, as the *son of a king*. If this explanation is true, that would indicate that David wrote the psalm before he became friends with Achish but he possibly added this title after he had become friends with Achish. This would make sense that David would affix some sort of title to each of his psalms when he handed them over to the court choir (or, the musical conductor added these titles, as dictated by David). This would make more sense than David writing *a psalm of David* at the beginning of every psalm when he writes the psalm. A good writer rarely starts out with the title first and then a by-line second. A good writer begins with the writing and adds a title and by-line later.

Whereas this explanation is simple, there have been believers who have questioned the inspiration of Holy Write over this apparent, but not actual, discrepancy. Realize, when you are dealing with Scripture, and you think that you have come across a contradiction, bear in mind that the contradiction is really in the mind of the reader. You are either misreading or misunderstanding one or more passages; or you lack some key information which would explain the apparent contradiction. McGee gives the illustration of a Bible institute student who came to him and was very distressed by this apparent contradiction.²

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Psalm 34 inscription c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253

² See J. Vernon McGee, *Psalms Volume 1*; Thru the Bible Books, ©1977, p. 177.

Psalm 34 inscription c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
gârash (גָּרַשׁ) [pronounced gaw-RASH]	<i>to cast out, to throw out, to drive out</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Piel imperfect with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1644 BDB #176
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
hâlak ^e (הָלַךְ) [pronounced haw-LAHK ^e]	<i>to go, to come, to depart, to walk; to advance</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229

Translation: ...and he drove him away and he departed. Ahimelech is not worried about David, but he apparently wants David out of his palace and probably out of town. David shared his sentiments.

We should set the scene for this psalm as we did for Psalm 56. David, in I Sam. 21, was running for his life in fear of Saul. He went to Nob, the city of priests, and endangered their lives (and he did not reveal that he was a fugitive). Then he went to Gath, a city of Philistines, and many of them were probably related to men that David had killed in battle. Furthermore, he had killed the greatest national hero, Goliath. However, he shows up there not as a conquering hero, but as a man needing refuge; and when that doesn't seem to play well, then he presents himself as an insane person, which is what causes him to write this psalm. What doesn't seem to cross his mind is that, he is endangering Israel by going to Gath and pretending to be insane. This tells the king of Gath, as well as all the people of Gath, that Israel's greatest hero is no longer a threat. In other words, prior to this psalm, David exhibited some atrocious and faithless behavior (I am grading him on an objective scale of merit, not on a comparative scale with myself, as I would only come out looking much worse in similar circumstances). In Psalm 56, David rebounded—he named his sins to God, and for that psalm and this (and for his subsequent travels in Israel as a fugitive), David is back in fellowship. Therefore, these psalms will be written from a position of strength, even though David is probably alone (or with a very small group—a possibility that I doubt) and a fugitive.

You will recall just how carefully David structured Psalm 56? David also has given structure to this psalm, but a very different sort of structure. Each stanza begins with successive letters of the Hebrew alphabet. The letter is not by itself in the Hebrew; it is the first letter of the first word of each stanza. Some translations demonstrate this. The NJB and the JPS both put the Hebrew letter to the left of each stanza (a separate Hebrew letter does not occur in the Hebrew); and Rotherham precedes each stanza with the name of the letter written out. It would be equally accurate to precede each verse with a verse number (which is done in virtually every translation for every verse). In order to write this, David simply has to choose the first word of each verse so that it begins with the proper letter.

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David Praises Jehovah God

Slavishly literal:

**I praise Y^ehowah in every time;
continually his praise [is] in my mouth.**

Psalm
34:1

Moderately literal:

**I will praise Y^ehowah at all times;
[my] praise for Him [lit., his praise] is
continually on my lips [lit., in my mouth].**

**I will praise Y^ehowah in all situations;
my praise for Him is continually on my lips.**

Here is how others have handled this verse:

Early translations:

The Septuagint I will bless the Lord at all times; his praise is continually in my mouth.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV I will always praise the LORD.
 NJB I will bless Yahweh at all times,
 his praise continually on my lips.
 NLT I will praise the LORD at all times.
 I will constantly speak his praises.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

JPS (Tanakh) כ I bless the LORD at all times;
 praise of Him is ever in my mouth.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

God's Word™ I will thank the LORD at all times.
 My mouth will always praise him.
 NASB I will bless the LORD at all times;
 His praise shall continually be in my mouth.
 Young's Updated LT I do bless Jehovah at all times,
 Continually His praise *is* in my mouth.

What is the gist of this verse? David can celebrate God's care and guidance in all situations.

Psalm 34:1a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
bârak ^e (בָּרַךְ) [pronounced <i>baw-RAHK</i> ^e]	<i>to invoke God, to praise, to celebrate, to adore, to bless [God]; to bless [men], to invoke blessings; to bless [as God, man and other created things], therefore to cause to prosper, to make happy; to salute anyone [with a blessing]; to curse</i>	1 st person singular, Piel imperfect	Strong's #1288 BDB #138
`êth (אֵת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84

Psalm 34:1a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly yohoh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's# none BDB #88
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced kohl]	<i>every, each, all of, all; any of</i>	masculine singular construct not followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
'êth (עֵת) [pronounced gayth]	<i>time, the right time, the proper time</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #6256 BDB #773

Translation: [I will praise Y^ehowah at all times](#);... David, although he has spent the previous week or month out of fellowship, is now back in fellowship, and he recognizes that God is on his side in all circumstances. This is a very difficult thing to learn and to act upon. I have gone through some difficult times over the past several years, there were times when I was able to recognize God's hand and His guidance and there were times that I fail this test miserably. I know that throughout all of this, God has been faithful, even though I have not been. I know that I could always trust God, even though there were many times when I did not. This is where David is—his life has gone through some very difficult changes. He has gone from being a national hero to a national fugitive, and he had trouble initially with that change. However, God hasn't changed and God's promises and protection have never changed. My less than literal translation may better convey the concept of this half of v. 1: [I will praise Y^ehowah in all situations](#).

Barnes comments on *at all times*: *In every situation of life; in every event that occurs. The idea is, that he would do it publicly and privately; in prosperity and in adversity; in safety and in danger; in joy and in sorrow. It would be a great principle of his life, expressive of the deep feeling of his soul, that God was always to be regarded as an object of adoration and praise.*³

Now you may think, *well, sure David is praising God; God just delivered him from the hand of Abimelech*. David put himself in that position. He was still being hunted by Saul, which is going to go on for the remainder of the book of I Samuel. So David is praising God, despite the fact that he was still in danger.

Psalm 34:1b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
tâmiyd (תָּמִיד) [pronounced <i>taw-MEED</i>]	<i>continuously, continuity</i>	masculine singular noun/adverb	Strong's #8548 BDB #556
t ^e hîllâh (תְּהִלָּה) [pronounced <i>t^ehil-LAW</i>]	<i>praise, a song of praise</i>	feminine singular noun with a 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #8416 BDB #239

³ Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, Psalm 34:1.

Psalm 34:1b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's# none BDB #88
peh (פ) [pronounced peh]	<i>mouth, edge</i>	masculine singular noun with the 1 st person singular suffix	Strong's #6310 BDB #804

Translation: ...[my] praise for Him [lit., *his praise*] is continually on my lips [lit., *in my mouth*]. David has faced nothing but trouble for the past month or more, and he initially reacted to it as an unbeliever would have reacted: with absolutely no faith or understanding of God's control over the situation. However, David is back in fellowship, as of Psalm 34, and now he can praise or celebrate God in all circumstances and at all times. **Rejoice in the Lord always; and again I say, rejoice!** (Philip. 4:4). What both of these verses convey is being in fellowship and being occupied with the person of Jesus Christ. This does not mean that David audibly praised God every 3 or 4 seconds. If Jonathan came up to David and asked, "Hey, David, How's it going?" David would not have answered, "Praise the Lord, I'm doing okay; praise the Lord." In his soul, David recognized God's presence and protection; if the occasion came up, David would certainly give praise to God; probably by song. In his soul, despite the fact that he was a fugitive and despite the fact that Saul was out to kill him, David recognized that God was with him and that God had his back.

**In Y^ehowah glories my soul;
hear humble ones and they rejoice.**

Psalm
34:2

**My soul glories in Y^ehowah;
grace-oriented [believers] hear and they
rejoice.**

**My soul glories and celebrates in Jehovah;
grace-oriented believers hear my celebration and they rejoice as well.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Early translations:

The Septuagint My soul will boast herself in the Lord; let the meek hear and rejoice.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV With all my heart, I will praise the LORD.
Let all who are helpless, listen and be glad.

NLY I will boast only in the LORD;
let all who are discouraged take heart.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

JPS (Tanakh) ב I glory in the LORD;
let the lowly hear it and rejoice.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

God's Word™ My soul will boast about the LORD.
 Those who are oppressed will hear it and rejoice.

NASB My soul shall make its boast in the LORD;
 The humble shall hear it and rejoice.

Young's Updated LT In Jehovah does my soul boast herself,
 Hear do the humble and rejoice.

What is the gist of this verse? David glories or celebrates while being in Jehovah. Other believers who hear David's rejoicing celebrate with him as well.

Psalm 34:2a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	Strong's# none BDB #88
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly yohoh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
hâlal (לָלַח) [pronounced haw-LAHL]	<i>to be praised; to glory, to boast oneself, to be celebrated</i>	3 rd person feminine singular, Hithpael imperfect	Strong's #1984 BDB #237
<p>This, interestingly enough, is one form of the verb that we found back in I Sam. 21:13: Then David changed his behavior before them [lit., <i>in their eyes</i>] and he feigned madness in their presence. The Hithpael is the passive (as per Gesenius) or reflexive (as per Zodhiates) of the Piel (intensive) stem. This verb appears to have an active use here in this psalm (and whenever else it has <i>God</i> as the object as in Isa. 41:16 Jer. 4:2). The meaning of this verb, and there are several, appear to stay within the general boundaries of their stems.</p>			
nephesh (נֶפֶשׁ) [pronounced NEH-fesh]	<i>soul, life, living being, desire</i>	feminine singular noun with a 1 st person singular suffix	Strong's #5315 BDB #659

Translation: My soul glories in Y^ehowah;... David has recognized that God has remained the same, regardless of the situations that David found himself in. God was faithful to David and David could always depend upon God. Therefore, he could glory in or boast of Jehovah and His faithfulness.

Barnes comments: *The word "boast" here refers to that on which a man would value himself; that which would be most prominent in his mind when he endeavored to call to remembrance what he could reflect on with most pleasure. The psalmist here says that when He did this, it would not be wealth or strength to which he would refer; it would not be his rank or position in society; it would not be what he had done, nor what he had gained, as pertaining to this life. His joy would spring from the fact that there was a God; that he was such a God, and that he could regard him as His God. This would be his chief distinction - that on which he would value himself most. Of all the things that we can possess in this world, the crowning distinction is, that we have a God, and that he is such a being as he is.*⁴

What makes this important is that God is omnipotent. Not only is God faithful and his character dependable (v. 3), but God is both willing and able to protect David in all situations. David is within a truly fail-safe situation. Let's try

⁴ Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, Psalm 34:2.

an analogy here: you're a little kid who gets picked on constantly; and suddenly, your best friend is the biggest and toughest kid on the block and at your school. Not only that, but this kid has integrity; you can trust that he will protect you. Walking beside this kid gives you complete protection in any and all places. You're going to celebrate your friendship with this kid, as you will never be bullied again.

Application: The application is simple: we are related to the same God as David; we are in Jesus Christ—positional sanctification—we can depend upon Him for our protection and we can celebrate His faithfulness toward us. There is nothing in life for which He hasn't already made provision on our behalf.

Psalm 34:2b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
shâma' (שָׁמַעַ) [pronounced shaw-MAHG]	<i>to listen, to hear, to listen intently, to listen and obey, to listen and act upon, to listen and give heed to, to hearken to, to be attentive to, to listen and take note of, to listen and be cognizant of</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #8085 BDB #1033
ʿânâv (אֲנָוִי) [pronounced ʿaw-NAWV]	<i>humble, meek, grace-oriented and possibly poor or afflicted</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong's #6035 BDB #776
w ^e (or v ^e) (וְ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
sâmach (שָׂמַח) [pronounced saw-MAHKH]	<i>to rejoice, to be glad, to be joyful, to be merry</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect; pausal form	Strong's #8055 BDB #970

Translation: ...[grace-oriented](#) [[believers](#)] [hear and they rejoice](#). The noun here is the masculine plural ʿânâv (אֲנָוִי) [pronounced ʿaw-NAWV], which is a reference to not just believers, but grace-oriented believers. They hear that David is rejoicing over his situation and they are encouraged and happy as well.

This is one place where there seem to be other men with David. This could also be simply a poetic device on David's part, a reference to grace-oriented believers who may read this psalm in the future. We know that 400 will join up with him when he is in the cave of Adullam (I Sam. 22:1–2). Whether they have been with him previously and how long they have been with him is unknown. We discussed this back in I Sam. 21:15.

Application: Note that not everyone rejoices in God—not even every believer. It is the grace-oriented believer (also called the humble) who can rejoice. If you have no capacity of soul, then you will not rejoice in what He has done for you, and what He continues to do for us.

**Magnify to Y^{ehowah} with me
and let us lift up His name together.**

Psalm
34:3

**Celebrate with regards to [or, Praise] Y^{ehowah}
with me
and let us lift up His name [reputation and
character] together.**

**Praise Jehovah with me
and let us exalt His reputation and character together.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Early translations:

The Septuagint Magnify the Lord with me and let us exalt His name together.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV Honor the LORD with me! Celebrate his great name.
 NJB *Gimel* Proclaim with me the greatness of Yahweh,
 let us acclaim his name together.
 TEV Proclaim with me the LORD's greatness;
 let us praise his name together!

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

JPS (Tanakh) א Exalt the LORD with me;
 let us extol His name together.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

God's Word™ Praise the LORD's greatness with me.
 Let us highly honor his name together.
 NASB O magnify the LORD with me,
 And let us exalt His name together.
 Young's Updated LT Ascribe greatness to Jehovah with me,
 And we exalt His name together.

What is the gist of this verse? David celebrates Who and What God is, and then calls for others to exalt His name with him.

Psalm 34:3a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
gâdal (גָּדַל) [pronounced gaw-DAHL]	to make [one] great, to cause to be magnified, to value highly, thus to praise, to celebrate; to make rich and powerful; to cause one to grow [something]; to nourish	2 nd person masculine plural, Piel imperative	Strong's #1431 BDB #152.
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l']	to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly yohh-WAH]	transliterated variously as Jehovah, Yahweh, Y ^e howah	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
`êth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	with, at, near, by, among, directly from	preposition (which is identical to the sign of the direct object); with the 1 st person singular suffix	Strong's #854 BDB #85

Translation: Celebrate with regards to [or, praise] Y^ehowah with me... *Jehovah*, in this half of the verse, is not a direct object, but part of a prepositional phrase. I do not believe that gâdal is followed by the lâmed preposition anywhere else but here. Therefore, although many interpret this as *Praise Jehovah*, the meaning may be better expressed as *Celebrate because of Jehovah with me*. The idea is, God has been faithful to David in all circumstances, so David implores others with him to celebrate Jehovah's faithfulness or celebrate because of Jehovah's faithfulness. That he asks others to join him here may be poetic license and it may imply that David is not alone at the time of writing this.

Again, in this verse, David is either speaking to those with him, or he is using a poetic imperative to those who will later hear this psalm. So, it is possible that he has some men with him. The primary reason that I don't see David as being with anyone at this time is, his exploits in I Sam. 21 appear to be solitary. There is nothing in that chapter which suggests that David is traveling with anyone (although he asks the priest for bread for his young men, who are not with him; there is every reason to believe that he is lying—this is covered in greater detail in the exegesis of that chapter).

Psalm 34:3b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
rûwm (רומ) [pronounced <i>room</i>]	<i>to raise, to lift up, to make high; to build a house; to bring up children; to put in safety; to raise up, to exalt [in victory or with praise]</i>	1 st person plural, Polel imperfect with the voluntative hê	Strong's #7311 BDB #926.
shêm (שם) [pronounced <i>shame</i>]	<i>name, reputation, character</i>	masculine singular noun with a 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #8034 BDB #1027
yachad (יחד) [pronounced <i>YAH-khahd</i>]	<i>together, alike, all together</i>	adverb	Strong's #3162 BDB #403

Translation: ...and let us lift us His name [reputation and character] together. *Name* in the Old Testament referred to one's character and reputation. We often use this word in the same way even today. "Charlie Brown has made a good name for himself in Centerville." God's character and reputation are a part of the revealed Word of God. We do not know exactly what David possessed at this time, but recall that he has spent time with Samuel at the Naioth School of Prophets, so he undoubtedly left there with something, even if it was just doctrinal information which he carried in his soul.

The voluntative hê indicates that David calls upon those who hear this psalm to exalt or extol God's reputation and character. A songwriter often writes in solitude, even though he may exhort his listeners within the song to do this or that (clap, dance, or whatever). Therefore, David's imperative (v. 3a) and voluntative hê (v. 3b) are not absolute indicators that he is traveling with anyone else.

By the way, God's reputation is not made great by the exaltation of others. God's reputation and character are great on their own. David exhorts his listeners to simply recognize God's greatness.

**I sought Y^ehowah and He answered me;
and from all my fears He delivered me.**

Psalm
34:4

**I sought Y^ehowah and He answered me;
He delivered me from all of my fears.**

**I had searched out Jehovah and He answered me;
He has delivered from all of my fears.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Early translations:

The Septuagint I sought the Lord diligently, and he listened to me and He delivered me from all my neighborhoods.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV I asked the LORD for help,
and he saved me from all my fears.

NLT I prayed to the LORD, and he answered me,
freeing me from all my fears.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

JPS (Tanakh) ד I turned to the LORD, and He answered me;
He saved me from all my terrors.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

The Amplified Bible I sought (inquired of) from the Lord, and required Him [of necessity, and on the authority of His Word], and He heard me, and delivered me from all my fears.

NASB I sought the LORD, and He answered me,
And delivered me from all my fears.

Young's Updated LT I sought Jehovah, and He answered me,
And from all my fears did deliver me.

What is the gist of this verse? David has searched for Jehovah (probably through prayer and supplication) and God delivered David from all of his fears, which were many and reasonable.

Psalm 34:4a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
dârash (דָּרַשׁ) [pronounced daw-RASH]	to seek, to make inquiries concerning, to consult, to investigate, to study, to follow, to inquire	1 st person singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #1875 BDB #205
ʿêth (אֵת) [pronounced ayth]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly yohh-WAH]	transliterated variously as Jehovah, Yahweh, Y ^e howah	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217

Translation: I sought Y^ehowah... The first thing that you should notice is that all three verbs in this verse are in the perfect tense. That means this refers to completed action. David is not seeking God in this psalm or simultaneous to writing this psalm. He has already sought out God; he has already looked for God and obviously, he has found God.

Psalm 34:4b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced weh]	and	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʿânâh (אָנָה) [pronounced gaw-NAWH]	to answer, to respond; to speak loudly, to speak up [in a public forum]; to testify; to sing, to chant, to sing responsively	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect with a 1 st person singular suffix	Strong's #6030 BDB #772

Translation: ...and He answered me;... Again, the perfect (completed) tense. David searched for God and God answered him. God did not leave David hanging. However, God's answer was not necessarily and audible one. One of the most interesting things about David is, there does not appear to be direct contact between God and him. We don't find God coming to David and speaking to him audibly or through dreams. God speaks to David through His Word and through various prophets. God does answer David, but it is not by a tap on the shoulder and a deep, Charlton Heston-type voice saying, "Here I am David; what is it that you want?"

I realize that my forays into the Hebrew are sometimes tedious, however, there is a reason for them: this allows for a more accurate understanding of Scripture. Spurgeon questions David's prayers and his ability to reach God, and cites David's behavior before the king of Gath as an indication that he could not reach God.⁵ Spurgeon's problem is that he does not understand the chronology of this. David is out of fellowship in I Sam. 21 and remains out of fellowship for that entire chapter. Therefore, whatever he does is in the energy of the flesh, and the lasting results of his actions may not be good (they were not, as a matter of fact). David wheedled bread and a weapon from the priests, which will result in the death of all the priests save one; he feigned insanity before Achish, king of Gath, which will result in a Philistine attack on Israel (as their great nemesis is incapacitated). In other words, no good can come out of David's actions in I Sam. 21, and this is because he is out of fellowship. However, upon escaping Gath, David first writes Psalm 56, which is a rebound psalm,⁶ in part; and then he writes this psalm, which is a psalm of faith-rest, in part. Note how easily and logically these two psalms fit together with I Sam. 21 as an epilogue, and help to explain how David could go from seeming so messtup in I Sam. 21, to being a spiritual powerhouse in I Sam. 22. There will be times certainly when it is hard to understand a passage or to reconcile several passages or chapter of Scripture; this, however, is not one of those times. When you take the Hebrew as it is, and logically piece this time period together in the life of David, it makes perfect and logical sense.

Allow me a tangent here. One of the things which is lacking in the clergy, not just today, but for most of the Church Age, is a sense of logic. God is a God of order, which would include logic and reason; He is not a God of disorder. So, we need not look at a passage and say, "God is inscrutable; we will never be able to understand this or that about Him. We will never be able to understand this or that passage." If it is in Scripture, God meant for it to be understood. If the application of logic is involved (e.g., in the very famous verse I Cor. 13:1, a verse which is almost universally misunderstood), it is logic which guides us to a proper explanation.⁷ For pastors, there are a variety of backgrounds which come into play in a positive way: R. B. Thieme, both Junior and III, spent time in the military,

⁵ See Charles Haddon Spurgeon, *A Treasury of David*; e-Sword, Psalm 34:4.

⁶ I.e., David gets back into fellowship.

⁷ By the way, both charismatics and non-charismatics interpret this verse in part to mean that men spoke in the languages of angels (i.e., gibberish) at one time or another. This is not what that portion of that verse means and it should never be interpreted in that way.

which has impacted their respective ministries in a very positive way. Several pastors who came out of Berachah Church also went the route of the military, which has served them in a very positive way. They have also enjoyed the training in the original languages, an education which has been crucial to their ministries. My background is in mathematics, and in part, that includes many careful forays into mathematical logic. This can also be applied to Scripture, and in such a way as to be positively applied to Biblical exegesis.

Psalm 34:4c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i>]	<i>from, off, out from, out of from, on account of, since, than, more than, greater than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>koh</i>]	with a plural noun, it is rendered <i>all of; any of</i>	masculine singular construct with a masculine plural noun	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
m ^e gûwrâh (מְגֹוֹרָה) [pronounced <i>m^egoo-RAW</i>]	<i>fears, terrors; barn, storehouse</i>	feminine plural noun with the 1 st person singular suffix	Strong's #4034 #4035 BDB #159
<p>The alternate spelling, m^egôwrâh (מְגֹוֹרָה) [pronounced <i>m^ego-RAW</i>] is found in Prov. 10:34. The oddball meanings <i>barn, storehouse</i> are found only in Haggai 2:19 proceeds from the verb <i>to temporarily reside</i> (Strong's #1481 BDB #157). The other meanings proceed from the homonymic verb which means <i>to dread, to fear</i> (Strong's #1481 BDB #158). There is even a third homonymic verb which means <i>to stir up strife, to quarrel</i> (Strong's #1481 BDB #158). All three verbs are spelled identically.</p>			
nâtsal (נָצַל) [pronounced <i>naw-TSAHL</i>]	<i>to snatch away, to deliver, to rescue, to snatch out of danger, to preserve</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Hiphil perfect with the 1 st person singular suffix, pausal form	Strong's #5337 BDB #664

Translation: ...He delivered me from all of my fears. We find the perfect (completed) tense with nâtsal because Jehovah Elohim delivered David from his fear back in Psalm 56. So now, as David writes this second psalm, he is no longer in fear for his life. He knows that God has delivered him from danger; but more importantly, God delivered David from his fears. God has already made provision for David in eternity past. There is nothing which can happen to him that God has not already foreseen. The Philistines can't touch David; Saul cannot harm David. God has all of that under control. It's like a carnival ride. Once you are strapped in, there is virtually nothing that could go wrong with you. You're not going to fall out, the ride is not going to fly off its tracks. Granted, there may be a few moments where your heart is pounding out of your chest and your breath is 10 feet behind you, but it's all under control. Those who designed these rides don't want you to die or fly out of the car and injure yourself. There's no money in that. So they have set things up so that you are relatively safe, regardless of how you feel. The same is true of our lives before God. He knows everything that will happen to us. There will be very difficult things which happen to us in our lives; God has taken care of all that. We might as well strap ourselves in and enjoy the ride. We might be more inclined to ask, "Okay, how is God going to get me out of this jam?" rather than to doubt that He can.

David Gives Reasons for His Praise

**They look unto Him and they have shined;
and their faces are not ashamed.**

Psalm
34:5

**They look to Him [or, Look to Him] and be
radiant [possibly, enlightened];
and your faces will not be ashamed.**

**Look to him and be radiant;
your face will not be ashamed.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Early translations:

The Septuagint Draw near to him, and be enlightened; and your faces will not be ashamed.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV Keep your eyes on the LORD! You will shine like the sun
and never blush with shame.

NLT Those who look to him for help will be radiant with joy;
no shadow of shame will darken their faces.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

JPS (Tanakh) ה Men look to Him and are radiant;
י let their faces not be downcast.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Updated Emphasized Bible They looked to him and were radiant.
NASB They looked to Him and were radiant.
And their faces shall never be ashamed.

NRSV Look to him, and be radiant;
so your [Greek, Syriac and Jerome; Hebrew reads *their*] faces shall never be
ashamed.

Young's Updated LT They looked expectantly unto Him,
And they became bright,
And their faces are not ashamed.

What is the gist of this verse? When the believer turns toward God for guidance and protection, he will not be disappointed; he will be elated; his life and attitude will reflect God's character or glory.

Psalm 34:5a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
nâbaṭ (נָבַט) [pronounced naw ^b -VAHT	<i>to look intently at, to examine carefully; to regard, to consider</i>	3 rd person plural, Hiphil perfect	Strong's #5027 BDB #613

Psalm 34:5a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
<p>Some manuscripts (along with the Septuagint, Syriac and Vulgate)⁸ have the 2nd person masculine plural, Hiphil imperative here.⁹ In the Hebrew, there is just one difference in the first vowel point between these two forms (and recall that the vowel points were added hundreds of years after the original was written).</p>			
<p>ֶּל (אל) [pronounced <i>e/</i>]</p>	<p><i>unto, in, into, toward, to, regarding, against</i></p>	<p>directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied; with the 3rd person masculine singular suffix)</p>	<p>Strong's #413 BDB #39</p>
<p>וֹ (or וֵ) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]</p>	<p><i>and</i></p>	<p>simple wâw conjunction</p>	<p>No Strong's # BDB #251</p>
<p>נָהַר (נִהַר) [pronounced <i>naw-HAHR</i>]</p>	<p><i>to shine, to beam, to be radiant</i></p>	<p>3rd person plural, Qal perfect, pausal form</p>	<p>Strong's #5102 BDB #626</p>
<p>This verb is a homonym with the Hebrew verb that means <i>to flow, to stream</i>. Strong's #5102 BDB #625. There is ample cognatic evidence for both sets of meanings.</p>			
<p>This is an imperative in the Septuagint, Syriac and the Vulgate.¹⁰</p>			

Translation: **They look to Him** [or, *Look to Him*] **and be radiant** [possibly, *enlightened*];... I much prefer the imperative sense of this verse: **Look to Him and be enlightened** [or, *radiant*]... The imperative mood seems to be more in keeping with the tenor of this psalm, as we find the imperative mood in vv. 3, 8, 9, 11, 13, 14. In fact, given the close proximity of those verses, it would seem to be too much of a jump between vv. 3 and 8 without another imperative falling between them.

There is more to this half of the verse than, "Look at God and He will give you a happy face." David is speaking to the readers of this psalm, imploring them to look toward God. The result is His reflected glory—this is why they are radiant. They don't have some lame happy face; they reflect God's glory and His character.

David's behavior and outlook have changed tremendously since I Sam. 21: he's gone from being frightened, on the run, and acting impulsively, putting others at risk to save himself, to being confident, taking charge of those who come to him, looking out for others, and having a clear trust in God's provisions and protection. This is because he has rebounded (named his sins to God, thus having fellowship with God restored) and he now looks to God for guidance and for confidence. David, therefore, now reflects God's glory; and this permeates his every action. In this psalm, he urges others to take these same steps.

This is sorely needed in business nowadays. A believer should be completely trustworthy and behave completely honorably in all of his business dealings. No one should expect to be backstabbed by a believer; no one should expect a believer to write some loophole into some small print in some corner of a contract; no one should expect a believer to sue them simply for the purpose of a monetary gain (in fact, they should not expect to be sued by a believer at all); no one should expect a believer to be dishonest, condescending, or underhanded in any sort of a business deal. The believer should reflect God's character and glory. You should be able to shake hands with a believer and walk away knowing that you can trust him and his word. I have entered business agreements with believers and unbelievers alike; it is unfortunate, but just about as often, I can trust the unbeliever as much as I can

⁸ From Joseph Bryant Rotherham's *The Emphasized Bible*; ©1971 by Kregel Publications; p. 544.

⁹ *Analytical Key to the Old Testament*; John Joseph Owens; Baker Book House, Grand Rapid, Michigan; ©1989; Vol. 3, p. 311.

¹⁰ Joseph Bryant Rotherham's *The Emphasized Bible*; ©1971 by Kregel Publications; p. 544.

the believer. This is tragic. Not everyone who comes in contact with you will know that you are a believer; however, almost everyone who comes in contact with you should feel confident that you are honest and dependable. They should come to find that your word is your bond and that your dealings with them reflect honesty and integrity. If they later find out that you are a believer, then they won't be disappointed.

Psalm 34:5b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^é (or v ^é) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
pânîym (פְּנִים) [pronounced <i>paw-NEEM</i>]	<i>face, faces; presence</i>	masculine plural construct (plural acts like English singular); with the 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #6440 BDB #815
In the Greek, this is a 2 nd person, plural genitive/ablative; i.e., <i>your faces</i> .			
`al (אֵל) [pronounced <i>a</i>]	<i>not; nothing; none</i>	adverb of negation; conjunction of prohibiting, dehorting, deprecating, desire that something <i>not</i> be done	Strong's #408 BDB #39.
châphêr (חָפַר) [pronounced <i>khaw-FAIR</i>]	<i>to be ashamed, to be bashful, to blush</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect, pausal form	Strong's #2659 BDB #344

Translation: ...and your faces will not be ashamed. *Ashamedness* is a topic found surprisingly often in Scripture. Some may not fully grasp this thought, so let me see if I can explain it. There are teenagers who, if put in the same room with their peers and their parents would be ashamed of their parents. If their parents showed up to some school function, the child would be embarrassed to admit to being related to them. On the other hand, if their parent was the president, a senator, a still-popular rock star or celebrity; they might feel even proud. Believers, also, when put into a crowd of *intellects*, might have a tendency to feel ashamed of Jesus Christ, if the prevailing attitude is a knocking of religion. However, we are assured that when we look to Jesus, our faces will not be ashamed.

There are a number of verses which deal with this same theme; turn to Jehovah and you will not be ashamed; among them are Job 6:20 Psalm 22:5 Rom. 9:33 1John 2:28. Let's just quote Rom. one of these passages as an example: **As it stands written, Behold I lay in Zion a Stumbling-Stone and a Rock of Offense, and everyone believing in Him should not be ashamed** (Rom. 9:33 quoting Isa. 28:16).

**This afflicted [one] called and Y^howah heard
and out of all his troubles He saved him.** Psalm
34:6

**This afflicted [man] called [out] and Y^howah
heard [him],
and He delivered him from all of his troubles
[distresses and adversities].**

**This afflicted man called out to Jehovah and He heard him
and He delivered this man from all of his troubles.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Early translations:

The Septuagint This poor man cried out, and the Lord listened to him, and He delivered him out of all his afflictions.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV I was a nobody, but I prayed,
and the LORD saved me from all my troubles.
NAB In my misfortune I called,
the LORD heard and saved me from all distress.
NLT I cried out to the LORD in my suffering,
and he heard me.
He set me free from all my fears.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

JPS (Tanakh) Here was a lowly man who called
and the LORD listened,
and delivered him from all his troubles.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB The poor man cried and the LORD heard him;
And saved him out of all his troubles.
NRSV This poor soul cried, and was heard by the LORD,
and was saved from every trouble.
Young's Updated LT This poor *one* called, and Jehovah heard,
And from all his distresses saved him.

What is the gist of this verse? When a man in need calls out to Jehovah, God hears him and delivers him from his problems or through his problems.

Psalm 34:6a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
zeh (זֶה) [pronounced zeh]	<i>here, this, thus</i>	demonstrative adjective	Strong's #2088, 2090 (& 2063) BDB #260
ʿânîy (אֲנִי) [pronounced ʻaw-NEE]	<i>poor, afflicted, humble; those in circumstances of humiliation and poverty</i>	masculine singular adjective (functions here as a noun)	Strong's #6041 BDB #776
qârâ' (קָרָא) [pronounced kaw-RAW]	<i>to call, to proclaim, to read, to call to, to call out to, to assemble, to summon</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #7121 BDB #894

This is a homonym; the other qârâ' means *to encounter, to befall, to meet, to assemble*.

Translation: This afflicted [man] called [out]... The afflicted or troubled man in this verse is David. David finally, in the previous psalm, called out to God. Again, note the perfect tense. This is a completed action. When David

writes this psalm, he is in fellowship. Also, note the perfect tense: spirituality does not involve progressive action. Spiritual growth does, but getting back into fellowship comes from naming your sins.

Psalm 34:6b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yhoh-WAH</i>]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
shâma ^ʿ (שָׁמַע) [pronounced <i>shaw-MAHG</i>]	<i>to listen, to hear, to listen intently, to listen and obey, to listen and act upon, to listen and give heed to, to hearken to, to be attentive to, to listen and take note of, to listen and be cognizant of</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal perfect; pausal form	Strong's #8085 BDB #1033

Translation: ...and Y^ehowah heard [him],... Again, the perfect tense—God heard David back in eternity past. However, from David's perspective, God just heard him.

Psalm 34:6c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i>]	<i>from, off, out from, out of from, on account of, since, than, more than, greater than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i>]	with a plural noun, it is rendered <i>all of; any of</i>	masculine singular construct with a masculine plural noun	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
tsârâh (צָרָה) [pronounced <i>tzaw-RAW</i>]	<i>troubles, distresses, disasters, afflictions, adversities</i>	feminine plural noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #6869 BDB #865
yâsha ^ʿ (יָשַׁע) [pronounced <i>yaw-SHAHG</i>]	<i>to deliver, to save</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Hiphil perfect with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #3467 BDB #446

Translation: ...and He delivered him from all of his troubles [distresses and adversities]. The previous phrase makes complete sense—David calls out to God and God hears him; however, note this phrase: God has, perfect tense, delivered David out from all of his troubles and distresses. David's still being pursued by Saul. David is still an outlaw. Yet, from his perspective, he has been delivered from *all* of his distresses, afflictions and adversities.

David knows how this will play out. God will eventually make him king over all Israel. David knows that God has taken care of everything in eternity past—the perfect tense. It's all taken care of, so there is no reason to worry.

Application: This is pretty obvious—God knew about our lives and everything in our lives that would go wrong and every pressure that we would face. He has taken care of these things in eternity past. He has delivered from all of our problems, distresses and adversities. It's a done deal.

Application: Not, it is a hard fact, but no one gets out of this life alive. Unless we are of the rapture generation, we will all die, and our deaths will run the gamut of dying in our sleep to a slow a painful death by some wasting disease. We will all die. There will be a disease or a bullet or some type of death with our name on it. We will not escape our death and all of the prayers in the world will not change this, if it is our time (this is apart from the sin unto death, which can be turned around in some instances). So, the point is, we will all face troubles; and we will all face the ultimate end of life—God has made provision for these things, and His provision may not include a complete deliverance from these things. My point is, you will face some trials and tribulations in life that will not be completely eradicated; they will not suddenly disappear in a poof of smoke because you fervently prayed to God. He has still provided for you and these provisions will get you through any of these troubles, even though the troubles may not be removed (the classic example is Paul's physical infirmity or thorn in the flesh of II Cor. 12:7–10).

**Encamping a Messenger of Y^howah around to
[those] fearing Him;
and so He draws them out.**

Psalm
34:7

**The Angel of Y^howah bivouacs around those
who fear [and respect] Him;
then He delivers them.**

The Angel of Jehovah first bivouacs around those who fear Him, and then He delivers them.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Early translations:

The Septuagint

The Angel of the Lord will encamp around them that fear him, and He will deliver them.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV
NLT

If you honor the LORD, his angel will protect you.
For the angel of the LORD guards all who fear him,
and he rescues them.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

JPS (Tanakh)

n The angel of the LORD camps around those who fear Him
and rescues them.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB

Then angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear Him,
And rescues them.

Young's Updated LT

A messenger of Jehovah is encamping,
Round about those who fear Him,
And He arms them.

What is the gist of this verse? God first establishes a protective perimeter about the believer in fellowship, and then He delivers the believer from his troubles.

Psalm 34:7a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
chânah (חָנָה) [pronounced <i>khaw-NAW</i>]	<i>to bivouac, to camp, to encamp in [or, against], to set up camp</i>	Qal active participle	Strong's #2583 BDB #333
mal'âkê (מַלְאָכִי) [pronounced <i>mahl'-AWCH</i>]	<i>messenger or angel; this word has been used for a prophet (Isa. 42:19) and priest (Mal. 2:7)</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #4397 BDB #521
YHWH (יְהוָה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yhoh-WAH</i>]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
çâbîyb (סָבִיב) [pronounced <i>saw^b-VEE^bV</i>]	<i>around, surrounding, circuit, round about, encircle</i>	adverb	Strong's #5439 BDB #686
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l'</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
Çâbîb plus the lâmed preposition mean <i>around</i> .			
yârê' (יָרֵא) [pronounced <i>yaw-RAY</i>]	<i>to fear, to fear-respect, to reverence, to have a reverential respect</i>	masculine plural, Qal active participle with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #3372 BDB #431

Translation: *The Angel of Y^ehowah bivouacs around those who fear [and respect] Him;...* This phrase is followed by the wâw consecutive, which is actually rare in poetry. In a narrative, almost every clause is pulled together by a wâw consecutive. However, this is unusual. What we are getting here is a succession of events, rather than simply two things that God does. First, He encamps around those who fear and respect Him. This is the contrast; David used to be afraid of Saul; he used to be afraid of the king of Gath. Now, instead, David fears God. **Don't be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Instead, fear the One who can destroy both body and soul in hell** (Matt. 10:28). The Qal active participle gives us continuous action. David is in a constant state of *fear of God*; this indicates that David is in fellowship.

David is out camped in the woods, in hiding. However, now, Jehovah has camped all around him, which makes him completely safe. This does not mean that David can now act without thinking and function as though he is not a fugitive. David is not going to go to Gibeah and plant himself down on a park bench, because God has protected him. Trusting in God's protection does not mean that we act with complete abandon. We do not jump off a 1000 ft. cliff, knowing that God has camped about us and we are safe. We don't jump in front of a speeding train, knowing that God has camped about us and we are completely safe. Trust in God and God's provision does not mean that we then act like complete idiots.

Application: There are several cults out there that when one of their own is sick, they pray for that person and they refuse all medical treatment. That is stupid; that would be like David now moving back into his old house in Gibeah (I assume that is where he lived as he is married to Saul's daughter) because he has trusted in God. That is idiocy. I've had several operations and I will guarantee you that I prayed many times prior to each operation and I trusted God for the outcome of each operation. God was faithful and the operations were successful. There is a time for medical treatment and seeking medical treatment does not show a lack of faith in God. When a person has a condition which can only be solved by a medical team, and he refuses treatment, saying that he is instead trusting

in God, those around him, for the most part, write him off as being an idiot. They now have one more reason not to believe in Jesus Christ, because they have just witnessed the testimony of an idiot.

Application: Do not just behave irrationally after becoming a believer. Do not make these big decisions thinking that, God will take care of me and protect me. You don't suddenly get married, you don't leave your job, you don't give all of your money to the church. When you become a believer, Paul urges you to **stay as you are**. Don't make any radical, life-changing decisions. **If you are a slave, don't seek to be free** (modern take: if you work for a lousy employer, don't quit your job). **If you are married, don't seek a divorce; if you are single, don't seek to be married** (I Cor. 7:20–27 gives Paul's complete dissertation on this topic). Just because you are a believer and just because God has given you certain promises and guaranteed His protection, this is not enough of a reason to act like a flaming idiot.

We covered the **Doctrine of the Angel of Jehovah** back in Gen. 16:7. The Angel of Jehovah is the revealed member of the Trinity, which is generally Jesus Christ. The imagery here is interesting; there is no indication of direct contact between David and the Angel of God. Although several exegetes assert that *angel* here really stands in for *angels* (as a metonym)¹¹ I don't believe that there is any clear rationale for that position. It is Jesus Christ Who provides our protection.

Psalm 34:7b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
châlats (חָלַט) [pronounced <i>khaw-LAHTI</i>]	<i>to draw out, to take away; to set free, to deliver; to spoil, to despoil, to plunder</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Piel perfect, with the 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #2502 BDB #323

Translation: ...then He delivers them. Recall that I mentioned the wâw consecutive, which gives us sequential action here. First God forms a barrier around the believer; God becomes a buffer between the believer and his enemies. Once God has established a perimeter, then he delivers the believer from trouble. David isn't delivered right then and there. He doesn't call out to God, and then God immediately vanquishes his enemies; God first establishes a perimeter, a protective barrier, a circle of fire around the believer, and then God, in His Own time, delivers the believer. But the believer is protected at all times and given grace to deal with whatever onslaught that he must face.

Jesus Christ first pioneered God's designed spirituality model; this sustained Him even up to the cross, prior to which, Jesus had endured unbelievable suffering, primarily at the hand of the vicious, sadistic Roman soldiers (applauded by the Jewish religious hierarchy). This was not His payment for our sins; however, Jesus had to endure this in order to get to the cross to begin with. It is on the cross, during the 6 hours of darkness, wherein He endured the punishment for our sins, where He was made sin for us. We have the same resources that got Him to that point; and He got there without sinning. So, when we face great difficulties, realize that our Savior has endured far greater difficulties—unimaginable sufferings—and with the same operating assets as He has given to us.

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¹¹ Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset and David Brown; *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible*; from e-sword, Psalm 34:4 and John Wesley; *Explanatory Notes on the Whole Bible*; courtesy of e-sword, Psalm 34:4.

David Exhorts His Listeners to Taste Jehovah

Taste and see that good [is] Y^ehowah!
Happinesses of the man—he takes refuge in
Him.

Psalm
34:8

Try [lit., *taste*] Y^ehowah and see that [He is]
good;
Great happiness [lit., *happinesses*] [is to] the
man [who] takes refuge in Him.

Try the Lord and see that He is good;
Great happiness comes to the man who takes refuge in Him.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Early translations:

The Septuagint Taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man who hopes in Him.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV Discover for yourself that the LORD is kind.
Come to him for protection, and you will be glad.
NLT Taste and see that the LORD is good.
Oh, the joys fo those who trust in him!

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

JPS (Tanakh) o Taste and see how good the LORD is;
happy is the man who takes refuge in Him!

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

The Amplified Bible O taste and see that the Lord [our God] is good! Blessed—happy, fortunate [to be
envied]—is the man who trusts *and* takes refuge in Him.
NASB O taste and see that the LORD is good;
How blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him!
Young's Updated LT Taste and see that Jehovah *is* good,
O the happiness of the man who trusts in Him.

What is the gist of this verse? David implores the listener (and now, the reader) to taste Jehovah—that is, to try Him out—and the result will be that he will see that Jehovah is good. David guarantees happiness to the one who trusts in God.

Psalm 34:8a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ṭā'am (טָאָם) [pronounced <i>taw-GAHM</i>]	<i>to taste; to perceive</i>	2 nd person masculine plural, Qal imperative	Strong's #2938 BDB #380
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and</i>	simple wāw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251

Psalm 34:8a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
râ`âh (רָאָה) [pronounced raw-AWH]	<i>look, see, behold, view, see here, listen up</i>	2 nd person masculine plural, Qal imperative	Strong's #7200 BDB #906
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced kee]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
ṭôwb (טוֹב) [pronounced toe ^b]	<i>pleasant, pleasing, agreeable, good, better</i>	masculine singular adjective; sometimes functions as a substantive	Strong's #2896 BDB #373
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly yohh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217

Translation: Try [lit., taste] Y^ehowah and see that [He is] good;... David suggests to the listener that he try the Lord; that he taste the Lord. It is like offering a treat of some sort, with guarantees from David that God is good. David has spent much of his time panicked and trying to escape Saul. Here, he stops and realizes how well taken care of his is; and he urges others to try God as well.

Barnes comments on this portion of v. 34: *This is an address to others, founded on the experience of the psalmist. He had found protection from the Lord; he had had evidence of His goodness; and he asks now of others that they would make the same trial which he had made. It is the language of piety in view of personal experience; and it is such language as a young convert, whose heart is filled with joy as hope first dawns on his soul, would address to his companions and friends, and to all the world around; such language as one who has had any special comfort, or who has experienced any special deliverance from temptation or from trouble, would address to others. Lessons, derived from our own experience, we may properly recommend to others; the evidence which has been furnished us that God is good, we may properly employ in persuading others to come and taste his love.*¹²

Psalm 34:8b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾash ^e rêy (אֲשֵׁרֵי) [pronounced ahsh ^e -RAY]	<i>blessedness, blessings, happinesses</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #835 BDB #80
geber (גִּבּוֹר) [pronounced GĒH ^b -veh]	<i>men, as separate from women and children</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #1397 (& #1399) BDB #149
châṣâh (חָסָא) [pronounced khaw-SAW]	<i>to take refuge, and hence to trust [in]</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #2620 BDB #340
b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity with a 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's# none BDB #88

¹² Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, Psalm 34:8.

Translation: ...great happiness [lit., *happinesses*] [is to] the man [who] takes refuge in Him. David takes this a step further: he promises great happiness to anyone who takes refuge in God. I don't have an explanation for the structure of this line, except to default to the explanation, *it's just poetry*.

**Fear/respect Y^ehowah, [you] His holy ones;
for [there is] no want to ones fearing Him.**

Psalm
34:9

**Fear [and respect] Y^ehowah, [you] His saints,
for [there is] no lack [or want] to the ones who
fear Him.**

**Both fear and respect Jehovah, you, His saints,
for there is no lack or want in the lives of those who fear Him.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Early translations:

The Septuagint Fear the Lord, all you his saints; for there is not want to those that fear Him.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV Honor the LORD! You are his special people.
No one who honors the LORD will ever be in need.

NLT Let the LORD's people show him reverence,
for those who honor him will have all they need.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

JPS (Tanakh) Fear the LORD, you His consecrated ones,
for those who fear Him lack nothing.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

God's Word™ Fear the LORD, you holy people who belong to him.
Those who fear him are never in need.

NASB O fear the LORD, you His saints;
For to those who fear Him, there is no want.

Young's Updated LT Fear Jehovah, you His holy ones,
For there is no lack to those fearing Him.

What is the gist of this verse? David encourages his listeners to fear (respect) Jehovah, guaranteeing them that there is no wanting for those who believe in Him.

Psalm 34:9a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
yârê' (יִרְא) [pronounced yaw-RAY]	<i>to fear, to fear-respect, to reverence, to have a reverential respect</i>	2 nd person masculine plural, Qal imperative	Strong's #3372 BDB #431
'êth (אֵת) [pronounced ayth]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84

Psalm 34:9a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yhoh-WAH</i>]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
qâdôwsh (קדוש) [pronounced <i>kaw- DOWSH</i>]	<i>saints, holy ones, set-apart ones, sacred ones, consecrated ones, those set apart to God</i>	masculine singular adjective/noun, with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #6918 BDB #872

Translation: [Fear \[and respect\] Y^ehowah, \[you\] His saints,...](#) David implores his listeners, God's saints, to fear and respect Jehovah. Now, saints are those whom God has set apart for Himself. This is equivalent to *believers* or *Christians*. This tells us that fear/respect is a step beyond simple belief in Jehovah Elohim. That implies an occupation with Christ; a functioning in one's life knowing that Jesus is right there (or, Jehovah Elohim, as He is known in the Old Testament).

Psalm 34:9b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced <i>kee</i>]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
ʿêyn (אֵין) [pronounced <i>ān</i>]	<i>nothing, not, [is] not; not present, not ready; expresses non- existence, absence or non- possession; there is no</i>	particle of negation; substantive of negation	Strong's #369 BDB #34
mach ^e çôwr (מחסור) [pronounced <i>mahkh- BOHR</i>]	<i>need, something needed, poverty, lack</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #4270 BDB #341
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l</i> ʰ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
yârêʿ (ירא) [pronounced <i>yaw-RAY</i>]	<i>to fear, to fear-respect, to reverence, to have a reverential respect</i>	masculine plural, Qal active participle with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #3372 BDB #431

Translation: [...for \[there is\] no lack \[or want\] to the ones who fear Him.](#) David now gives a rationale for being occupied with Jehovah Elohim: those who are occupied with Jesus Christ—those believers who are growing in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ—these believers do not lack. They have their basic needs met and then some.

Barnes comments on this statement: *Sooner or later all their real necessities will be met, and God will bestow upon them every needed blessing. The statement here cannot be regarded as absolutely and universally true—that is, it cannot mean that they who fear the Lord will never, in any instance, be hungry or thirsty, or destitute of raiment or of a comfortable home; but it is evidently intended to be a general*

affirmation, and is in accordance with the other statements which occur in the Bible about the advantages of true religion in securing temporal as well as spiritual blessings from God.¹³ Barnes continues: And so, in Psalm 37:25, David records the result of his own observation at the end of a long life, "I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread." But while these statements should not be interpreted as affirming absolutely that no child of God will ever be in need of food, or drink, or raiment, or home, or friends, yet it is generally true that the needs of the righteous are supplied, often in an unexpected manner, and from an unexpected source. It is true that virtue and religion conduce to temporal prosperity; and it is almost universally true that the inmates of charity-houses and prisons are neither the pious, nor the children of the pious. These houses are the refuge, to a great extent, of the intemperate, the godless, and the profligate - or of the families of the intemperate, the godless, and the profligate; and if all such persons were to be discharged from those abodes, our almshouses and prisons would soon become tenantless. A community could most easily provide for all those who have been trained in the ways of religion, but who are reduced to poverty by fire, or by flood, or by ill health; and they would most cheerfully do it. Nothing can be more true than that if a man wished to do all that could be done in the general uncertainty of human affairs to secure prosperity, it would be an advantage to him to be a virtuous and religious man. God never blesses or prospers a sinner as such, though he often does it notwithstanding the fact that he is a sinner; but he does and will bless and prosper a righteous man as such, and because he is righteous.¹⁴

One might add to Barnes comments, look only to Psalm 119, of the march of the Jews out of the land; they were removed from the land because of their reversionism; however, there were some faithful believers as well. Both the faithful and unfaithful suffered privation. Also, take a look at Paul, in II Cor. 11:24–27: **Five times the Jewish leaders had me beaten with 39 lashes; three times Roman officials had me beaten with clubs. Once people tried to stone me to death; three times I was shipwrecked, and I drifted on the sea for a night and a day. Because I've traveled a lot, I've faced dangers from raging rivers, from robbers, from my own people, and from other people. I've faced dangers in the city, in the open country, on the sea, and from believers who turned out to be false friends. Because I've had to work so hard, I've often gone without sleep, been hungry and thirsty, and gone without food and without proper clothes during cold weather.** What Paul describes here seems to be antithetical to the promises made to us by David. As a general rule, God takes care of the believer's basic needs. However, there are times when God allows the believer to suffer privation, and He provides him the grace to get through these sufferings.

Personally, I have been lucky all of my life. Even though I was very poor during my last few years of college, newly married, and dealing with a ton of pressures, I was never hungry, I never lacked a roof over my head, and God provided Bible doctrine for me to get through the other pressures of life. When I heard Thieme's teachings about the privation test and the prosperity test, I volunteered, in prayer, for the latter, and God saw to it that I faced the prosperity test. There are two basic keys to facing any testing: being filled with the Spirit through rebound¹⁵ and taking in Bible doctrine. Because of the tremendous impact of Berachah Church, there are now dozens of outstanding pastors out there in the world, so finding God's Word taught properly is not difficult. You may not find it taught in your particular city, but it is available. Throughout all of your life, nothing is more important than the daily intake of God's Word while filled with God the Holy Spirit.

Let me dispel a myth. The saying *shine the little light that you have* is just that, a saying. You don't study one verse and then practice it until you get it down. If you suffer from materialism lust, then you might stall out when you come to commandment 10. If materialism lust is your biggest problem, then you may never overcome it entirely. This does not mean that you stop studying God's Word after you get to the 10th commandment. You continue to study His Word and there will be things in addition to the 10th commandment which may help you to better get control of that weakness. However, if that is your area of weakness, you may deal with it until the day you die. What is important is, when you find yourself lusting after someone else's car, house, wife, etc., that you name that sin to God and move on. In other words, you don't ever stop with the study of God's Word.

¹³ Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, Psalm 34:9.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Naming your sins to God as you commit them.

Young lions [or, strong men] have been in want and have been hungry, and seekers of Y^ehowah do not lack any good [thing].

Psalm 34:10

[Although even] young lions [or, strong men] are in want and go hungry, those who seek Y^ehowah are not lacking any good thing.

Even though strong and powerful men occasionally are in want and go hungry, those who seek Jehovah do not lack for any good thing.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Early translations:

The Septuagint The rich have become poor and hungry; but they who seek the Lord diligently will not want any good thing. Pause

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV Young lions may go hungry or even starve, but if you trust the LORD, you will never miss out on anything good.

NAB The powerful grow poor and hungry, but those who seek the LORD lack no good thing.

NLT Even strong young lions sometimes go hungry, but those who trust in the LORD will never lack any good thing.

REB Princes may suffer want and go hungry, but those who fear him lack for nothing.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™ Young lions go hungry and may starve, but those who seek the LORD's help have all the good things they need.

JPS (Tanakh) Lions have been reduced to starvation, but those who turn to the LORD shall not lack any good.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB The yong lions do lack and suffer hunger; But they who seek the LORD shall not be in want of any good thing.

Young's Updated LT Young lions have lacked and been hungry, And those seeking Jehovah lack not any good thing.

What is the gist of this verse? Those who seek Jehovah do not lack any necessity even though there are young lions (or strong men) who go hungry.

Psalm 34:10a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
k ^e phîyr (אִיֹּר, קֶ) [pronounced k ^e -FEER]	a young lion; a lion which has been weaned from its mother and is just beginning to hunt	masculine singular noun	Strong's #3715 BDB #498

Psalm 34:10a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
Kennicott's MSS. has כַּבִּירִים cabbirim, "powerful men" (see below). The Vulgate, Septuagint, Ethiopic, Syriac, Arabic, and Anglo-Saxon have the same reading. ¹⁶ Because of this, I have placed this reading below.			
kābbīyr (כַּבִּיר) [pronounced kab-BEER]	great, mighty, strong, powerful; with regards to quantity, it means much, many	masculine plural adjective also used as a substantive	Strong's #3524 BDB #460
The spelling is almost the same, and it is easy to see how one might be confounded for the other.			
rūwsh (רוּשׁ) [pronounced roosh]	to be in want, to be needy, to be poor	3 rd person plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #7326 BDB #930
w ^é (or v ^é) (וּ) [pronounced weh]	and	simple wāw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
rā'ab (רָעַב) [pronounced raw-ḠAw ^é V]	to hunger, to be hungry	3 rd person plural, Qal perfect; pausal form	Strong's #7456 BDB #944

Translation: [Although even] young lions [or, strong men] are in want and go hungry,... The word for *lions* here is an interesting one: this is a young lion which has been recently weaned and has not learned quite how to hunt. Therefore, this lion is going to be hungry until it learns to kill.

Spurgeon comments: *They are fierce, cunning, strong, in all the rigour of youth, and yet they sometimes howl in their ravenous hunger, and even so crafty, designing, and oppressing men, with all their sagacity and unscrupulousness, often come to want; yet simple-minded believers, who dare not act as the greedy lions of earth, are fed with food convenient for them. To trust God is better policy than the craftiest politicians can teach or practise.*¹⁷ These two sets of comments may seem contradictory, but they are not. The common perception of the lion is as Spurgeon has commented—intelligent, powerful creatures who can take what they want. The reality of the matter, however, is that those lions who have just been weaned are ill-prepared to hunt; they are not ready yet to take care of themselves. Therefore, it may seem as though they are capable of eating whatever they want whenever they want, the reality is that they go hungry at times.

Despite the poetic-sound of the words above, this could also be a reference to *strong, powerful men*. This is a word which is commonly found in poetry, and therefore might be what should have been here (see the Hebrew exegesis). However, before you are too quick to finalize the reading as *strong me*, keep in mind that a copyist could have changed an early manuscript to make the meaning more ascertainable (it may not have even been an intentional change, given the similarity of the words).

Psalm 34:10b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^é (or v ^é) (וּ) [pronounced weh]	and	simple wāw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251

¹⁶ From Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, Psalm 34:10.

¹⁷ Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, Psalm 34:10. I must say that I am thoroughly disappointed that neither Rotherham nor the NRSV pointed out this alternate reading. Apart from Clarke, I would have missed it.

Psalm 34:10b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
dârash (דָּרַשׁ) [pronounced daw-RASH]	<i>to seek, to make inquiries concerning, to consult, to investigate, to study, to follow, to inquire</i>	masculine plural construct, Qal active participle	Strong's #1875 BDB #205
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly yoh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
lô' (לֹא or לֹא־) [pronounced low]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
châçêr (חָסַר) [pronounced khaw-SEHR]	<i>to lack, to need, to be lacking, to decrease</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #2637 BDB #341
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced koh]	<i>every, each, all of, all; any of</i>	masculine singular construct not followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
ṭôwb (טוֹב) [pronounced toh ^b]	<i>pleasant, pleasing, agreeable, good, better</i>	masculine singular adjective which acts like a substantive	Strong's #2896 BDB #373

Translation: ...those who seek Y^ehowah are not lacking any good thing. This does not mean that every believer has everything that they want and need. First of all, the person described here is a *seeker of Y^ehowah*, meaning that, not only do they believe in Jehovah, but they actively seek Him, meaning that they are pursuing God and His Word. We are told that they lack no good thing, which indicates that God provides both the necessities and the extras as well. Again, this does not mean that we get everything that we want. Some people don't understand this, but having every material thing that you have ever wanted does not translate into happiness. I've personally been able to buy everything that I really want and I have been in situations where I could barely afford my food; and inside, I am no happier in either situation.

Also, we have already discussed this basic topic in general in the previous verse. Although, in general, God provides for the basic needs of His Own, and then some; there are times when we are called upon to suffer privation. II Cor. 4:16–17: **That is why we are not discouraged. Though outwardly we are wearing out, inwardly we are renewed day by day. Our suffering is light and temporary and is producing for us an eternal glory that is greater than anything we can imagine.**

Barnes comments on *any good thing*: *Any real good. God is able to supply every need; and if anything is withheld, it is always certain that it is not because God could not confer it, but because He sees some good reasons why it should not be conferred. The real good; what we need most; what will most benefit us - will be bestowed on us; and universally it may be said of all the children of God that everything in this world and the next will be granted that is really for their good. They themselves are often not the best judges of what will be for their good; but God is an infallible Judge in this matter, and He will certainly bestow what is best for them.*¹⁸ God either gives us the necessities of life or He gives us the strength to endure lack of these necessities.

¹⁸ Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, Psalm 34:10.

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David Teaches the Fear of Jehovah

**Come, O sons, listen to me;
fear of Y^ehowah I will train you.**

Psalm
34:11

**Come [here], O sons [and] listen to me;
I will teach you the fear/respect of Y^ehowah.**

**Come here, you sons, and listen to me;
I will teach you the proper fear and respect for Jehovah.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Early translations:

The Septuagint Come, you children, hear me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV Come, my children, listen
as I teach you to respect the LORD.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

JPS (Tanakh) לָ Come, my sons, listen to me;
I will teach you what it is to fear the LORD.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

The Amplified Bible Come, you children, listen to me; I will teach you to revere *and* worshipfully fear the Lord.

Updated Emphasized Bible Come, you children! Listen to me,
<The reverence of Yahweh> Will I teach you.

NASB Come, you children, listen to me;
I will teach you the fear of the LORD.

Young's Updated LT Come you, children, listen to me,
The fear of Jehovah I teach you.

What is the gist of this verse? David asks his listeners to pay attention, as he will teach them respect/fear of Jehovah.

Psalm 34:11a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
hâlak ^e (הָלַךְ) [pronounced <i>haw-LAHK^e</i>]	<i>go, come, depart, walk; advance</i>	2 nd person masculine plural, Qal imperative	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229
bên (בֵּן) [pronounced <i>bane</i>]	<i>son, descendant</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong's #1121 BDB #119

Psalm 34:11a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
shâma' (שָׁמַע) [pronounced shaw-MAHG]	<i>to listen, to hear, to listen intently, to listen and obey, to listen and act upon, to listen and give heed to, to hearken to, to be attentive to, to listen and take note of, to listen and be cognizant of</i>	2 nd person masculine plural, Qal imperative	Strong's #8085 BDB #1033

Translation: *Come [here], O sons [and] listen to me;...* What this requires is positive volition. You have to desire to know who and what God is. David bades those who are within earshot to come near and listen.

There are a number of exegetes¹⁹ who suggest that David is now speaking to young children; however, there is really no indication of that. This word can mean *sons*, in the sense of David's actual sons (although that would make little sense, given this time frame); to very young people in general (which would also make little sense, given this time frame); to young people in general (which is not out of the question); or to those who are, in a sense, his spiritual sons (also, a reasonable understanding). My thinking is that the use of this word is more of a poetic device than an intentional narrowing of the listeners to a specific subgroup.

Psalm 34:11b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
yir'âh (יִרְאֵה) [pronounced yir'-AW]	<i>fear, dread, terror, reverence, piety</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #3374 BDB #432
This word is often, but not exclusively, used in poetry. And it is often, but not exclusively, used for the fear-respect of God. Scofield, along with hundreds of other theologians, will tell you that yir'âh means <i>reverential trust</i> ; don't kid yourselves—it also means <i>fear</i> . If you don't believe that the God of the Universe—Who will cast billions of people and billions of fallen angels into the Lake of Fire where they will burn forever—if you don't believe that you ought to fear Him, then you are way confused. David, who will spend eternity with God, transgressed God's commandments several times and God brought the hurt on him so bad that David wrote psalms that we have to this day which indicate that God caused him great pain and suffering on earth. This is clear in passages like Psalm 55:5 Jonah 1:10, 16.			
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly yoh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Yehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
lâmad (לָמַד) [pronounced law-FAHD]	<i>to train, to accustom, to teach</i>	1 st person singular, Piel imperfect with a 2 nd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #3925 BDB #540

Translation: *...I will teach you the fear/respect of Yehowah.* There may be someone who is listening to what David is saying, and thinking, *I would like to have this fear of Jehovah; I would like to know more about this fear/respect of Jehovah.* David promises that he will teach this to anyone who will listen. This tells us, also, that this sort of

¹⁹ Gill and Spurgeon, for instance. Even Barnes says that this was probably directed to the young, although he acknowledges that the word means *sons*.

thing is not automatic. The new believer does not necessarily understand the fear/respect of God. He must be taught this. This gives us a better sense of to whom this verse is directed: David's spiritual sons, in a sense; those who have believed in Jehovah Elohim, but are still young in this belief. Again, this suggests that David has people with him, although they could join up with him at a later date (after the incident in Gath). It is also simply a poetic device, as the purpose of a psalm is to be sung or read to a group; therefore, even if there is no group, David writes as though there is. I write much of this exegesis as though I am addressing a group, although at the time that I write this, I have no idea what will become of this manuscript.

**What the man the delight being alive
desiring days to see good?**

Psalm
34:12

**What man delights [in] being alive
[and] desiring days to see good?**

**What man enjoys life
and desires for enough time to enjoy prosperity?**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Early translations:

The Septuagint What man is there that desires life, loving to see good days?

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV Do you want to live and enjoy a long life?
 NJB Who among you delights in life,
 longs for time to enjoy prosperity?
 NLT Do any of you want to live
 a life that is long and good?

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's WordTM Which of you wants a full life?
 Who would like to live long enough to enjoy good things?
 JPS (Tanakh) n Who is the man who is eager for life,
 who desires years of good fortune?

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

MKJV Who is the man that desires life, and loves days, that he may see good?
 NASB Who is the man who desires life,
 And loves *length of* days that he may see good?
 Young's Updated LT Who *is* the man that is desiring life?
 Loving days to see good?

What is the gist of this verse? David asks the rhetorical questions, *who desires a long and full life?* and *who wants many days that they classify as good?*

With this verse, we have a change in number. In vv. 7–11, David is speaking to a group; now, in vv. 12–14, he speaks to the individual man.

Psalm 34:12a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
mîy (מִי) [pronounced mee]	<i>who</i> ; occasionally rendered <i>how</i> , <i>in what way</i>	pronominal interrogative	Strong's #4310 BDB #566
ʾîysh (אִישׁ) [pronounced eesh]	<i>a man, a husband; anyone; a certain one; each, each one, everyone</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #376 BDB #35
chêphets (חֵפֶז) [pronounced KHAY-fets]	<i>a delight, a pleasure</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #2656 BDB #343
chayyîym (חַיִּים) [pronounced khay-YEEM]	<i>being alive, being vigorous, having life, sustaining life, living prosperously—it is life as opposed to death</i>	Masculine substantive plural abstract	Strong's #2416 BDB #313

Translation: *What man delights [in] being alive...* David offers a rhetorical question here: *Who takes pleasure in being alive?* This is a man who enjoys his life. David appears to be asking, *what man does not want to enjoy his life?* It is an odd sort of construction, with *delight* being a noun with a definite article rather than a verb. We may have the implication of the verb *to be* here. *Who [is] the man the one delighting [in] life?* The idea is, *what man would not want to delight in his life?*

Psalm 34:12b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾâhêb (אָהֵב) [pronounced aw-HAYV ^h]	<i>desiring, breathing after; loving; delighting in</i>	Qal active participle	Strong's #157 BDB #12
yâmîym (יָמִים) [pronounced yaw-MEEM]	<i>days, time of life, lifetime; a specific time period, a year</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong's #3117 BDB #398
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^h]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
râ`âh (רָאָה) [pronounced raw-AWH]	<i>to see, to look, to look at, to view, to behold; to perceive, to understand, to learn, to know</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #7200 BDB #906

Psalm 34:12b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
<p>The lamed with an infinitive construct generally expresses purpose or result, although it can have three other common uses with the infinitive: (1) It can have a gerundial or adverbial sense to explain the circumstances of a previous action; (2) it can act as a periphrastic future in nominal clauses; and, (3) it can behave as a gerund, in the sense of <i>is to be</i>, <i>must be</i>, <i>ought to be</i>.²⁰ (4) Lamed with the infinitive can connote <i>shall</i> or <i>must</i>.²¹ Here, the common meaning of purpose or result seems to be the most apropos. The Modern King James Version understands this verse in this way and inserts the word <i>that</i> to indicate a purpose or a result: Who is the man that desires life, and loves days, that he may see good?</p>			
ṭôwb (טוּב) [pronounced toe ^b v]	<i>pleasant, pleasing, agreeable, good, better</i>	masculine singular adjective which acts like a substantive	Strong's #2896 BDB #373

Translation:...[\[and\] desiring days to see good.](#) Who does not want to remain alive long enough to enjoy that which is good? Most people, if they live long enough, experience some good in their lives. What man does not want those days which he classifies as good? Who doesn't have an idea about how life should be and what things would have to fall into place for it to be that way? The idea here is that David is asking a rhetorical question: who doesn't want a good life? In the verses which follow, he tells how this life may be achieved.

Spurgeon comments: *Mere existence is not life; the art of living, truly, really, and joyfully living, it is not given to all men to know. To teach men how to live and how to die, is the aim of all useful religious instruction.*²²

**Keep your tongue from evil
and your lips from speaking deceit.**

Psalm
34:13

**Keep your tongue from evil
and your lips from speaking deceit.**

**Keep your tongue from speaking evil
and your lips from speaking deceit.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Early translations:

The Septuagint [Keep your tongue from evil, and your lips from speaking guile.](#)

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV [Then don't say cruel things and don't tell lies.](#)
REB [Then keep your tongue from evil
and your lips from telling lies;...](#)

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

JPS (Tanakh) [י Guard your tongue from evil,](#)

²⁰ the bulk of this was paraphrased from J.C.L. Gibson, *Davidson's Introductory Hebrew Grammar~Syntax*; 4th Edition, © T&T Clark Ltd., 1994, pp. 127–132 and from *Biblical Hebrew*; by Page Kelley; William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., ©1992, p. 434.

²¹ Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 2, p. 438.

²² Charles Haddon Spurgeon, *A Treasury of David*; e-Sword, Psalm 34:12.

your lips from deceitful speech.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB Keep your tongue from evil,
And your lips from speaking deceit.
Young's Updated LT Keep your tongue from evil,
And your lips from speaking deceit.

What is the gist of this verse? Closely associated with having a good life is the control of the tongue and avoiding sins of the tongue.

Psalm 34:13a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
nâtsar (נָצַר) [pronounced naw-TSAR]	to keep, to guard, to watch over, to protect	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal imperative	Strong's #5341 BDB #665
lâshōwn (לְשׁוֹן) [pronounced law-SHOHN]	tongue; lapping; tongue-shaped	feminine singular noun with a 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #3956 BDB #546
min (מִן) [pronounced min]	from, off, out from, out of from, on account of, since, than, more than, greater than	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
ra' (רָע) [pronounced rahé]	evil, bad, wicked; evil in appearance, deformed; disagreeable, displeasing; unhappy, unfortunate; sad	masculine singular noun	Strong's #7451 BDB #948

Translation: Keep your tongue from evil... David here more or less answers the question which he asked in the previous verse. He asked *what man desires a full life and days to enjoy the good things of life?* Obviously, this is pretty much every man. Everyone wants to lead a long and full life. The real question is, *how do we lead a long full life?* That is David's implied question, which he answers here. First, you keep your tongue from evil. There are all sorts of verbal sins: gossiping, lying, maligning; and all of these fall under the category of evil. So part of *your* way to a happier life is to avoid these sorts of sins.

Peter quotes this verse in his first epistle: *For he that wants to love life and to see good days, let him restrain his tongue from evil, and his lips from speaking guile. Let him turn aside from evil and do good. Let him seek peace and pursue it* (I Peter 3:11–12 quoting Psalm 34:12–14). The context of this quotation is how one should live; with the emphasis upon the inner person and not on the exterior. The personal enjoyment of life is related to refraining from sins of the tongue and the lack of evil in one's life. There are those who say every damn thing that pops into their head, and they are often proud of it ("I'm not afraid to speak my mind"). That is such a load of crap. Part of being civilized is not saying everything that pops into your head. You don't comment on how fat someone has just gotten since you last saw them—it doesn't matter if they are now the size of a house. And your rude and cruel comments are not ever going to result in their suddenly losing all that excess weight. By the way, these people who always speak their mind, generally do so to others that they care little about, or that they like to feel superior to. When it comes to someone that they really care about (and such a person may not even exist), then they do not tend to be this cruel. If they happen to run across a cute child with cystic fibrosis, they rarely say, "Hey kid, you got cystic fibrosis and you will probably die soon." Whether or not something is the truth, doesn't mean that it is

important enough for them to always point it out. Here, and in many places throughout Scripture, we are told to limit what we say with the tongue.

Psalm 34:13b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced weh]	and	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
sâphâh (שָׁפָה) [pronounced saw-FAWH]	lip, tongue; words, speech; dialect, language; edge, border [or, lip] [of something]	feminine plural noun with the 2 nd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #8193 BDB #973
min (מִן) [pronounced min]	from, off, out from, out of from, on account of, since, than, more than, greater than	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
dâ ^b var (דַּבַּר) [pronounced daw ^b -VAHR]	to speak, to talk [and back with action], to give an opinion, to expound, to make a formal speech, to speak out, to promise, to propose, to speak kindly of, to declare, to proclaim, to announce	Piel infinitive construct	Strong's #1696 BDB #180
mir ^e mâh (מִרְמָה) [pronounced mir ^e -MAW]	deceit, deception, duplicity, evil cunning, treachery	feminine singular noun	Strong's #4820 BDB #941

Translation: ...and your lips from speaking deceit. This gives a specific example. In the previous line, David gives a general answer to *how does one have a long a full life?* and here he gives a specific sin of the tongue which should be avoided.

Barnes comments: *this is one of the methods of lengthening out life. To love the truth; to speak the truth; to avoid all falsehood, slander, and deceit, will contribute to this, or will be a means which will tend to prolong life, and to make it happy.*²³

Gill's comments: *The tongue is an instrument of much evil, an unruly member, and needs restraint; and it is from evil, and not from good, it is to be kept; from evil speaking of God, from cursing and swearing; from evil speaking of men, reproaching and reviling them; from filthy speaking, from all obscene and unchaste words, and from all lying ones.*²⁴

We've covered the **Doctrine of Sins of the Tongue** back in Lev. 19:16. Suffice to say that a blessed and long life is closely associated with the control of one's own tongue. Spurgeon's short comment is appropriate here: *Men cannot spit forth poison without feeling some of the venom burning their own flesh.*²⁵

**Depart from evil and do good;
seek peace and pursue him.**

Psalm
34:14

**Depart from evil and do good;
seek peace and pursue it.**

²³ Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, Psalm 34:13.

²⁴ Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, Psalm 34:13.

²⁵ Charles Haddon Spurgeon, *A Treasury of David*; e-Sword, Psalm 34:13.

**Depart from evil and do that which is good;
seek peace and pursue it.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Early translations:

The Septuagint Turn away from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV Do good instead of evil and try to live at peace.
NLT Turn away from evil and do good.
 Work hard at living in peace with others.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

JPS (Tanakh) o Shun evil and do good,
 seek amity [or, *integrity*] and pursue it.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Updated Emphasized Bible Depart from wickedness and do good,
 Aim at well-being and pursue it.
NASB Depart from evil, and do good;
 Seek peace, and pursue it.
Young's Updated LT Turn aside from evil and do good,
 Seek peace and pursue it.

What is the gist of this verse? David continues his advice for a long and enjoyable life: depart from evil and do that which is right; seek peace, which refers to one's relationship to God.

Psalm 34:14a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
çûwr (וָּוּר) [pronounced soor]	<i>turn aside, depart, go away</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal imperative	Strong's #5493 (and #5494) BDB #693
min (מִן) [pronounced min]	<i>from, off, out from, out of from, on account of, since, than, more than, greater than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
ra' (רָע) [pronounced rahé]	<i>evil, bad, wicked; evil in appearance, deformed; disagreeable, displeasing; unhappy, unfortunate; sad</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #7451 BDB #948
w ^a (or v ^e) (וְ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251

Psalm 34:14a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʿâsâh (אָשָׂה) [pronounced ʿaw-SAWH]	<i>to do, to make, to construct, to fashion, to form, to prepare</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal imperative	Strong's #6213 BDB #793
ṭôwb (טוֹב) [pronounced toe ^b ʋ]	<i>pleasant, pleasing, agreeable, good, better</i>	masculine singular adjective which acts like a substantive	Strong's #2896 BDB #373

Translation: *Depart from evil and do good;*... The listener is urged to discontinue a life of evil and wrongdoing, and is told to pursue good instead.

Our society, as of late, has sought to call good evil and evil good. This is their way around doing that which is right and good and shunning that which is evil. Therefore, certain activities have come to be accepted as lifestyle alternatives: living in sin (for those who don't know; this is cohabiting with a member of the opposite sex without being married); living in some sort of pseudo-marriage/living arrangement with a member of the same sex; having strippers come to one's bachelor or bachelorette party. As I write this, there is a movement to make marriages between gay valid, recognized unions in the eyes of the government. There is much more to this movement than meets the eye. Most neutral or almost neutral people think that this movement simply wants the same sort of marriage enjoyed by heterosexuals and they want the same benefits that heterosexual unions enjoy. However, their desires are more subversive than many imagine: *This politics is as open-minded as the conservative politics is closed-minded. It seeks an end to all restrictions on homosexuality, but also the subversion of heterosexual norms as taught in schools or the media. By virtue of its intellectual origins, it affirms a close connection with every other minority group, whose cultural subversion of white, heterosexual, male norms is just as vital.*²⁶ I want you to understand, not only do they expect the homosexual lifestyle to be taught as an acceptable and alternative lifestyle in our schools, they want this portrayal in all media, which will include the church.

Some more examples: *The Los Angeles Unified School District has approved instructional materials to be used in "diversity" and "safety" programs with elementary and high school students. Among the materials is a "Models of Pride II" reading list that includes such titles as "Young, Gay & Proud," "One Teenager In 10: Writings by Gay & Lesbian Youth," and "Homophobia as Child Abuse." There are 24 other titles that are more of the same.*

*Assemblyman Dennis Mountjoy, R-Monrovia says of the materials, "The material is being put forward under the guise of tolerance and diversity, but it's inappropriate. It's lewd and lascivious and is darn embarrassing. Here I sit in my office reading my porn. It made me turn red, and I don't easily turn red." He added: "I challenge every parent and school board member to review these books and decide if they are appropriate for our children. If you have trouble finding them, contact the LAUSD. They can give you the names of the 'adult' bookstores they recommend." The school district has been sued by one of its own teachers over the offensiveness of the materials.*²⁷

Another example: *TORONTO, Dec 19, 2000 (LSN.ca) - Toronto City Councilor Kyle Rae hopes to warn Pope John Paul II that he had better not speak about homosexuality in Toronto during his upcoming World Youth Day (WYD) visit in 2002. In September, Rae, who describes himself as "openly gay", told Toronto's controversial NOW magazine that he hopes to meet with Father Thomas Rosica, WYD coordinator in Toronto. Contacted by LifeSite, Rae said the pope's often-repeated statements about*

²⁶ Andrew Sullivan, PhD; *The Politics of Homosexuality* found at <http://hem.passagen.se/nicb/sull.htm>

²⁷ From http://www.eric.com/partner/Article_Display_Page/0%2C%2CPTID313086|CHID590694|CIID1578378%2C00.html and they quoted from "Lawmakers 'Sanction' Use of District-Approved 'Porn'," www.worldnetdaily.com, January 24, 2002.

homosexuality are "hateful". He said that voicing such "hateful and hurtful" opinions "is not permissible in our society." He commented, "I don't think religion should be used as a shield against hate."

Rae said the delegation from the city of Toronto that went to discuss WYD raised the matter. "They discussed that in recent times the pope has made very controversial and hurtful comments about the gay and lesbian community and that it would be a problem given that Toronto is not a monotheistic city .. with the pope coming here, his continuing negative comments about gay and lesbian people would make it very difficult come WYD 2002." When informed that the pope's comments are about behaviour, not people themselves, Rae said he could not accept the distinction between criticism of homosexual acts and homosexual inclinations. "I can't separate out what I do and who I am," he said. Rae told LifeSite he would be meeting with Fr. Rosica to sort out the situation.²⁸ I hope you grasp their position: when it comes to the opinion of a religious leader, he had better not say anything negative about homosexuality.

Another example: the APA resists offering therapy to those who would like to change from homosexuals to heterosexuals: CHICAGO, May 23 (LSN.ca) - Leaders of more than 50 groups that help people leave the homosexual lifestyle gathered last week in downtown Chicago to demand the American Psychiatric Association (APA) acknowledge that such a life change is possible. Focus on the Family reports that marchers at the massive McCormick Place Convention Center carried signs reading, "Where's the tolerance?" and "It's my right to change." The protesters said they represent tens of thousands of people who have left the homosexual lifestyle.

Speaking at the demonstration was Columbia University professor Dr. Robert Spitzer, one of the chief architects of the APA's 1973 decision to stop diagnosing homosexuality as a mental disorder. Spitzer, who is working on a study of former homosexuals, said he hopes to present the results at a future APA convention. The APA officially discourages its therapists from assisting anyone who desires to leave the homosexual lifestyle.²⁹

The connection between homosexuality and pedophilia. First off, most homosexuals are pedophiles, and many abhor pediphelia. However, *In the activist magazine Gayme*, writer Bill Andriette said, "The only standard for moral sex...is that it be freely and equally consented to by the persons involved." From that sexual ethic to one which includes intergenerational sex is but a short leap. Andriette said, "There is no question that blacks, whites, women, men, children, and adolescents can consent to sex If we want really to respect the authenticity of individuals we have to let people take risks, explore different values, and recognize that we will be challenged and threatened by what they discover."³⁰ Furthermore (from the same article): *In the Nebraska Medical Journal* Cameron said that when data from both genders are combined, homosexuals are at least 8-12 times more likely to molest children than are heterosexuals. In the face of such overwhelming evidence, homosexual activists resort to a circular argument: since true homosexuals only desire sex with another adult, then pedophiles cannot be homosexual. In effect, activists have simply defined homosexual molestation of children out of existence. But the words of homosexuals themselves betray them. Writing in the homosexual magazine *Out*, columnist Dan Savage mentioned that he lives near a park where some local high school soccer teams practice. "Some of the boys are really something else, and during practice they play shirts and skins. Any gay man who tells you he can walk by a boy's soccer team without looking is a liar...," Savage said.³¹ From the same article: A recent review (Holmes and Slap, 1998) of the research on the molestation of boys, published in the prestigious *Journal of the American Medical Association* showed that adolescent boys who were abused by men were up to seven times more likely to identify themselves as homosexual or bisexual. Furthermore, research also shows a strong link between the sexual abuse of a child and that child's later pedophilia as an adult. At the Connecticut Correctional Institution, for example, clinical psychologist A. Nicholas Groth, director of the sex offender program, said 85% of the pedophiles were

²⁸ Life Site article taken from <http://www.lifesite.net/ldn/2000/dec/00121901.html>.

²⁹ *Ex-Gays Demand Recognition by Psychiatric Association* taken from <http://www.lifesite.net/ldn/2000/may/00052304.html>

³⁰ Taken from <http://www.freerepublic.com/forum/a39a85d645363.htm>.

³¹ *Ibid.*

*themselves sexually assaulted as youths. This casts certain parts of the homosexual agenda in a more sinister light - such as the drive to lower the legal age of sexual consent and to expunge sodomy laws from the books. It might also cause parents to wonder why homosexual activists are tireless in their efforts to use the courts as a crowbar to pry open the doors of the Boy Scouts to homosexual troop leaders. Again, it would be unfair to imply that all - or even most - homosexuals are a threat to children. Nevertheless, there are some elements of the homosexual movement which openly endorse pedophilia. And opening the social "doors" to all homosexual groups will allow pedophile groups in as well. Future Shame What will research show in ten years? Twenty years? Will we discover that we have handed over an entire generation, only to discover that homosexuality in this nation has doubled or tripled? If it is true, as evidence suggests, that children can be recruited into the homosexual lifestyle, what will history say about a generation of adults that swallowed - hook, line and sinker - the lies fabricated by the very ones who abused their children.*³²

What I was unable to locate on the Internet was the court action that has been taken by homosexuals in various countries. Many groups have found out that the easiest way to make massive changes is by appealing to the court system. No referendums have to be held, no congressmen swayed, no voters persuaded. You first need to convince a handful of men to hear your case and then you need to bend existing law to support your position. In order to do this, homosexuality cannot be a disease or an aberration or a deviant behavior. It must be presented as an inherent, integral and unchangeable aspect of a person's being. Therefore, the first attack must be on any psychiatric organization which presents homosexuality as anything other than the result of a person's free will. Then society must be convinced that homosexuals are just like Afro-Americans (or Blacks in any nation)—a minority which has been born this way, had no choice in the matter, and now face grave injustices because of the way they are born. Once the inroads have been made in these areas, then homosexuals can take exactly the same laws which rightfully give full constitutional rights to Afro-Americans and apply these laws to themselves. The courts, having been swayed about the nature of homosexuality, must therefore, as a matter of law, apply these same laws to homosexuals. The results in various countries have been: pastors who have taught what is in the Bible about homosexuality have been sued and have lost in court and have had to pay fines for teaching that homosexuality is wrong. Some churches have been forced to accept openly gay couples into their flock (it is quite a different matter if a gay person is willing to be open to the Word of God). Curriculum in schools has been changed to include gay couples as a viable life style, and teachers have been sued for not presenting the gay lifestyle as a reasonable alternative lifestyle. **I obviously need to find these court cases**

Let me present some actual situations: from Hal Lindsay's article on the WorldNet Daily on February 4, 2004: *In Canada, it is a violation of that country's hate-speech laws to express my opinion regarding homosexual conduct. A man was recently charged with hate crimes in Canada for posting a billboard that contained Bible references prohibiting homosexual conduct. Similar laws exist in other allegedly "free democracies."*³³

From the same article: *America remains a free country in this regard, but that freedom is rapidly being curtailed. One can march in favor of the Nazi Party or the Ku Klux Klan, but it is a different story when it comes to calling homosexual conduct "wrong" or "sinful." It is not yet a crime, but the lines between free speech and hate speech are rapidly being blurred when it comes to "gay" rights. It is still OK to preach destruction of Israel. Skinheads and KKK organizers can count on police protection when they appear in public.*³⁴ And you thought that hate speech law were about hatred toward racial minority groups.

Lindsay again: *Gays can hold parades in which they appear in various stages of undress, or simulating homosexual sex acts, or even demanding rights for pedophiles (like NAMBLA - the North American*

³² *ibid.*

³³ Taken from http://www.f2a.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=news.home&Heading=Homosexuality&Heading_ID=16. An alternate website for this article: http://www.worldnetdaily.com/news/article.asp?ARTICLE_ID=36938

³⁴ *ibid.*

Man-Boy Love Association) and count on police protection. But "anti-gay rights" groups are marginalized in America, and outlawed in places like Canada and many countries in Europe.³⁵

You are well aware of the legal battles of the political homosexual movement and the Boy Scouts of America; here is an article which deals with recent developments: *The U.S. Supreme Court today allowed Connecticut to exclude the Boy Scouts of America from a state charitable program because of the Scouts' policy barring avowed homosexuals from leadership. Critics said the high court's refusal to revisit the ruling by the 2nd Circuit Court of Appeals threatens not only the First Amendment right to expressive association but also the right to free exercise of religion. The decision has "far reaching implications that could threaten the constitutional rights of religious-based organizations that seek to promote and preserve their organizational values, particularly with regard to the issue of homosexuality," said the Michigan-based Thomas More Law Center, which filed a friend-of-the-court brief in the case. For more than 30 years, the Boy Scouts had participated in the Connecticut State Employee Campaign Committee, which allows private groups to receive charitable donations through voluntary payroll deductions from state employees. State officials denied the Boy Scouts access to the program, claiming the organization violated state non-discrimination laws by excluding avowed homosexuals from positions of leadership. The organization says "such employment would interfere with scouting's mission of transmitting values to youth." "Permitting this decision [Second Circuit Court of Appeals] to stand would in effect allow governments to legally extort organizations and individuals to give up basic beliefs," said Richard Thompson, president and chief counsel of the Thomas More Law Center, prior to the ruling. Thompson noted homosexual activist organizations such as the Lambda Legal Defense Fund are allowed to participate in the state charitable campaign. Lambda Senior Staff Attorney Evan Wolfson has said, "As long as the Boy Scouts' leaders are insisting on an exclusionary membership policy, the rest of us, especially public schools, parents, and donors, are going to dissociate ourselves from discrimination against our kids." The Law Center said this decision, coupled with the Supreme Court's ruling less than two weeks ago allowing the state of Washington to discriminate in its scholarship program against a Christian college student who majored in theology, is evidence of a "disturbing anti-Christian trend in the federal courts." "It suggests that the Supreme Court has taken sides in the culture war facing our nation," Thompson said. In 2000, the Supreme Court affirmed by a 5-4 vote the Scouts' policy of excluding homosexuals from leadership. The decision, *Boy Scouts of America v. Dale*, held the youth organization had a constitutionally based right to discriminate on the basis of "sexual orientation." James Dale was an Eagle Scout whose adult membership in the Boy Scouts was revoked when the organization learned that he was an avowed homosexual and homosexual-rights activist. The organization, founded in 1910, has more than 2.5 million youth members and 1 million adult members.³⁶ So, if the politically active gays cannot get a foothold in this organization (as they have in the Disney parks), then they will attack the Boy Scouts in any way that they can. In light of the relationship between homosexuals and pedophiles, do we want homosexuals involved with large groups of young men?*

You may wonder, how the heck did we end up here? Our verse reads, [Depart from evil and do good;...](#) Let me offer up Isa. 5:20: [Woe to those who call evil good and good evil; who put darkness for light and light for darkness; who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter!](#) This is a description of the homosexual movement. They have developed an entire system of evil and they have call it good; they have taken that which is good, a repudiation of their sins, and have called that evil. One of Satan's strategies is to reclassify that which is evil as good; and to take that which is good and brand it as evil. However, it is Biblical exegesis which gives us the correct perspective on what is evil and what is good; and David urges us, for a long and happy life, to depart from evil and to do that which is good. By the way, this sort of thing takes very little time. In the 1960's, there would be no question about whether an openly gay man should be teaching children or involved with children—a huge percentage of parents would be against it. However, significantly fewer would be interested in fereting out single males as possible homosexuals. 40 years later, an openly gay homosexual probably could not be removed from the classroom and it appears that in the near future, a teacher will be sued if he does not teach that the gay lifestyle is a viable and acceptable lifestyle.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Taken from http://www.worldnetdaily.com/news/article.asp?ARTICLE_ID=37483

Psalm 34:14b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
bâqash (בָּקַשׁ) [pronounced <i>baw-KAHSH</i>]	<i>seek, search out, desire, strive after, attempt to get, require, demand, ask, seek with desire and diligence</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Piel imperative	Strong's #1245 BDB #134
shâlôwm (שָׁלוֹם) [pronounced <i>shaw-LOHM</i>]	<i>completeness, soundness, welfare, peace, safe, secure, tranquil, undisturbed, unagitated</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #7965 BDB #1022
w ^e (or v ^e) (וְ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
râdaph (רָדַף) [pronounced <i>raw-DAHf</i>]	<i>to pursue, to follow after; to chase with hostile intent, to persecute</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal imperative with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #7291 BDB #922

Translation: ...seek peace and pursue it. The reader is further urged to look for peace and tranquility; to, in fact, pursue it. Often, the peace found in Scripture is twisted to mean *world peace*. This, unfortunately, puts a wrong twist on many passages. Often, when we find the word *peace* in Scripture, it refers to *peace with God*; that is, one who has taken Jesus at His word, and has apprehended through faith peace with God through His Son. However, here, we are looking at a lifestyle of trust in God and tranquility because of our trust in God. Thieme labeled this the *faith-rest* life, the Old Testament means of spirituality. David placed his faith in Jehovah Elohim, for both his salvation and his protection; and now he enjoys a life of tranquility, despite the fact that he is a fugitive from Saul and on the run for his life.

We should have covered the **Doctrine of Peace** early on in the book of Leviticus.

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We have an interesting interplay between the imperatives of these past several verses and the results of obeying these imperatives.

Psalm 34:8–14: David Outlines the Spiritual Life for the Old Testament

Try [lit., *taste*] Y^ehowah and **see** that [He is] *good*;
 Great happiness [lit., *happinesses*] [is to] the man [who] takes refuge in Him.
Fear [and respect] Y^ehowah, [you] His saints,
 for [there is] no lack [or want] to the ones who fear Him.
 [Although even] young lions [or, *strong men*] are in want and go hungry,
 those who seek Y^ehowah are not lacking any *good* thing.
Come [here], O sons [and] **listen** to me;
 I will teach you the fear/respect of Y^ehowah.
 What man delights [in] being alive
 [and] desiring days to see *good*?
Keep your tongue from evil
 and your lips from speaking deceit.
Depart from evil and **do good**;
seek peace and pursue it.

Note that I have **emboldened** the **imperatives** and *italicized* the word *good*. David tells us in these imperatives what the Old Testament believer was to do, and the result is always תֹּב (טוֹב) [pronounced *toh^bv*], which means *good*. Strong's #2896 BDB #373.

In fact, in these verses, we have an outline of the spiritual way of life for the Old Testament believer. First, a man was to taste Jehovah, which essentially means *to believe* in Him. A person was to fear Jehovah, which meant they were to be occupied with the person of Christ. They were to listen to God's Word, which is equivalent to listening to David. They were to avoid sins of the tongue and evil and they were to seek peace with God, which would mean remaining in fellowship with Him. Don't misunderstand this portion of Psalm 34; David is not giving specific mechanics here; he is giving rather an outline of the spiritual life in the Old Testament where the mechanics can be inferred by the reader.

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God's Direct Involvement in the Life of the Believer

**Eyes of Y^ehowah unto righteous ones
and His ears unto their cry [for help].**

Psalm
34:15

**The eyes of Y^ehowah [are] toward the
righteous
and His ears [listen] for their cry [for help].**

**The eyes of Jehovah are on the righteous
and He listens to their cries for help.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Early translations:

The Septuagint

The eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and His ears to their prayer,...

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV

If you obey the LORD, he will watch over you
and answer your prayers.

NAB

The LORD has eyes for the just
and ears for their cry.

NLT	The eyes of the LORD watch over those who do right; his ears are open to their cries for help.
TEV	The LORD watches over the righteous and listens to their cries;...

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™	The LORD's eyes are on righteous people. His ears hear their cry for help.
JPS (Tanakh)	י The eyes of the LORD are on the righteous, His ears attentive to their cry.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

The Amplified Bible	The eyes of the Lord are toward the [uncompromisingly] righteous, and His ears are open to their cry.
NASB	The eyes of the LORD are toward the righteous, And His ears are <i>open</i> to their cry.
Young's Updated LT	The eyes of Jehovah <i>are</i> unto the righteous, And His ears unto their cry.

What is the gist of this verse? God is with us; He watches over us and He hears us when we call out to Him.

Psalm 34:15a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʿayin (עַיִן) [pronounced GAH-yin]	<i>spring, literal eye(s), spiritual eyes, spring</i>	feminine dual construct	Strong's #5869 (and #5871) BDB #744
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly yohh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
ʿel (אֶל) [pronounced el]	<i>unto, in, into, toward, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
tsaddîyq (צַדִּיק) [pronounced tsahd-DEEK]	<i>just, righteous, justified; just ones, righteous ones, justified ones; absolute or perfect righteousness [if applied to God]</i>	masculine plural adjective, often used as a substantive	Strong's #6662 BDB #843

Translation: The eyes of Y^ehowah [are] toward the righteous... David here offers assurance for those who pursue God and His Word. *Righteous* (or, *righteous ones*) refers to believers who are positive toward God's Word and are growing. These are both positionally and experientially righteous. They are the ones who *fear/respect God* (v. 11) and they are the ones who *do good* (v. 14). God takes note of these believers. God watches over and protects these believers. One of the many parallel verses is Psalm 33:18–19: *Behold, the eye of Jehovah is to those who fear Him, on those who hope in His mercy; to deliver their soul from death, and to keep them alive in famine.*

Psalm 34:15b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʾôzen (אָזֵן) [pronounced <i>OH-zen</i>]	<i>ears</i>	feminine dual noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #241 BDB #23
ʾel (אֶל) [pronounced <i>el</i>]	<i>unto, in, into, toward, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
shav ^{er} âh (שָׁחַח) [pronounced <i>shahv-GAW</i>]	<i>an outcry, a crying out, a cry for help</i>	feminine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #7775 BDB #1003

Translation: ...and His ears [listen] for their cry [for help]. God appears to be more responsive to the growing believer, as the growing believer is in fellowship and his prayers reach God. The believer who is out of fellowship and/or who is not growing, often finds himself under God's discipline, and cries for help generally do not produce the same results.

Faces of Y^howah in doers of evil to cut off from earth their memory.

Psalm 34:16

The face of Y^howah [is] against those who do evil, to cut off their memory from the earth.

Jehovah's face is against those who do evil; He will cut off remembrance of them from the earth.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Early translations:

The Septuagint ...but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil, to destroy their memorial from the earth.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

- CEV But God despised evil people, and he will wipe them all from the earth, till they are forgotten.
- NAB The LORD's face is against evildoers to wipe out their memory from the earth.
- TEV ...but he opposes those who do evil, so that when they die, they are soon forgotten.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

- God's Word™ The LORD confronts those who do evil in order to wipe out all memory of them from the earth.
- JPS (Tanakh) 9 The face of the LORD is set against evildoers, to erase their names from the earth.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

<i>Updated Emphasized Bible</i>	The face of Yahweh is against such as do wickedness, To cut off, from the earth, their memory.
NASB	The face of the LORD is against evildoers, To cut off the memory of them from the earth.
<i>Young's Updated LT</i>	(The face of Jehovah is on doers of evil, To cut off from earth their memorial.)

What is the gist of this verse? Jehovah is against those who do evil and He will remove any memory of them from the earth.

Psalm 34:16a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
pânîym (פָּנִים) [pronounced paw-NEEM]	<i>face, faces; presence</i>	masculine plural construct (plural acts like English singular)	Strong's #6440 BDB #815
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly yohh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity with a 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's# none BDB #88
ʿāsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced gaw-SAWH]	<i>doing, making, constructing, fashioning, forming, preparing</i>	masculine plural construct, Qal active participle	Strong's #6213 BDB #793
raʿ (רָע) [pronounced rahó]	<i>evil, bad, wicked; evil in appearance, deformed; disagreeable, displeasing; unhappy, unfortunate; sad</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #7451 BDB #948

Translation: *The face of Y^ehowah [is] against those who do evil,...* What we have here is a poetic contrast to the previous verse. God's eyes were on the righteous in the previous verse; his face is against those who do evil in this verse. As with the previous verse, there are many parallel verses, including Jer. 44:11: *So Jehovah of Hosts, the God of Israel, says this: Behold, I will set My face against you for evil, and to cut off all Judah.*

Psalm 34:16b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^{eh}]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510

Psalm 34:16b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kârath (כָּרַת) [pronounced kaw-RAHTH]	<i>to kill, to destroy [men]; to separate, to remove, to withdraw; to cut off, to cut down; to allow to perish</i>	Hiphil infinitive construct	Strong's #3772 BDB #503
min (מִן) [pronounced min]	<i>from, off, out from, out of from, on account of, since, than, more than, greater than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
ʿerets (אֶרֶץ) [pronounced EH-rets]	<i>earth (all or a portion thereof), land</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #776 BDB #75
zêker (זָכַר) [pronounced ZAY-kehr]	<i>memory, remembrance, memorial</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #2143 BDB #271

Translation: ...to cut off their memory from the earth. Again, this contrasts with the second line of the previous verse. In the previous verse, God hears the cries for help of the righteous; however, He will also remove all memory of those who do wrong from the earth. On earth, in the Millennium, no one will remember the unbelievers who once lived there. The street where I grew up, I don't believe that there is anyone who lived there when I lived there. So, apart from the people who bought my house, I could go up and down the street, knocking on doors, the doors of houses that I have been in many times, and no one would know who I was. Even more, will the memory of unbelievers be removed from this earth. This is not unlike Psalm 109:13, which reads: *Let his posterity be cut off; and in the generation following let their name be blotted out.* Or, Prov. 10:7: *The memory of the just is blessed; but the name of the wicked shall rot.* Or, Psalm 109:12–14: *Let there be none to give mercy to him; nor any to favor his fatherless children. Let his posterity be cut off; and in the generation following let their name be blotted out. Let the iniquity of his fathers be remembered to Jehovah; and let not the sin of his mother be blotted out.* This is a common theme found throughout Scripture. Not only are the wicked entirely routed, but their memory is blotted out completely.

<p>They cried [out for help] and Y^howah had heard; and from all their troubles, He delivered them.</p>	<p>Psalm 34:17</p>	<p>Y^howah hears them [when] they cry [out for help]; and He delivers them from all their troubles.</p>
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Jehovah heard them when they cried out to Him for help, and He delivered them from all of their afflictions.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Early translations:

<p>The Septuagint</p>	<p>The righteous cried, and the Lord listened to them and delivered them out of all their afflictions. [<i>Righteous</i> is found in the Greek, but not the Hebrew].</p>
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Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

<p>CEV</p>	<p>When his people pray for help, he listens and rescues them from their troubles.</p>
<p>NJB</p>	<p><i>Zade</i> They cry in anguish and Yahweh hears,</p>

and rescues them from all their troubles.
 NLT The LORD hears his people when they call to him for help.
 He rescues them from all their troubles.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™ [Righteous people] cry out.
 The Lord hears and rescues them from all their troubles.
 JPS (Tanakh) x They [viz., *the righteous* of v. 16] cry out, and the LORD hears,
 and saves them from all their troubles.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB *The righteous cry and the LORD hears,
 And delivers them out of all their troubles.*
 Young's Updated LT They cried, and Jehovah heard,
 And from al their distresses, He delivered them.

What is the gist of this verse? God hears the righteous ones cry out for His help, and He delivers them from their sufferings, problems and troubles.

Psalm 34:17a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
tsâ'âq (צָעַק) [pronounced tsaw-GAHK]	<i>to cry, to cry out, to call, to summon</i>	3 rd person plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6817 BDB #858
wê (or vê) (וְ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly yohh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Yehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
shâma' (שָׁמַע) [pronounced shaw-MAHG]	<i>to listen, to hear, to listen intently, to listen and obey, to listen and act upon, to listen and give heed to, to hearken to, to be attentive to, to listen and take note of, to listen and be cognizant of</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect; pausal form	Strong's #8085 BDB #1033

Translation: *Yehowah hears them [when] they cried [out for help];...* This verse actually harkens back to v. 15, to the righteous believer. The believer will call to God for help; the hard-hearted man, the person on negative volition, will not. The verbs in the verse are all in the perfect tense, indicating that this is a completed action. To us, it may seem as though we are calling out right now to God for help; for Him, however, He heard us call out to Him in eternity past and He answered us in eternity past. He made provision for every problem and heartache that we would have.

As a tangent, what about those unbelievers who call out to God for deliverance, make promises, and then never keep their promises? God hears the prayers of many unbelievers, and God often responds to any bit of positive volition, even though He knows that they will not carry through with whatever promises that they make (to go to

church, to read their Bible, to do whatever they think God wants them to do). An example of this would be gen X, the generation of adults who left Egypt with Moses. These men called out to God again and again, and God answered them again and again; yet, they still fell back into reversionism time after time. **If we endure, we will also reign with Him. If we deny Him, He will also deny us [rewards]. If we are faithless, He remains faithful; He cannot deny Himself** (I Tim. 2:12–13). The idea is that God is always dependable, no matter how faithless we are.

Psalm 34:17b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
min (מִן) [pronounced min]	<i>from, off, out from, out of from, on account of, since, than, more than, greater than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced koh]	with a plural noun, it is rendered <i>all of; any of</i>	masculine singular construct with a masculine plural noun	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
tsârâh (צָרָה) [pronounced tzaw-RAW]	<i>troubles, distresses, disasters, afflictions, adversities</i>	feminine plural noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #6869 BDB #865
nâtsal (נָצַל) [pronounced naw-TSAHL]	<i>to snatch away, to deliver, to rescue, to snatch out of danger, to preserve</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Hiphil perfect with the 3 rd person masculine plural suffix, pausal form	Strong's #5337 BDB #664

Translation: *...and He delivers them from all their troubles.* Again, this is the perfect tense, meaning completed action. We see this from the standpoint of time—if we are rescued from a problem tomorrow, to us, it is tomorrow. However, for God, He took care of this in eternity past. He knew our needs even before Adam and the garden and He made provision for those needs in eternity past. An example might be a couple who expect their first baby. Even before the baby is born, they are reading books to see how to deal with this kid at age 1, and at age 2, etc. They have his room painted and prepared before he takes his first breath. They buy a car seat for him before he is able to be driven around in a car. Parents see to the needs of their children before the children have these needs; given that God is omnipotent and omniscient, we would expect for Him to have taken care of His children from the moment that He knew they had need—and that would be eternity past. There will be times when we feel as though God has deserted us, or failed us, however, in retrospect (often from this life, but maybe from the next), we will see that God never deserted us and He never failed us.

Being human, I sometimes find myself in doubt; and there is nothing more scary than to imagine a world apart from God; where there is no right or wrong; where all events are random, and where, at any time, your life could be plunged into suffering without reprieve and without comfort; and where there is no promise of anything to come at death.

Near, Y^ehowah, to those broken of heart and those crushed of spirit He delivers.

Psalm 34:18

Y^ehowah is near to the brokenhearted and He delivers those [whose] spirit [has been] humbled.

**Jehovah is near to the brokenhearted
and He delivers those whose spirit has been crushed.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Early translations:

The Septuagint The Lord is near to them that are of a contrite heart; and He will save the lowly in spirit.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV The LORD is there to rescue all
 who are discouraged and have given up hope.
TEV The LORD is near to those who are discouraged;
 he saves those who have lost all hope.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™ The LORD is near to those whose hearts are humble.
 He saves those whose spirits are crushed.
JPS (Tanakh) ק The LORD is close to the brokenhearted;
 those crushed in spirit He delivers.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB The LORD is near to the brokenhearted,
 And saves those who are crushed in spirit.
Young's Updated LT Near is Jehovah to the broken of heart,
 And the bruised of spirit He saves.

What is the gist of this verse? God is close to those who have troubles; and He delivers those whose spirit has been crushed.

Psalm 34:18a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
קָרֹב (קרוב) אוּ קָרֹבָה (קרובה) [pronounced kaw-RO ^b V]	<i>near [in place or time], contiguous, imminent, within a short pace; short, shortness; near in relation, intimate acquaintance; that which is familiar to us; one who brings aide to another; soon, presently</i>	masculine adjective used as a substantive	Strong's #7138 BDB #898
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly yoh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^ʰ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510

Psalm 34:18a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
shâbar (רַבַּרְבָּ) [pronounced shaw ^b -VAHR]	<i>to be broken, to break [one's limbs, mind or heart]; to be torn to pieces; to be broken down, to be destroyed, to perish</i>	masculine plural construct, Niphal participle	Strong's #7665 BDB #990
lêb (לֵב) [pronounced lay ^b ṽ]	<i>heart, inner man, mind, will, thinking</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #3820 BDB #524

Translation: *Y^{ehowah} is near to the brokenhearted...* What we have here is language of accommodation; God is omnipresent, so He is everywhere. We have similar language in Psalm 22:11: *Be not far from Me; for trouble is near, for there is none to help.* So that we can understand that he is a personal God, interested in us, David tells us that He is near to those whose inner person or heart has been broken. There will be times when your heart has been broken. David left his home, his wife and his position; he had done absolutely nothing wrong, and now he was a fugitive. So one would expect him to be brokenhearted. However, God is near to those who are brokenhearted. This means that God comforts those whose spirit has been broken by the circumstances of life.

Psalm 34:18b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
êth (אֵת) [pronounced ayth]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
dakâ' (אֲדָכָה) [pronounced dah-KAW]	<i>crushed, broken [into very small pieces]; dusk; broken in spirit, humbled, contrite, cast down</i>	masculine plural adjective construct	Strong's #1793 BDB #194
rûwach (רוּחַ) [pronounced ROO-ahkh]	<i>wind, breath, spirit, apparition</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #7307 BDB #924
yâsha' (יַשֵּׁה) [pronounced yaw-SHAHṢ]	<i>to deliver, to save</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect	Strong's #3467 BDB #446

Translation: *...and He delivers those [whose] spirit [has been] humbled.* Here we have a double-meaning: God does deliver those who have been crushed by the weight of life and its many injustices; however, this also refers to those whose spirit has been humble—God will save such a one.

My salvation experience is very similar to many others that I have heard: although I had some interest in God, I was also very arrogant and I possessed a lot of negative volition as well. In that time period of my life, God brought me to what I felt was my lowest point in life, to where I hurt a great deal (in retrospect, I know that life could have been much more difficult than what I felt I was enduring then). But, for me, at that point in time, life was miserable. At that point, although I wasn't saved, I did express some sincere positive volition toward God. I wasn't really sure

what it was that I was promising God, but I knew that something had to change. I don't know if I made any promises; I only recall that my volition became positive, and I was saved within a month after that.

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God's Redemption of the Believer

**Many [are the] distresses of the righteous
and from all of them delivers him Y^ehowah.**

Psalm
34:19

**The distresses of the righteous one [are]
many,
but Y^ehowah delivers him from all of them.**

**The righteous suffer many distresses and indignities,
but Jehovah delivers him out from all of them.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Early translations:

The Septuagint Many are the afflictions of the righteous; but out of them all the Lord will deliver them.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV The LORD's people suffer a lot,
but he will always bring them safely through.

NLT The righteous face many trouble,
but the LORD rescues them from each and every one.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™ The righteous person has many troubles,
but the LORD rescues him from all of them.

JPS (Tanakh) ׀ Though the misfortunes of the righteous be many,
the LORD will save him from them all,....

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB Many are the afflictions of the righteous;
But the LORD delivers him out of them all.

Young's Updated LT Many are the evils of the righteous,
Out of them does Jehovah deliver him.

What is the gist of this verse? The righteous face many afflictions and difficulties, but God delivers them out from these afflictions.

Psalm 34:19a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
rab (רַב) [pronounced rah ^{bv}]	<i>many, much, great</i> (in the sense of <i>large</i> or <i>significant</i> , not acclaimed)	feminine plural adjective	Strong's #7227 BDB #912

Psalm 34:19a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
râ'âh (רָעָה) [pronounced raw-GAW]	<i>evil, misery, distress, disaster, injury, iniquity, aberration, that which is morally reprehensible</i>	feminine plural construct	Strong's #7451 BDB #949
tsaddîyq (צַדִּיק) [pronounced tsahd-DEEK]	<i>just, righteous, justified; just ones, righteous ones, justified ones; absolute or perfect righteousness [if applied to God]</i>	adjective, often used as a substantive	Strong's #6662 BDB #843

Translation: *The distresses of the righteous one [are] many,...* Becoming a child of God does not mean that your problems will instantly vanish. In fact, in many ways, your troubles will just begin, as you are thrust almost center stage into the angelic conflict. As an unbeliever, Satan already has you whipped, so there is not much reason for him to involve himself in your life. You're already a drowning man, so Satan does not have to throw you in the water. However, when you believe in Jesus Christ, all of a sudden, you are positionally higher than Satan, your actions have a direct effect on the angelic conflict, and now you are of interest to Satan. So he will see to it that you are attacked.

I separated, to some degree, from my church, and began to work on exegeting the Word of God, book by book, chapter by chapter, line by line and word by word in 1995. Although the tools for doing so all became quickly available to me, I also faced sets of problems greater than I had ever faced before. They were big and distressing and they threatened to consume my mental health. This verse tells me, *what did you expect? A rose garden?* This is exactly what I should have expected. All of the problems have come to a nice, neat completion; and, although I don't particularly welcome new problems, I know that they are out there. As a believer who is growing, I need to expect Satanic attacks (not directly from Satan, of course, but from some low rung of his cadre of demons). If I did not face difficulties, particularly those initiated by fellow believers, then I should wonder to myself, *what am I doing wrong?* However, David tells us, this is par for the course. We should expect distresses to come to us.

Application: A reasonable question is: *why should I become a Christian if I know that there will be problems and difficulties in my life?* The answer is, everyone has problems and difficulties. There is not one person in this world who does not face trials and tribulations. Most people inflict themselves, being their own worst enemy. And believers have the added problem of facing demonic attacks. However, the advantage is, God is near and God is there to help us and God will solve our problems. Many times, it is nothing more than a test, and the more difficult the test, the more interesting the outcome. That is, you should find it interesting to watch God and see how He gets you out of this jam.

Over the past several years, I faced a number of related problems that seem insurmountable. It looked as though I could lose my job, my health insurance, and much of my savings. All of this struck at once. God solved all of these problems and the end result was, I am better off financially now than I ever was before. I couldn't predict that sort of result, but God knew what my problems would be and He knew what the solutions would be, and He made provision for all of this in eternity past. There was never a reason for me to be upset, off-balance or doubting (although I was, at times, all three). As I recent heard another pastor say, "Life is short; learn from the mistakes of others." This is in opposition to the old saying, "Learn from your own mistakes." One of the purposes of Scripture is for us to see what others have done, what they have done wrong, and how God solves their problems. We get the benefit of their mistakes without having to make them ourselves. God allows us an intimate look into their lives so that we can learn by their mistakes. An illustration of this is David and Bathsheba. Bathsheba probably was the woman for David. From their union came Solomon and the Messianic line of David; however, David was not allowed to take Bathsheba while she was married and he was certainly not allowed to have her husband killed. Those were bad choices that David made and David suffered greatly because of them. However, had David not pursued Bathsheba, I can guarantee you that God would have brought them together. Sure, it could

have involved the death of her husband and it is possible that he could have left her—we don't know, but God would have dealt with that situation and David would have had everything that he had by doing wrong, but without the discipline. Learn from David's mistakes: do not commit adultery, no matter how much in love you think you are.

Psalm 34:19b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^ə (or v ^ə) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and</i>	simple wāw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
min (מן) [pronounced <i>min</i>]	<i>from, off, out from, out of from, on account of, since, than, more than, greater than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i>]	<i>the whole, all, the entirety, every</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
nâtsal (נָצַל) [pronounced <i>naw-TSAHL</i>]	<i>to snatch away, to deliver, to rescue, to snatch out of danger, to preserve</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Hiphil perfect with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5337 BDB #664
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yoh-WAH</i>]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217

Translation: ...but Y^ehowah delivers him from all of them. Here is the promise: despite the fact that we will face stressful situations, and sometimes problems with seemingly no solution, God is able to deliver us out from all of these. Not only is He able, but He is willing. David speaks from experience; he has had nothing but trouble in the past month and a lot of trouble over the past several years. Most of that trouble came from one human source, Saul. However, note, David does not seek to destroy the source of his problem; he does not raise his hand against Saul.

Application: You do not make unauthorized attacks on your enemies. I had a person who went out of her way to make my life difficult whenever she could. She had it out for me, and spend some of her spare time causing problems for me. God nowhere authorizes me to strike back. I am authorized to pray against her; I am authorized to pray on her behalf, but I am never authorized to take any sort of retaliatory action against her. Whenever someone causes you problems, God does not authorize you to strike back, to respond in kind, to gossip about them, or to malign them. We are allowed to pray against these people (imprecatory prayers); however, we are encouraged to pray for these personal enemies: **You have heard that it was said, "You will love your neighbor and hate your enemy." But I say to you, Love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who despitefully use you and persecute you, so that you may become sons of your Father in Heaven. For He makes His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. If you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Don't even the tax-collectors do the same? And if you greet your brothers only, what do you do more than others? Don't even the tax-collectors do so? Therefore be complete, even as your Father in Heaven is perfect (Matt. 5:43–48).**

Application: As a growing believer, you are guaranteed to face problems, heartaches and troubles. David also guarantees you that God has made provision for these problems in eternity past and we can trust Him to solve every single one of them.

Gill makes an excellent point³⁷ about this verse: we suddenly have the singular rather than the plural. In the previous verse, for instance, *they* cried for help and Y^ehowah heard *them* and he delivered *them*. In v. 15, God looks upon the *righteous ones* and He listens to *their* cry. His point is, in this verse, **The distresses of the righteous [are] many, but Y^ehowah delivers him from all of them**, we have a peek at the Savior. We have already gone over the various sorts of references of the Messianic psalms, and often, although the psalm may be about something entirely different, we either have a peek of the Messiah, or we have a parallel situation. The move from the plural to the singular here is significant; and the significance of this change is confirmed by the verse that follows, which is quoted in the gospels with reference to our Lord. So we may also read this verse as: **The distresses (difficulties and pressures) on the Righteous One are many, but Jehovah delivers Him from all of them**. Even though our Lord faced problems and difficulties that we cannot even imagine; and physical pain beyond our own personal endurance, Jehovah the Father gave His Son through God the Holy Spirit the strength to endure these things. We have the same indwelling and empowering Spirit. By the way, that Jesus the Messiah is called the *Righteous One* in the Old Testament is found in Isa. 53:11 Jer. 23:5 Zech. 9:9.

Gill comments: *His afflictions were many, which He endured from men, from devils, and from God himself: many were the afflictions of his body, which He bore when buffeted, scourged, and crucified; and many were the afflictions of His soul, when He bore the sins of his people, endured the wrath of God for them, and was forsaken by Him; though none of these were for any sins of His own, but for the sins of others; and out of them all the Lord delivered Him at last, and set Him at his own right hand; or this may be understood of everyone of the righteous; who, though they are justified from sin, and are saved from wrath, yet have many afflictions.*³⁸

In other words, we have a parallel application of this verse, which is confirmed in the gospels (as the next verse is quoted in connection with the crucifixion). The righteous man faces many difficulties that God delivers him from; furthermore, Jesus, the Righteous One, also faces innumerable difficulties, pains and sorrows that God delivered Him from as well. We will discuss the divine fulfillment of this verse when we cover the next.

**Keeping all his bones,
one from them has not been broken.**

Psalm
34:20

**Preserving all of his bones [or, substance],
not one of them is broken.**

**He preserves his bones;
not one of them is broken.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Early translations:

The Septuagint He keeps all their bones; not one of them will be broken.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV Not one of their bones will ever be broken.

NLT For the LORD protects them from harm—
not one of their bones will be broken [Hebrew protects him from harm—not one of his bones].

TEV The LORD preserves him completely;
not one of his bones is broken.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

³⁷ Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, Psalm 34:19.

³⁸ Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, Psalm 34:19.

God's Word™		The LORD guards all of his bones. Not one of them is broken.
JPS (Tanakh)	ψ	Keeping all his bones intact, not one of them being broken.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Updated Emphasized Bible		Keeping all his bones, Not one from among them is broken.
NASB		He keeps all his bones; Not one of them is broken.
Young's Updated LT		He is keeping all his bones, One of them has not been broken.

What is the gist of this verse? There is a limitation as to how much damage these difficulties can cause, here presented as not breaking one's bones (this verse has a literal fulfilment in our Lord Jesus Christ).

Psalm 34:20a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
shâmar (שָׁמַר) [pronounced shaw-MAR]	<i>to keep, to guard, to watch, to preserve</i>	Qal active participle	Strong's #8104 BDB #1036
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced kohl]	with a plural noun, it is rendered <i>all of; any of</i>	masculine singular construct with a masculine plural noun	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
ʿetsem (עֵצֶם) [pronounced geh-TSEM]	<i>bone, substance, self; self-same; corporeality, duration, existence, and therefore identity</i>	feminine plural substantive with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #6106 BDB #782

Translation: Preserving all of his bones [or, substance],... David continues with the promises of God. God preserves the bones or substance of the growing believer. The idea here is that there is a limit as to what God will allow, and an illustration of not breaking the bones is offered. This does not mean that no growing believer will ever suffer broken bones at the hands of man; it simply means that God limits what can be done to the believer. In the case of our Lord, it was not to allow any of His bones to be broken, even with the terrific amount of torture which He faced.

Psalm 34:20b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʿechâd (אֶחָד) [pronounced eh-KHAWD]	<i>one, first, certain, only; but it can also mean a composite unity</i>	feminine singular construct, numeral	Strong's #259 BDB #25
min (מִן) [pronounced min]	<i>from, off, out from, out of from, on account of, since, than, more than, greater than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577

Psalm 34:20b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
hênnâh (הֲנָה) [pronounced <i>hayn-nawh</i>]	<i>they, those; these</i> [with the definite article]	3 rd person feminine plural personal pronoun	Strong's #2007 BDB #241
lô' (לֹא or לֹא־) [pronounced <i>low</i>]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
shâbar (שָׁבַר) [pronounced <i>shaw^p-VAHR</i>]	<i>to be broken, to break</i> [one's limbs, mind or heart]; <i>to be torn to pieces; to be broken down, to be destroyed, to perish</i>	3 rd person feminine singular, Niphal perfect	Strong's #7665 BDB #990

Translation: *...not one of them is broken.* God does not allow his bones to be broken. This means that David has escaped any serious injury, although he has been in many situations where he could have lost his life.

Psalm 34 is one of those psalms which is specifically about something which is not related to the Messiah to come. This is about David and David's recovery from being out of fellowship and making a host of errors in judgment. However, for this verse and the previous, we have a multiple fulfillment: it refers to David, to the believer who is advancing, and to the Messiah to come. In the latter case, we would read these verses as follows: *The distresses (difficulties and pressures) on the Righteous One are many, but Jehovah delivers Him from all of them; preserving all of His bones, not one of them is broken* (Psalm 34:19–20). What Jesus faced in His life was incomprehensible to us. He lived for over 30 years without sin, although Satan tempted Him continually. The disciples tried His patience; the religious hierarchy maligned and pursued Him with evil intent; a generally just Roman government authorized intense physical torture. Yet, in all of this, He was without sin. To get to the cross, which was the reason that He came to this earth, Jesus had to endure pain and suffering which is unimaginable. God allowed Jesus to maintain the strength to go to the cross (most men, given the amount of torture He received, would have just lied down and died before getting to the cross). This ability was due in part that God the Father had one minor limitation; none of our Savior's bones could be broken, even unto the end. Recently, His pre-cross suffering was reasonably portrayed cinematically in "The Passion of the Christ." However, this movie gave us no clue as to the finally suffering which our Lord endured, which was the equivalent of enduring eternal hell for all of us.

Now, with specific reference to His bones not being broken: Jesus could not have physically gotten Himself to the cross if, say, his leg, ankle or foot had been broken prior to the crucifixion. God also promised that His bones would not be broken at the culmination of the crucifixion. God promised this even as far back as the first Passover that Jesus would not have any of His bones broken: *"The meal must be eaten inside one house. Never take any of the meat outside the house. Never break any of the bones."* (Ex. 12:46; mentioned again in Num. 9:12). This is the Passover lamb, which is a type of our Lord. The Passover lamb illustrated our Lord dying for our sins and man apprehending this salvation through faith in Him (which is illustrated by the non-meritorious activity of eating the Passover lamb—see John 6:54–56).³⁹ The bones of the Passover lamb were not to be broken; and the bones of our Passover Lamb were not broken. The illustration, of course, is that the Lamb must be delivered to the sacrifice whole, unblemished and without spot. Now, although I have read several commentaries about the significance of our Lord's bones not being broken, but apart from fulfilling of these two Scriptures, none of the explanations really ring true. John is the only gospel writer to mention this in John 19:33, 36: *When the soldiers came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they didn't break his legs. This happened so that the Scripture would be fulfilled: "None of his bones will be broken."* This was unusual, as apparently some crucifix victims had their legs broken at the end of their torture (John 9:31–32; in this instance, it was to preserve Jewish traditions). Rather than try to

³⁹ *Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life, and I will bring them back to life on the last day. My flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood live in me, and I live in them.*

Psalm 34:21a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
mûwth (מת) [pronounced <i>mooth</i>]	<i>to kill, to cause to die, to execute</i>	3 rd person feminine singular, Polel imperfect	Strong's #4191 BDB #559
The Polel is equivalent to the Piel (intensive) stem (while neither Mansoor nor Zodhiates acknowledge it, both Owen and Seow do). Although there is an intensification of the verb, the Piel also carries with it a sense of causation.			
râshâ' (רשע) [pronounced <i>raw-SHAWṢ</i>]	<i>malevolent, lawless, corrupt, criminal</i>	masculine singular adjective acting as a noun	Strong's #7563 BDB #957
râ'âh (רעה) [pronounced <i>raw-ṢAW</i>]	<i>evil, misery, distress, disaster, injury, iniquity, aberration, that which is morally reprehensible</i>	feminine plural noun	Strong's #7451 BDB #949

The gender of the noun identifies the subject of the verb.

Translation: *Evil will kill the malevolent one,...* Even though those who are malevolent or lawless ally themselves with evil, that same evil will kill them. You have heard that we are our own worst enemies. Most people, if they are honest enough to admit it, recognize that the bulk of their problems are personally created. This verse, of course, says a great deal more than that. Those who are lawless, corrupt and malevolent will be destroyed by their own evil. Let me give you an example: there are a lot of homosexuals in this time who have entered into churches and there are a lot of churches which have bent over backwards to receive them. Long held doctrines have been discarded, Scripture has been reinterpreted, and their lifestyle has been accepted as valid. That these homosexuals are in church indicates that they know something is missing. However, the local church does them no good to sugar-coat the truth. The best case scenario is that they might be saved in such a church (although it is doubtful; a church which compromises one or two verses of Scripture will surely compromise the gospel). However, their homosexual activity will keep them perpetually out of fellowship. This is the best possible outcome. What is even more likely is (1) they will see no reason to seek God's saving forgiveness and (2) the apostate church which welcomes them will not likely present God's saving forgiveness in the first place. So the evil of trying to get their lifestyle passed off as valid will be what kills them. This was just one illustration of many. In this time period, there is a great movement to get those things previously recognized as sinful to be seen as valid lifestyle choices. Prostitution and illegal drug use are promoted as being victimless crimes, when they are anything but. When they are portrayed as being simple acts of free will, apart from law and apart from morality, this evil will kill the malevolent one.

Almost every commentator gave the same general comment as Clarke: *The very thing in which they delight shall become their bane and their ruin.*⁴⁰ I know that people despise this illustration, but we have AIDS and the homosexuals; their very behavior resulted in a disease that seemed unable to be defied. At this point, there does not appear to be a cure, but a way to forestall the eventual effects. What about all of the innocents who have been slaughtered by this disease? First of all, there are no true innocents; and secondly, it is a simple result of cause and effect. Sinful behavior always touches those who had relation to the sinful behavior itself. That's a Satanic bonus. We have the rapid proliferation of venereal diseases on not just the sexually immoral, but upon many *innocents* as well (many children have been born with a variety of disorders because their mother had been infected by a venereal disease). Let's take a particular incident: the shootings at Columbine High School a few years ago. Their were mental, verbal, and physical sins committed against the young men who did the shootings. They responded with sinful behavior. However, the shootings affection thousands of innocents in a variety of ways. Let's take another example, pornography. This may appear to be a relatively victimless crime, but not only does it distort

⁴⁰ Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, Psalm 34:21.

the relationship between men and women, but it there is much more to it than simply women who offer to pose for pictures. Not only can this be the first step to a life of degradation, but even those women who later opt out, are left with a lifetime legacy that they cannot erase. And this bypasses a the extensive illegal activity which is associated with that business. It is also important to recognize that these things strike even in places where the sin is generally accepted by society. Calling evil good does not make it any less evil nor does it decrease its destructiveness.

Psalm 34:21b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
sânê' (סַנְאֵ) [pronounced <i>saw-NAY</i>]	<i>to hate</i> ; in the participle, it is <i>the ones hating</i>	masculine plural construct, Qal active participle	Strong's #8130 BDB #971
tsaddîyq (צַדִּיק) [pronounced <i>tsahd-DEEK</i>]	<i>just, righteous, justified</i> ; <i>just ones, righteous ones, justified ones</i> ; <i>absolute or perfect righteousness</i> [if applied to God]	masculine singular adjective, often used as a substantive	Strong's #6662 BDB #843
'âsham (אָשָׁם) [pronounced <i>aw-SHAHM</i>]	<i>to be guilty, to offend, to be offensive, to be ceremonially unclean</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect, pausal form	Strong's #816 BDB #79

Translation: ...and those who hate the Righteous One stand condemned [lit., are guilty, are offensive]. Again, *righteous* is a masculine singular—this is properly applied to Jesus Christ. Those who hate Jesus Christ (or those who are against Christ) stand condemned. They are guilty. This has a double application: those who hate David, who is righteous, are condemned; however, more importantly, those who hate the Righteous One are condemned. You will recall that in v. 19, this psalm seemed to focus more upon Jesus Christ than upon David and his troubles. In fact, it would be very easy to take the final 4 verses of this psalm and apply them all to our Savior and Lord, Jesus Christ. In v. 19, we moved from the plural *righteous ones* (v. 15) to the singular *Righteous One*. At that point, even though there is application to David, it more pertains to our Lord.

Redeeming Y^ehowah a soul of His servants and will not be guilty all the ones taking refuge in Him.

Psalm
34:22

Y^ehowah purchases the souls of His servants and those who take refuge in [or, trust in] Him will not be guilty [or, offensive].

Jehovah has purchased the souls of His servants and those who take refuge in and trust in Him will not be guilty [or, offensive].

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Early translations:

The Septuagint

The Lord will redeem the souls of His servants; and none of those that hope in Him will go wrong.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV

The LORD saves the lives of his servants.

NLT Run to him for protection, and you won't be punished.
 But the LORD will redeem those who serve him.
 Everyone who trusts in him will be freely pardoned.
 REB The LORD delivers the lives of his servants,
 and no punishment befalls those who seek refuge in him.
 TEV The LORD will save his people;
 those who go to him for protection will be spared.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™ The LORD protects the souls of his servants.
 All who take refuge in him will never be condemned.
 JPS (Tanakh) The LORD redeems the life of His servants;
 all who take refuge in Him shall not be ruined.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

The Amplified Bible The Lord redeems the life of His servants, and none of those who take refuge and trust in Him shall be condemned or held guilty.
 NASB The LORD redeems the soul of His servants;
 And none of those who take refuge in Him will be condemned.
 Young's Updated LT Jehovah redeems the soul of His servants,
 And none trusting in Him are desolate!

What is the gist of this verse? God has purchased or redeemed the lives of His servants; those who have trusted in Him will be pleased.

The Geneva Bible makes the very short and accurate comment here:) *For when they seem to be overcome with great dangers and death itself, then God shows himself as their redeemer.*⁴¹

Psalm 34:22a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
pādâh (פָּדָה) [pronounced paw-DAWH]	to ransom, to purchase, to redeem	Qal active participle	Strong's #6299 BDB #804
YHWH (יְהוָה) [pronunciation is possibly yoh-WAH]	transliterated variously as Jehovah, Yahweh, Y ^e howah	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
nephesh (נֶפֶשׁ) [pronounced NEH-fesh]	soul, life, living being, desire	feminine singular construct	Strong's #5315 BDB #659
ʿebed (עֶבֶד) [pronounced ĠE ^B -ved]	slave, servant	masculine plural noun with a 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5650 BDB #713

Translation: Y^ehowah purchases the souls of His servants... Since we have begun to speak of the Messiah and His afflictions, prior to the cross, and that His bones were not broken, after the cross; it would make sense to speak

⁴¹ Geneva Bible Translation Notes; 1599, courtesy of e-sword, Psalm 34:22.

of His atoning work, where He purchased our souls. Therefore, this is a very apropos ending to this psalm and this section of the psalm.

At the time of David, it was unclear as to how Jehovah would purchase the souls of his servants or the lives of His servants. Actually, the word for *soul* is in the singular, which does not refer to one soul, per se, but to a one-time purchase. God the Holy Spirit guided David to say this, even though David certainly was not aware of the nuts and bolts of this arrangement. No one knew just exactly how God would pay for the soul of His servants. No one in the Old Testament completely understood that God would come in the flesh and suffer the equivalent of hell for all of us. Satan surely didn't know, as he guided Jesus to the cross, not realizing what he was doing.

Psalm 34:22b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lô' (אֵל or אֵלָא) [pronounced <i>low</i>]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
âsham (אָשָׁם) [pronounced <i>aw-SHAHM</i>]	<i>to be guilty, to offend, to be offensive, to be ceremonially unclean</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #816 BDB #79
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i>]	with a plural noun, it is rendered <i>all of; any of</i>	masculine singular construct with a masculine plural noun	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
châçâh (חָצָא) [pronounced <i>khaw-SAW</i>]	<i>to take refuge, and hence to trust [in]</i>	masculine plural, Qal active participle	Strong's #2620 BDB #340
b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity with a 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's# none BDB #88

Translation: ...and those who take refuge in [or, trust in] Him will not be guilty [or, offensive]. Although the God-ward mechanics which provided salvation were not completely realized in the Old Testament, the man-ward mechanics of salvation were. All man needed to do was to trust in God, or take refuge in Jehovah God. This was the means of salvation.

The means of salvation is presented in Old Testament Scripture, but not as clearly as it is found in the New Testament (particularly with the book of John). However, it is found. Here it is clear that one need only trust in or take refuge in Jehovah and he should be found guilty before God or offensive to God. Now might be a good time to examine a piece that I did on **Salvation** many years ago, where I listed many of the verses in Scripture which make it clear that salvation comes strictly through faith in Christ.

Once we have come as far as this verse, we have actually run out of letters in the Hebrew alphabet (recall that this is an acrostic psalm). The letter פ (pê') is repeated. פ also begins v. 16, and what we have in v. 16 is God's attitude toward those who reject Him (*evildoers*): His face is against them and their memory will be blotted out; this is in sharp contrast to this verse, where **God redeems the soul of His servants and those who trust in Him will not be offensive to Him**. In other words, we have two sides of the same coin: God's character is the coin and on one side we have approbation (v. 22) and on the other, disapprobation (v. 16), both drawn together by the same first

letter. This means little to us in the English; however, in the Hebrew, the first thing you do upon reading v. 22 is go back to v. 16, because this is an acrostic psalm. It is as though the author drew an arrow from v. 22 to v. 16. A man has two choices in relation to God: His approbation or His condemnation.

Finally, as we have noted previously, God the Holy Spirit guides David to speak of the Messiah to come, and the general reaction to Him. Therefore, let us read together vv. 19–22:

Psalm 34:19–22 A View of the Messiah

The distresses of the Righteous One [are] many,
 but Y^ehowah delivers Him from all of them.
 Preserving all of His bones [or, *substance*],
 not one of them is broken.
 Evil will kill the malevolent one,
 and those who hate the Righteous One stand condemned [lit., *guilty, offensive*].
 Y^ehowah purchases the souls of His servants
 and those who take refuge in [or, *trust in*] Him will not be guilty [or, *offensive*].

Barnes covers this passage in great detail: *The literal meaning of this is, that the Lord rescues the lives of his servants, or that he saves them from death. The word “redeem” in its primary sense means to let go or loose; to “buy” loose, or to ransom; and hence, to redeem with a price, or to rescue in any way. Here the idea is not that of delivering or rescuing by a “price,” or by an offering, but of rescuing from danger and death by the interposition of the power and providence of God. The word “soul” here is used to denote the entire man, and the idea is, that God will “rescue” or “save” those who serve and obey him. They will be kept from destruction. They will not be held and regarded as guilty, and will not be treated as if they were wicked. As the word “redeem” is used by David here it means God will save His people; without specifying the “means” by which it will be done [however, this is a clear reference to the cross—GK]. As the word “redeem” is used by Christians now, employing the ideas of the New Testament on the subject, it means that God will redeem His people by that great sacrifice which was made for them on the cross...Shall be [not] held and treated as “guilty.” See Psalm 34:21, where the same word occurs in the original. They shall not be held to be guilty; they shall not be punished. This is designed to be in contrast with the statement respecting the wicked in Psalm 34:21. The psalm, therefore, closes appropriately with the idea that they who trust the Lord will be ultimately safe; that God will make a distinction between them and the wicked; that they will be ultimately rescued from death, and be regarded and treated forever as the friends of God.*⁴²

⁴² Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, Psalm 34:22.