



International Bible Lessons Commentary

Uniform Sunday School Lessons Series

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Psalms 34:1-10 & Hebrews 2:17-18 **New Revised Standard Version** **May 27, 2018**

The [International Bible Lesson](#) (*Uniform Sunday School Lessons Series*) for **Sunday, May 27, 2018**, is from **Psalms 34:1-10 & Hebrews 2:17-18**. **Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further** follow the verse-by-verse *International Bible Lesson Commentary*. **Study Hints for Discussion and Thinking Further** will help with class preparation and in conducting class discussion: these hints are available on the [International Bible Lessons Commentary](#) website along with the *International Bible Lesson* that you may want to read to your class as part of your Bible study. You can discuss each week's commentary and lesson at the [International Bible Lesson Forum](#).

(Psalms 34:1) Of David, when he feigned madness before Abimelech, so that he drove him out, and he went away.

In 1 Samuel 21:10-22:1, we learn how David, in the process of fearfully fleeing King Saul, went to Gath. When he heard the servants of Achish say, "Is this not David the king of the land? Did they not sing to one another of him in dances, 'Saul has killed his thousands, and David his ten thousands'?" he became afraid, pretended to be insane, fled Gath, and escaped to the cave of Abdullam. Many scholars believe Abimelek or Abimelech means King.

I will bless the LORD at all times; his praise shall continually be in my mouth.

"I will bless" or "I will extol" the LORD have similar meanings. David says he will exalt, praise, commend, and thank the LORD. He will repeat and

remind himself about the true God's care and love for him by stating truths about the LORD: by naming attributes of God's character, nature, and power. To bless someone will make them happy: to bless the LORD will make God and the one exalting the LORD happy. David will do this "at all times;" in happy, peaceful times and in fearful, troubled times. Blessing and extoling the LORD "at all times" will increase our confidence and faith in the LORD no matter what our situation. When praising the LORD, we express our trust in the LORD, and He will lift our spirits and encourage us. Notice: David did not say, "His praise will always be in my mind;" rather, "His praise will always be on my lips or in my mouth." Our praising God begins in our minds, but the more we think of God and how the Almighty God, the Creator of the universe, loves us and sent His Son to save us and meet all our real needs, the more words of praise burst forth from our mouths in exalted words of praise to God for others to hear as well. The more we think about God in Jesus Christ, the more we are ready to glorify and honor God with our words whenever given the opportunity.

(Psalms 34:2) My soul makes its boast in the LORD; let the humble hear and be glad.

Rather than "glory in" the LORD, to "boast in" the LORD is the preferred translation. However, boasting about the LORD does not mean bragging about and exaggerating what God has done or drawing attention to any supposed favoritism God has for us above others. When our soul boasts in the LORD, our boasting and desire to glorify the LORD comes forth sincerely, truthfully, and lovingly from our inner being; our boasting comes from what we have experienced directly and indirectly from the God's loving care of us. The "humble" and the "afflicted" will rejoice and be glad when they hear honest praises of God coming forth from our lips; they will be encouraged to trust in the LORD; they will have confidence in what God can do when they learn what God has done. The humble will praise God and rejoice in the LORD with us.

(Psalms 34:3) O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together.

To “magnify” the LORD seems to be the preferred translation in this verse. When we magnify something, we do not change it; we make it easier for others to see and understand the object. As we teach in a Bible or Sunday school class, we can become like a magnifying glass for our students. We can make it easier for people to learn about God, to understand how reasonable God’s actions and words are, and what it means to follow Jesus. When we “magnify the LORD,” we tell the truth about the LORD and make the attributes and character of the LORD easier for others to see and understand so they can know, and not doubt, that the LORD can be trusted to do all things right and well. When we “glorify the LORD,” we also tell the truth about the LORD: we worship, exalt, and adore the LORD for being the true God and our God. David invites those who read or hear his psalm or hymn to magnify and glorify the LORD along with him, to take the truth about God into our minds and hearts as he had done and express our thoughts in words of praise to God for others to hear as well.

(Psalms 34:4) I sought the LORD, and he answered me, and delivered me from all my fears.

After inviting others to praise the LORD with him, David told those listening what he had done and how the LORD had responded to him. When he sought the LORD, the LORD answered him and helped him. In this way, David glorified and magnified the LORD for others to hear. He encouraged them to understand that if they sought the LORD; then the LORD would hear and answer them too. Notice: after God delivered David from his fears, he could think clearly; then, he thought of a way to leave Gath without a fight and flee to the cave of Abdullam. Sometimes the first and perhaps most important thing we need is God’s deliverance from ALL our fears, because our thinking of future possibilities and problems can give us more things to fear and cause us to think less clearly. As David did, we can pray for the LORD to deliver us from ALL our fears and help us think clearly.

(Psalms 34:5) Look to him, and be radiant; so your faces shall never be ashamed.

David encouraged people to look to God at all times, even in times of trouble, because the LORD would so encourage them and deliver them from all their fears that others would be able to see the result of God's work even in their faces and behavior. Even under persecution and other trials, they will not be ashamed of God, they will not be ashamed of themselves, and God will so transform their expressions that they will not look ashamed to others but look joyful — even radiant.

(Psalms 34:6) This poor soul cried, and was heard by the LORD, and was saved from every trouble.

This “poor man” was David himself. In 1 Samuel 21, we learn that David fled from Saul alone, hungry, and unarmed. He had to beg a priest for bread and a sword to survive. When he called to the LORD, the LORD led him to the priest, Ahimelech, who met his immediate need of bread and gave him Goliath's sword. Then, when he fled to the cave of Abdullam, the LORD saved him out of all his troubles and sent others to help him. David continued to have troubles in the future, but by reminding himself of all the LORD had done for him, he magnified the LORD. As he glorified the LORD, the LORD gave him courage and wisdom to face his future troubles. He knew from experience that the LORD would deliver him from all his fears and save him in times of trouble. By saying these things about the LORD and exalting Him, David not only encouraged himself, but also those who heard his testimony. He encouraged those who could remember how God had helped them in similar situations. Others would come to believe in the LORD and be able to say these things from their future experiences.

(Psalms 34:7) The angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear him, and delivers them.

When David glorified and magnified the LORD, he stated facts about God's presence with His people and one way the LORD delivers His people in distress. The “angel of the LORD” David speaks of may be the Lord Jesus prior to His incarnation and birth. Or, “the angel of the LORD” may be an angel, a guardian angel, that the LORD sends His people when they are in need. For example, the LORD sent an angel to save the prophet Daniel. In Daniel 6:22, Daniel told the king, “My God sent his angel, and he shut the

mouths of the lions. They have not hurt me, because I was found innocent in his sight. Nor have I ever done any wrong before you, Your Majesty.” In Hebrews 1:14, we are told that the LORD will send angels to help His people: “Are not all angels ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation?” In Colossians 1:27, we learn this blessed truth regarding the presence of Jesus Christ with and within Christians: “Christ in you [is] the hope of glory.” In summary, those who look to God as truly revealed in the Bible will know all that the LORD can do; they will reverence the LORD, and the LORD will deliver them. God abides with His people, and “God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble” (Psalms 46:1).

(Psalms 34:8) O taste and see that the LORD is good; happy are those who take refuge in him.

A parent might encourage a small child to taste a good food that is new to them. David asked those new to the truth about the LORD, or who doubt the truth about the LORD, to turn to the LORD and “taste” or “try out” believing in the LORD as the Bible has described God and revealed His words. Then, they should ask the LORD for help. If they would do this, David believed they would discover that the LORD is good. If they would take refuge in the true God, the LORD would shelter and protect them. David knew that the LORD would bless (make radiant, make happy, make glad) everyone who believed in and revered the LORD as he did.

(Psalms 34:9) O fear the LORD, you his holy ones, for those who fear him have no want.

Job feared the LORD, and from Job’s suffering we know that good people sometimes lack or lose what they have and physically need; but though Job’s suffering was severe, Job’s lack was temporary, and the LORD restored him. David’s lack of food and protection was temporary, and when he thought about all the LORD had done and continued to do for him, he concluded that he lacked nothing, and he glorified the LORD. From the Apostle Paul, we gain more insight into our troubles as Christians, in 2 Corinthians 4:17-18, we learn, “For this slight momentary affliction is preparing us for an eternal weight of glory beyond all measure, because we look not at what can be seen but at what cannot be seen; for what can be

seen is temporary, but what cannot be seen is eternal.” God’s “holy people” are those God has set apart or consecrated for His purposes. In Exodus 19:6, God told the Israelites, “be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.” God called and separated the Israelites from the nations to be a kingdom of priests for the benefit of all the nations. As Christians, Christ has called us to be God’s holy people and to declare His praises for all to hear for the benefit of others and ourselves. In 1 Peter 2:9, we read, “But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.” If we will live according to our calling as Christians and truly reverence God, we will lack nothing of lasting value, and we will look forward to receiving from Christ what cannot be seen now.

(Psalms 34:10) The young lions suffer want and hunger, but those who seek the LORD lack no good thing.

As noted above, the angel of the LORD saved Daniel from the Lion’s den. Our adversaries may seek to devour us, but the angel of the LORD is always with us. In 1 Peter 5:8, Peter warns us to “Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.” If we seek the LORD to be with the LORD “at all times,” as Christians we will live daily with the understanding that Jesus Christ abides within us and no matter what happens to us in this world we will lack no good thing.

(Hebrews 2:17) Therefore he had to become like his brothers and sisters in every respect, so that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make a sacrifice of atonement for the sins of the people.

Jesus, personally and by experience in this world, fully understands our human condition, our temptations, and our situation. Though He is the eternal, holy, almighty Son of God, he had to be made like us; so, He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. Jesus is fully human and fully God. After He died on the cross for our sins, and was buried, He rose and ascended into heaven where He now sits at the right hand of God the Father; there He is our merciful and faithful high priest

and is always interceding for us. Christians are a kingdom of priests, a royal priesthood in service to God, and Jesus is our High Priest in service to God. Because we love Jesus, we do what He, our King and High Priest, commands us, and He is ever ready to forgive us and help us.

(Hebrews 2:18) Because he himself was tested by what he suffered, he is able to help those who are being tested.

Jesus suffered when the world, the flesh, and the devil tempted Him, and He knows what we experience when the world, the flesh, and the devil tempt us. In Ephesians 6:12, the Apostle Paul described our struggles, and Jesus faced these same struggles: “For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.” Jesus understands our problems, and He is able to completely understand the source of all our trials and temptations; and beyond understanding, Jesus will help us. When we are tempted, we can flee to Him for help and He is an ever-present help in time of trouble.

Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further

1. When are we to bless and praise the LORD?
2. What are some of the ways we can exalt the name of the LORD together?
3. What happened when David sought the LORD? What can happen when we seek the LORD?
4. What did David say the angel of the LORD can do? What did David say we can do?
5. From our lesson, what did Jesus do and what did He become?

Begin or close your class by reading the short weekly
International Bible Lesson.

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