

Psalm 34:15–19

- 15 The eyes of the LORD are on the righteous, And His ears are open to their cry.
- 16 The face of the LORD is against those who do evil, To cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.
- 17 The righteous cry out, and the LORD hears, And delivers them out of all their troubles.
- 18 The LORD is near to those who have a broken heart, And saves such as have a contrite spirit.
- 19 Many are the afflictions of the righteous, But the LORD delivers him out of them all.

“God’s Comfort for Trying Times” Psalm 34:15-19

INTRO:

Sometimes when we think about the infinite majesty and unsearchable greatness of our Sovereign God, we are so swallowed up by the ineffableness of His character and being that we begin to feel insignificant. We may feel a little like Jane Crofut must have felt in the play, “*Our Town*,” when she received a letter addressed: “*Jane Crofut; The Crofut Farm; Grover’s Corners; Sutton County; New Hampshire; United States of America; North America; Western Hemisphere; the Earth; the Solar System; the Universe; the Mind of God.*” How can a God who changes the times and seasons, a God who controls the ebb and flow of history, be concerned about the problems I face in my everyday existence?

When God gave Isaiah the incredible revelation of **Isaiah 40**, which gives us a tiny glimpse of the greatness of our God, He included **verse 11**. “***He will feed His flock like a shepherd; He will gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom, and gently lead those who are with young.***” Our God wants us to recognize that while He is the One “***Who has measured the waters in the hollow of His hand, measured heaven with a span and calculated the dust of the earth in a measure,***” He is, at the same time, our shepherd who knows the struggles of the young sheep and those who have special needs. David in his song of praise and deliverance wants to remind us of this fact too! This is why he included these verses in his psalm.

I. God’s Treatment of the Righteous and the Wicked (v. 15-16)

II. God’s Special Care for the Righteous (v. 17-19)

I. God’s Treatment of the Righteous and the Wicked (v. 15-16)

“The eyes of the LORD are on the righteous, And His ears are open to their cry. The face of the LORD is against those who do evil, To cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.” Psalm 34:15–16

A. In his Psalm, David wrote about those who fear God. Those who fear God are those who in the words of **verses 13 and 14**, try to ***“Keep [their] tongue from evil, and [their] lips from speaking deceit. Depart from evil and do good. Seek peace and pursue it.”*** But if we try to live godly in this present world, we will find there are those who will try to make our lives miserable. This is why David instructed us the way he did in **verses 15-19**.

B. If we are going to remain faithful in the trying times, we need to keep before our minds the truth of **verses 15 and 16**.

1. In **Psalm 1**, the Psalmist wrote, ***“The LORD knows the way of the righteous.”***

2. In what way does God exercise special watch care and affection over the way of those who belong to Him? **Psalm 34:15** says,

“The eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and His ears are open to their cry.”

God watches over those who are His. His attention is never diverted away from them. Spurgeon wrote: *“He observes them with approval and tender consideration; they are so dear to him that he cannot take his eyes off them; he watches each one of them as carefully and intently as if there were only that one creature in the universe.”*

3. Do we live out our lives aware that our God has us constantly in His sight? He is never distracted from His vigilance over the direction of our lives? Does the knowledge that He is always watching us keep us from sin? Does it encourage us when we feel abandoned and alone?

4. Not only is He ever vigilant, He is also ever listening for our cries. The Hebrew word here means ***“to cry out for help.”*** The picture this paints in my mind is the picture of the young mother listening carefully for the cries of her little ones. God is ever ready to respond to our needs.

C. In **Psalm 1** we read that while God knows the way of the righteous, there is a difference in the way He treats the ungodly.

“For the Lord knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the ungodly shall perish.”

It is the case in our Psalm also. **Verse 16** says:

“The face of the Lord is against those who do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.”

1. God’s actions toward the workers of evil are not pleasant. He does not watch their way with special love and attention. No, He turns His face in determination to judge them.

2. Keil and Delitzsch’s comment is worth quoting. *“The evil doers are overwhelmed by the power of destruction that proceeds from the countenance of Yahweh, which is opposed to them, until there is not the slightest trace of their earthly existence left.”* The point is that no one gets away with sin. God judges those who do evil. Many times that judgment is not fast enough for our taste, but it comes in God’s perfect timing.

II. God’s Special Care for the Righteous (v. 17-19)

A. Having laid out the principle, David now comes back to the subject of God’s constant care for those who are righteous in His sight God’s lovingkindness and steadfast love is set upon those who are His by faith. It is exercised first in deliverance.

“[The righteous] cry out, and the LORD hears, and delivers them out of all their troubles” (v. 17).

1. Here the blessed ones ***“cry out”*** in their distress to God. This is a divine **911**. How does our God respond to this cry?

“And the LORD hears.”

David, like all of us, went through those times when heaven seems to be made of brass and our prayers don’t get through. Listen to his plea in **Psalm 4:1**.

“Hear me when I call, O God of my righteousness! You have relieved me in my distress; have mercy on me, and hear my prayer.”

And again in **Psalm 5:1-2**

“Give ear to my words, O Lord, consider my meditation. Give heed to the voice of my cry, my King and my God, for to You I will pray.”

Over and over again in his Psalms, David pleads with God to hear his prayer. Here this same David tells part of God’s love for us is that He always hears us when we cry out in distress to Him!

2. And what does He do when He hears?

“And [He] delivers them out of all their troubles.”

Many times the way out is through the valley to the other side.

“Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.”

Still, sometimes He simply makes the trouble go away.

B. God doesn't just hear us and deliver us; He also comforts us (**verse 18**).

“The LORD is near to those who have a broken heart, and saves such as have a contrite spirit.”

1. God promised a special closeness to those who have a heart which is broken into pieces. What caused our hearts to break? This can refer to repentance from sin. We have been humbled by our sin and our pride is dashed to bits before God. This is certainly one application. This also applies to those who have done right and have had their hearts shattered because of it. If He has promised to minister to us in our brokenhearted condition, it follows that all of us may become brokenhearted from time to time.

2. Our God delights in calling Himself ***“the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort.”*** (2 Corinthians 1:3) We see His mercifulness and comfort in His actions toward those who are brokenhearted. Consider **Psalm 147:3**.

“He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.”

We read in the great prophecy of the first coming of our Lord Jesus Christ in **Isaiah 61:1**.

“The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon Me, because the Lord has anointed Me to preach good tidings to the poor. He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound.”

One of the jobs of our Lord Jesus has is to heal those who are brokenhearted.

3. **Psalm 34** continues. He ***“saves such as have a contrite spirit.”*** This is the word that is the root of our Savior's name. It means ***“to deliver, to make safe, and to preserve.”*** He delivers us from our sins, but He also preserves us and delivers us from our difficulties.

C. So, in His special relationship to those who are righteous in His Son, God provides deliverance. God hears our cries of distress. He delivers us out of our troubles. He also comforts us. He is near to us when our hearts are broken and He binds-up our hurts. He also saves us from our sin and the situation. Finally, David tells us that He has promised a continuous provision (**verse 19**).

D. We may be tempted to say to God, ***“All right, you have promised to deliver me this time from my trouble, but what about next time?”*** In the 19th verse, David told us God never tires of taking care of His righteous ones.

“Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivers him out of them all.”

1. One thing that surprises us is how often trouble comes our way. Yet, the Bible is clear, while we walk in this world, trouble is the companion of the godly. I love what Paul tells us in the triumphal passage in **Romans 8:35-39**.

“Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written: ‘For Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.’ Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Many times trouble dogs the steps of the righteous, but God’s grace is more than sufficient and He continually and without fail delivers us out of every one of the afflictions that come our way.

So, friend of mine, if you are going through difficult times, let these truths encourage you and lift your spirits. First, God’s eyes are always upon you. Second, the wicked get away with nothing. God is the one who keeps the books. Third, God’s promises are our strength.

What does He promise?

He promises He will deliver us from our present difficulties. He hears our cries for help and will act.

He also promised He will comfort our broken hearts.

And, finally, He promised a continuous provision for our afflictions. Remember, *“God is never in a hurry, but God is never late.”*

Hymn# 206 There is a Redeemer