



prayer *life!*

Weekly Prayer Focus

January 17, 2016

Where Credit Is Due

O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt His name together. I sought the LORD, and He answered me, and delivered me from all my fears. —Psalm 34:3-4

It must have been quite humiliating, but sometimes “ya gotta do what ya gotta do.”

One of the most exalted figures in Israeli history is King David, the hero who built the United Kingdom. Even in his early days, he had cause to swagger. He was the one who killed the giant Goliath, saving his people from humiliation and slavery. He earned the hand of King Saul’s daughter and the love of his nation. Not only that, the prophet Samuel had anointed him to be king.

But now, David was a fugitive. King Saul became suspicious and turned on him. Tried to kill him. Was chasing him down to put an end to the rival for his throne. Despite his love for God and country, he had to run to Gath, a capital of Israel’s enemy. But now, the Philistines were onto him. They didn’t want Israel’s hero and their archenemy alive, much less in their town. It was time to kill him.

Thinking fast, David acted insane, drooling profusely and scribbling on the city gate. His act was so convincing that the king was sure he was dealing with a “*mashugana*”—a madman—and let him go.

Humbling, but smart—very smart! David’s characteristic quick thinking got him out of one of the toughest jams he’d ever face, leaving free to gather a band of loyal followers to support him during his exile. Clearly the man God had chosen to lead His people Israel knew how to act effectively. Surely God’s people would be in good hands with David on the throne.

But that’s not how David saw it. It was the LORD God who dominated David’s vision, and he gave credit for his deliverance to the Great Deliverer. Early on in life, David developed a pattern of acting responsibly and doing what needed to be done—like when he took on Goliath. But this pattern of behavior rested on an unshakable faith that the Lord is God and He will deliver. And that faith led the king to praise God and proclaim His excellencies to others. That’s what inspired his psalms.

Psalm 34 tells Israel, the community of faith, about the Lord’s mighty acts of deliverance for David, one representative individual who trusted in Him. The rescue from Egypt, the parting of the Red Sea, the conquest of the Promised Land lay hundreds of years in the past. Their focus was national more than individual. But David knew and testified that the God who had delivered in the past was the God he worshiped in his day. He counted on God to deliver him as an individual, just as He delivered Israel as a nation.

When called on to defend his father’s flock from a bear or lion, David looked to the Lord Jehovah to give him victory. While employing all his skill to confront Goliath, David looked for victory to come from God, and he told the giant as much. When his ploy of feigning madness worked, David understood who it was that delivered him. Psalm 34 is his testimony to the believing community that God will do the same thing for you.

Christians believe, along with David, that *the LORD will accomplish what concerns me* (Psalm 138:8). We go about our way, do what we’ve got to do, follow His Word, and trust His promises as they apply in daily life. But we always look to God and trust Him to keep His promises, accomplishing what He deems best. Then we testify to others, *Faithful is He who calls you, and He also will bring it to pass* (1st Thessalonians 5:24).

But then there’s the bigger picture. David was central to God’s plan of the ages. He was a chosen ancestor of Jesus—the Son of David, the Author and finisher of our faith. In this mad world of sin, with dangers too big to calculate, there is only one thing for certain, and it’s the thing we fear more than anything else. But Christ conquered death on the cross. His perfect sacrifice healed sin’s madness. He slew the great giant Death and delivered forever those who put their trust in Him.

To the praise of God’s glory

Prayer for the Week

Sunday (Church): Ask God to use Brent Whitefield, our Pastor of Outreach, to equip us to reach our community, so that we add new believers.

Monday (Home and Family): Pray for your church family (friends and prospective friends at Northpoint) to grow in God's grace and display it to others.

Tuesday (Job/School): Pray for your leaders, coworkers and friends at work to come to know Christ and His love.

Wednesday (Neighborhood and Community): Pray for the neighbors you interact with most regularly. Ask God to create moments when you can tell them of your hope in Christ Jesus.

Thursday (The Nation): Ask God to transform our education system, media, and businesses, so they honor Christ and uphold Biblical truth.

Friday (The World): Ask God to raise up new generations of missionaries to take the Gospel to the ends of the earth. Pray for worldwide revival in the Church, so Christ fills our vision, guides us, and empowers us for Godly living and witness.

Saturday (Praise and Rejoicing): List five things in your life that God has given you, then tell Him thanks for each one.

Prayer Record

Record specific prayers you have below. Note when and how God answers your prayers. It will help you to see that He really is paying attention.

Date	Request	Date	Answer

The angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear Him, and rescues them. O taste and see that the LORD is good; how blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him! –Psalm 34:7-8