

## LIV. THE LORD DELIVERS THE RIGHTEOUS FROM MANY AFFLICTIONS: 1 Samuel 21:7—22:1

**INTRODUCTION.** When was the last time you chose to do something, then almost immediately found yourself in a pickle, realizing you had made a huge mistake?

Well that is what happens to David in 1 Samuel 21. I would remind you that these things were written down for our instruction so that we may learn how to love Christ, hate sin, walk wisely, and so that we may better glorify and enjoy the Lord God! So let's try to understand what is happening in this passage by way of *exposition*, and then see what we should learn from it by way of *application*.

**CON(TEXT).** David, the Lord's chosen and set apart King-elect, is on the run from the current king, Saul. David is currently in a city called Nob, which is where the Tabernacle is currently set up, and he has just had his physical needs met by Ahimelech the Lord's priest, with bread.

### 1 Samuel 21:7-9

"7 Now a certain man of the servants of Saul was there that day, detained before the Lord. His name was Doeg the Edomite, the chief of Saul's herdsmen.

- This is going to be important later in the story, when Saul finds out the priests of Nob helped David.

8 Then David said to Ahimelech, 'Then have you not here a spear or a sword at hand? For I have brought neither my sword nor my weapons with me, because the king's business required haste.' 9 And the priest said, 'The sword of Goliath the Philistine, whom you struck down in the Valley of Elah, behold, it is here wrapped in a cloth behind the ephod. If you will take that, take it, for there is none but that here.' And David said, 'There is none like that; give it to me.'"

- So, even though he does not deserve it, because of the Lord's mercy, David is equipped with bread for his stomach and a sword for his hand.

## I. EXPOSITION (1 Sam. 21:10-22:1). \*4

### I) David made a foolish plan to go to the Lord's enemies (1 Sam. 21:10).

1 Samuel 21:10 And David rose and fled that day from Saul and went to Achish the king of Gath."

*Fleeing from one enemy to another is not wisdom but foolishness.*

**BOYS AND GIRLS...**

### II) David's foolish plan backfired on him so that he was

**taken captive by the Lord's enemies (1 Sam. 21:11).**

**1 Samuel 21:11**

"...In their hands..."

**III) David feared the king of Gath and made himself look like an insane person in order to escape (1 Sam. 21:12-15).**

**1 Samuel 21:12-15** "12 And David took these words to heart and was much afraid of Achish the king of Gath. 13 So he changed his behavior before them and pretended to be insane in their hands and made marks on the doors of the gate and let his spittle run down his beard. 14 Then Achish said to his servants, 'Behold, you see the man is mad. Why then have you brought him to me? 15 Do I lack madmen, that you have brought this fellow to behave as a madman in my presence? Shall this fellow come into my house?'"

– **Them:** "David, why are you acting like an insane person?" (1 Sam. 21:13).

**David:** "Because I was much afraid of Achish the king of Gath" (1 Sam. 21:12).

**Maybe we should learn this:**

*Fearing yours and the Lord's enemies, rather than trusting the Lord to deliver you, will lead you down a path of insanity.*

**BOYS AND GIRLS...**

**IV) Despite David's foolishness, the Lord delivered him from the hands of his enemies (1 Sam. 22:1).**

**1 Samuel 22:1** "David departed from there and escaped to the cave of Adullam."

– **Q.** Was it David's wit that should be admired for his escape?

**A.** Not according to David himself!

– **Consider Psalm 34.**

**Psalm 34:19-22**

*Of David, when he changed his behavior before Abimelech, so that he drove him out, and he went away.*

"19 Many are the afflictions of the righteous,  
but the Lord delivers him out of them all.

20 He keeps all his bones;  
not one of them is broken.

21 Affliction will slay the wicked,  
and those who hate the righteous will be condemned.

22 The Lord redeems the life of his servants;  
none of those who take refuge in him will be condemned."

– **Consider also Psalm 56.**

**Psalm 56:9, 13**

*To the choirmaster: according to The Dove on Far-off Terebinths. A Miktam of David, when the Philistines seized him in Gath.*

"9b This I know, that God is for me.

...

13 For you have delivered my soul from death,  
yes, my feet from falling,  
that I may walk before God  
in the light of life."

**Q.** So what is the doctrine we should learn from 1 Samuel 21:7-22:1?

**DOCTRINE.** *Even when a Christian's foolish plans backfire, the Lord is still faithful to deliver.*

**BOYS AND GIRLS...**

## II. APPLICATION (Psalm 34:19).

Draw your attention to Psalm 34:19 again. This is perhaps the verse that best encapsulates what we should learn from 1 Samuel 21.

**Psalm 34:19**

"Many are the afflictions of the righteous,  
but the LORD delivers him out of them all."

**BOYS AND GIRLS...** *you need to memorize this verse.*

**CLARIFICATION.** *The Lord is not promising to necessarily deliver you from the temporary hurt, but, rather, He is promising to deliver you from the eternal harm. Sometimes He will deliver you from the temporary hurt. Always He will sanctify you; always He will guard you through faith; always He will prepare you for glory; always He will preserve you so that you do not fall away.*

### **QUESTION.**

**What are the afflictions from which the Lord delivers His people? \*7**

**ANSWER 1.** The Lord delivers His people from His wrath.

**Psalm 6:4** "Turn, O Lord, deliver my life; save me for the sake of your steadfast love."

**Psalm 79:9** "Help us, O God of our salvation, for the glory of your name; deliver us, and atone for our sins, for your name's sake!"

*This He does through Christ Jesus' death as a substitute!*

**Here is the wonder of the gospel:**

*The triune God saves sinners from Himself, through Himself, by Himself, to Himself, for Himself.*

**BOYS AND GIRLS...**

**(i) The Lord saves His people *from* Himself**—we are delivered from the wrath of God righteously due to us for our sin.

**(ii) The Lord saves His people *through* Himself**—we are delivered through the work of the God-man alone, the Lord Jesus Christ.

**(iii) The Lord saves His people *by* Himself**—we are delivered through God's eternally electing us to salvation, predestinating us to eternal life; and then in time and space He causes us to be born again by the work of the Holy Spirit when we hear the gospel.

**(iv) The Lord saves His people *to* Himself**—we are delivered from sin and wrath to then belong to the Lord by covenant, living our lives both glorifying and enjoying God.

**(v) The Lord saves His people *for* Himself**—though we are done great good by God, ultimately God saves us *for* His own glory—to reveal how holy, just, merciful, gracious, powerful, awesome, loving, and patient He is.

**QUESTION.** How do I know if the Lord has saved me from *Himself*, through *Himself*, by *Himself*, to *Himself*, for *Himself*? **ANSWER.** Simple: You turn from your sins and trust in Christ alone for salvation as He is offered to you in the gospel.

If you trust Christ alone for salvation, you need to be baptized. Once you are baptized you need to join with the Church for worship and accountability. Then you need to walk with Christ and His people all your days for your gladness, others' good, and God's glory.

**ANSWER 2. The Lord delivers His people from their sin.**

**Psalm 39:8** "Deliver me from all my transgressions."

*Many want to be delivered from sin's penalties, but do they want also to be delivered from sin's habitual practice?*

- **Only you and the Lord know if that is true for you.** If you do not want to be delivered from all your transgressions then you are either uncovered or you are in a backslidden state. Examine yourself. Turn from your sin of making peace treatises with that which God calls sin—because it is. Trust in Christ alone to save you, and declare war on your sin.

*You who are truly covered to Christ and clinging to Christ and imperfectly, yet diligently, laboring to obey Christ: The Lord delivers His people from their sin!*

- **Whatever sin has its hooks in you; whatever vice has you by the**

throat; whatever temptation so easily entangles you; the Lord can deliver you from that! Go to God the Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, and cry out like the Psalmist in Psalm 39:8, "Deliver me from all my transgressions."

– **BOYS AND GIRLS**

**ANSWER 3. The Lord delivers His people from the sting of death.**

**Psalm 56:13** "For you have delivered my soul from death, yes, my feet from falling, that I may walk before God in the light of life."

**ANSWER 4. The Lord delivers His people from the wicked who seek to destroy.**

**Psalm 17:13-14**

"Arise, O LORD! Confront him, subdue him!  
Deliver my soul from the wicked by your sword,  
from men by your hand, O LORD,  
from men of the world whose portion is in this life."

**Psalm 37:40**

"The Lord helps them and delivers them; he delivers them from the wicked and saves them, because they take refuge in him."

**Psalm 142:6** "Attend to my cry, for I am brought very low! Deliver me from my persecutors, for they are too strong for me!"

**ANSWER 5. The Lord delivers His people from their fears.**

**Psalm 34:7**

"I sought the LORD, and he answered me and delivered me from all my fears."

**BOYS AND GIRLS. . .**

**ANSWER 6. The Lord delivers His people from the lies of the wicked.**

**Psalm 120:2** "Deliver me, O Lord, from lying lips, from a deceitful tongue."

**ANSWER 7. The Lord delivers His people from sickness.**

**Psalm 22:24** "For he has not despised or abhorred the affliction of the afflicted, and he has not hidden his face from him, but has heard, when he cried to him."

**SEVEN DIRECTIONS TO CONCLUDE (1 Sam. 21:7-22:1).**

**I) Do not be surprised when you end up in a trap if you go to the Lord's enemies.**

- **James 4:4** "You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God."
- **BOYS AND GIRLS**

## **II) Be careful not to credit your whit or cleverness or shrewdness in deliverances.**

**Psalm 34:2** "My soul makes its boast in the Lord; let the humble hear and be glad."

**Psalm 75:4** "I say to the boastful, 'Do not boast.'"

- "The man who boasts of his wit in escaping peril robs God of His glory, for deliverance comes by divine power alone." — **Thomas Brooks (1608–1680), *Precious Remedies Against Satan's Devices*. London: Printed by M. Simmons, 1652, pg. 112.**

## **III) Remember that you never deserve deliverances.**

**Psalm 34:6**

"This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him and saved him out of all his troubles."

A WARNING TO THOSE WHO ARE OUTSIDE OF CHRIST:

**Psalm 34:21**

"Affliction will slay the wicked, and those who hate the righteous will be condemned."

## **IV) Do not despair in any affliction if you belong to Christ.**

Use **Psalm 34:19** in all of your afflictions so that you do not lose heart: "Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the LORD delivers him out of them all."

Use also **Psalm 56:9**: "This I know, that God is for me."

- **BOYS AND GIRLS**

## **V) Cry out to God in the name of Christ alone for deliverances.**

**Psalm 34:17**

"When the righteous cry for help, the Lord hears and delivers them out of all their troubles."

**John 15:16** "You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you."

## **VI) Praise the Lord for the deliverances He provides.**

**Psalm 40:10** "I have not hidden your deliverance within my heart; I have spoken of

your faithfulness and your salvation; I have not concealed your steadfast love and your faithfulness from the great congregation."

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- **DALE RALPH DAVIS:** "We must not merely call this episode David's Folly and sigh about how lucky he was to get out. I suggest our response be governed by David's own response. According to the headings of Psalms 34 and 56, those psalms arose in the wake of this fiasco in Gath. You may look at 1 Samuel 21:10-15 and wonder, "Can anything good come out of Gath?" Here is David-foolish, desperate, confused. Ah, but it's the stuff psalms are made of. So David does not say, "I am lucky," but, "God is for me"; he sees men not as frightful but as flesh. His deliverance from all his fears and all his troubles (Ps. 34:4, 6) is the pledge that Yahweh will follow suit for other believers (vv. 15-22) and the basis for his continuing praise (vv. 1-3). Along with desperation there is nevertheless praise. I do not mean that we should act foolishly in order that praise may come but only that we should never forget God's mercies given us even in our foolishness." — Dale Ralph Davis, **1 Samuel Commentary**

### Psalm 34

Taste and See That the Lord Is Good

*Of David, when he changed his behavior before Abimelech, so that he drove him out, and he went away.*

- 1 I will bless the Lord at all times;  
his praise shall continually be in my mouth.
- 2 My soul makes its boast in the Lord;  
let the humble hear and be glad.
- 3 Oh, magnify the Lord with me,  
and let us exalt his name together!
- 4 I sought the Lord, and he answered me  
and delivered me from all my fears.
- 5 Those who look to him are radiant,  
and their faces shall never be ashamed.
- 6 This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him  
and saved him out of all his troubles.
- 7 The angel of the Lord encamps  
around those who fear him, and delivers them.
- 8 Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good!

Blessed is the man who takes refuge in him!  
 9 Oh, fear the Lord, you his saints,  
     for those who fear him have no lack!  
 10 The young lions suffer want and hunger;  
     but those who seek the Lord lack no good thing.  
 11 Come, O children, listen to me;  
     I will teach you the fear of the LORD.  
 12 What man is there who desires life  
     and loves many days, that he may see good?  
 13 Keep your tongue from evil  
     and your lips from speaking deceit.  
 14 Turn away from evil and do good;  
     seek peace and pursue it.  
 15 The eyes of the Lord are toward the righteous  
     and his ears toward their cry.  
 16 The face of the Lord is against those who do evil,  
     to cut off the memory of them from the earth.  
 17 When the righteous cry for help, the Lord hears  
     and delivers them out of all their troubles.  
*18 The Lord is near to the brokenhearted*  


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*and saves the crushed in spirit.*  


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*19 Many are the afflictions of the righteous,*  


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*but the Lord delivers him out of them all.*  


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*20 He keeps all his bones;*  


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*not one of them is broken.*  


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*21 Affliction will slay the wicked,*  


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*and those who hate the righteous will be condemned.*  


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*22 The Lord redeems the life of his servants;*  


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*none of those who take refuge in him will be condemned.*  


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## **Psalm 56**

In God I Trust *To the choirmaster: according to The Dove on Far-off Terebinths. A Miktam of David, when the Philistines seized him in Gath.*

1 Be gracious to me, O God, for man tramples on me;  
     all day long an attacker oppresses me;  
 2 my enemies trample on me all day long,  
     for many attack me proudly.  
 3 When I am afraid,  
     I put my trust in you.  
 4 In God, whose word I praise,  
     in God I trust; I shall not be afraid.  
     What can flesh do to me?  
 5 All day long they injure my cause;  
     all their thoughts are against me for evil.

6 They stir up strife, they lurk;  
     they watch my steps,  
     as they have waited for my life.

7 For their crime will they escape?  
     In wrath cast down the peoples, O God!

8 You have kept count of my tossings;  
     put my tears in your bottle.  
     Are they not in your book?

9 Then my enemies will turn back  
     in the day when I call.  
     *This I know, that God is for me.*

10 In God, whose word I praise,  
     in the Lord, whose word I praise,

11 in God I trust; I shall not be afraid.  
     What can man do to me?

12 I must perform my vows to you, O God;  
     I will render thank offerings to you.

13 For you have delivered my soul from death,  
     yes, my feet from falling,  
     that I may walk before God  
     in the light of life.

## PURITAN QUOTES

- "To make friends with the world's vanities is to forsake the Lord's favor; such company leads the soul to ruin in this life." — **Thomas Watson (c. 1620–1686), *A Body of Divinity*. London: Printed for Thomas Parkhurst, 1660, pg. 245.**
- "He that walks hand in hand with God's enemies shall find his heart divided and his peace lost in this world." — **Richard Baxter (1615–1691), *A Christian Directory*. London: Printed by Robert White, 1673, pg. 387.**
- "Love not the company of those who scorn the Lord, for their ways sow discord and reap God's displeasure even now." — **John Flavel (c. 1627–1691), *The Method of Grace*. London: Printed for Henry Mortlock, 1681, pg. 112.**
- "To sit in the seat of the ungodly is to invite their folly into thy life; such friendship brings shame before the harvest of eternity." — **William Perkins (1558–1602), *A Commentary on Galatians*. London: Printed by John Legat, 1604, pg. 89.**
- "The man who joins with the world's mockers shall reap a troubled conscience and a life of spiritual want." — **Jeremiah Burroughs (1599–**

**1646), *The Rare Jewel of Christian Contentment*. London: Printed by Peter Cole, 1648, pg. 198.**

- "Cling not to those who defy God, for their friendship is a snare that entangles the soul in earthly sorrow." — **Thomas Brooks (1608–1680), *Precious Remedies Against Satan's Devices*. London: Printed by M. Simmons, 1652, pg. 134.**
- "To be a friend to God's enemies is to invite their judgments upon thyself; such alliances breed strife in this life." — **John Owen (1616–1683), *The Nature and Power of Indwelling Sin*. London: Printed for William Marshall, 1667, pg. 201.**
- "Walk not with those who love the world, lest their ways draw thee from God and fill thy days with unrest." — **Richard Sibbes (1577–1635), *The Bruised Reed*. London: Printed by M. Flesher, 1630, pg. 65.**
- "Boast not in thine own wisdom for thy deliverance, for it is God's hand alone that saves, and human wit is but a broken reed." — **Thomas Watson (c. 1620–1686), *A Body of Divinity*. London: Printed for Thomas Parkhurst, 1660, pg. 156.**
- "Let not thy cleverness deceive thee into thinking thou hast wrought thy salvation; God's grace, not man's cunning, brings redemption." — **Richard Baxter (1615–1691), *The Reformed Pastor*. London: Printed by Robert White, 1656, pg. 234.**
- "The soul that trusts in its own shrewdness for deliverance shall find it vain; only God's mercy upholds us in the day of trouble." — **John Flavel (c. 1627–1691), *The Method of Grace*. London: Printed for Henry Mortlock, 1681, pg. 98.**
- "Lean not on thine own understanding to secure thy soul, for human wit is folly before God, who alone works salvation." — **William Perkins (1558–1602), *A Golden Chain*. Cambridge: Printed by John Legat, 1600, pg. 45.**
- "Take heed lest thou credit thy cleverness for thy preservation; it is God's providence, not man's device, that delivers." — **Jeremiah Burroughs (1599–1646), *The Rare Jewel of Christian Contentment*. London: Printed by Peter Cole, 1648, pg. 187.**
- "The man who boasts of his wit in escaping peril robs God of His glory, for deliverance comes by divine power alone." — **Thomas Brooks (1608–1680), *Precious Remedies Against Satan's Devices*. London: Printed by M. Simmons, 1652, pg. 112.**
- "Trust not in thine own shrewdness for salvation, for human wisdom is as dust before the Almighty, who saves by His grace." — **John Owen (1616–1683), *The Mortification of Sin*. London: Printed for Nathanael Ponder, 1656, pg. 76.**
- "Let not thy heart ascribe deliverance to thine own cunning; God's hand, not man's, brings thee safely through." — **Richard Sibbes (1577–1635),**

## Study and Discussion Questions

- **Context and Background:**

- Who is David in this passage, and what is his situation in 1 Samuel 21:7–22:1? Why is he on the run, and what challenges does he face in Nob and Gath?
- What is the significance of Doeg the Edomite's presence in Nob (1 Sam. 21:7)? How does this detail foreshadow future events in the narrative?
- Why is it notable that David receives the sword of Goliath (1 Sam. 21:9)? How does this connect to his past victories and God's provision?

- **Exposition of the Passage:**

- Why does the sermon describe David's decision to flee to Gath as a "foolish plan"? What does this reveal about David's state of mind and decision-making process?
- How does David's behavior in Gath (pretending to be insane, 1 Sam. 21:12–15) reflect his fear? What does this teach about the consequences of relying on human strategies instead of trusting God?
- According to 1 Samuel 22:1 and Psalm 34:19–22, who is ultimately responsible for David's deliverance from Gath? How does this shape the main doctrine of the sermon?

- **Doctrinal Insights:**

- The sermon states the doctrine: "Even when a Christian's foolish plans backfire, the Lord is still faithful to deliver." How does this doctrine apply to David's situation, and how might it apply to believers today?
- How do Psalm 34:19 and Psalm 56:9, 13 reinforce the idea that God delivers the righteous? What specific promises do these verses offer to those facing afflictions?

- **Application of Psalm 34:19:**

- The sermon emphasizes Psalm 34:19: "Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the LORD delivers him out of them all." What does this verse teach about the nature of afflictions and God's deliverance?
- How does the sermon clarify that God's deliverance may not always mean freedom from temporary hurt but always ensures protection

from eternal harm? Provide examples from Scripture or personal experience that illustrate this distinction.

- **Seven Afflictions and Deliverances:**

- List the seven afflictions from which the Lord delivers His people, as outlined in the sermon. For each, identify the corresponding Psalm and explain how it demonstrates God's faithfulness.
- How does the sermon describe the gospel in terms of God saving His people "from Himself, through Himself, by Himself, to Himself, for Himself"? Break down each component and explain its significance.

- **Practical Application:**

- Why does the sermon warn against seeking deliverance through alliances with the Lord's enemies (James 4:4)? How might this apply to modern contexts (e.g., compromising with worldly values or systems)?
- The sermon advises believers not to credit their own wit or cleverness for deliverances. How can Christians cultivate humility and give glory to God in moments of deliverance?
- How does Psalm 34:17 encourage believers to cry out to God in times of trouble? What role does praying "in the name of Christ" (John 15:16) play in this process?

## **Discussion Questions (For Small Groups or Classroom Settings)**

- **Engaging the Narrative:**

- Share a time when you made a decision that seemed wise at the moment but led to unintended consequences, similar to David's choice to flee to Gath. What did you learn from that experience?
- Why do you think David chose to act insane in Gath (1 Sam. 21:12–15)? Discuss how fear can lead to desperate or unwise actions. How can trusting God help us avoid such responses?

- **Theological Reflection:**

- The sermon highlights that God delivers the righteous despite their foolish plans. How does this truth provide comfort or encouragement when we make mistakes or face difficulties?
- Discuss the balance between God's sovereignty in delivering His people and our responsibility to make wise choices. How can we grow in wisdom while relying on God's faithfulness?

- **Application to Daily Life:**

- The sermon lists seven afflictions from which God delivers His people (e.g., wrath, sin, death, the wicked, fears, lies, sickness). Which of these resonates most with you personally, and why? How have you seen God deliver you or others from these?

- How can Psalm 34:19 ("Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the LORD delivers him out of them all") be a source of hope in your current challenges? Share practical ways to apply this verse in daily life.
- **Warnings and Encouragements:**
  - The sermon warns those outside of Christ that "affliction will slay the wicked" (Psalm 34:21). How does this warning underscore the urgency of trusting in Christ for salvation? How can believers lovingly share this truth with others?
  - The sermon encourages believers to "praise the Lord for the deliverances He provides" (Psalm 40:10). Share examples of how you have seen God's deliverance in your life or others' lives. How can you cultivate a habit of praising God for His faithfulness?
- **For Children (Based on "BOYS AND GIRLS" Prompts):**
  - What does it mean to trust God when you're scared, like David was in Gath? Can you think of a time when you were afraid and asked God for help?
  - Psalm 34:19 says God helps His people when they face trouble. What kinds of troubles do kids face, and how can they pray to God about them?
  - Why is it important to thank God when He helps you, like David did in Psalm 34? How can you show God you're thankful?