

David was inspired by his own experience to write this psalm, remembering a time when he was afraid for his own life. He is so grateful that LORD has preserved his life that he writes this psalm praising the LORD for His tender care of His saints. He calls on these saints to join him in praise to the LORD and lists some of the many benefits available to those who trust in the LORD.

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A Psalm of David, when he changed his behaviour before Abimelech; who drove him away, and he departed  
1 I will bless the LORD at all times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth.

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**“A Psalm of David, when he changed his behaviour before Abimelech; who drove him away, and he departed”** – The title tells us that the author of this psalm is David, and his occasion for writing it was an incident in his life when he was fleeing from Saul and had sought refuge with Achish, the king of Gath (1 Sam. 21:10-15). The name “Abimelech,” like the name Pharaoh, was a title rather than the man’s actual name, which was Achish according to the account in 1 Samuel 21. The servants of Achish did not trust David and suggested to the king that David’s loyalties still lay with Israel. As a result, David became afraid for his life and began pretending to be insane in order to give Achish a reason to send him away. The words of this psalm express David’s gratitude to the LORD for allowing him to escape with his life.

**“I will bless the LORD at all times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth”** – David was glad to have escaped Gath and was grateful to the LORD that he was alive. Although an argument can be made that David demonstrated a lack of trust in God to take care of him when he acted insane, this psalm credits the LORD for protecting him in all aspects of his life. David declares that he will always have a word of praise for the LORD. He is motivated by the same joy that we experience when the LORD answers our prayer by resolving a situation for which we could not see the solution. We are amazed and grateful at what the LORD can do, and this was the attitude of David in this psalm.

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2 My soul shall make her boast in the LORD: the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad.

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**“My soul shall make her boast in the LORD”** – David is willing to boast, but his boast is in the LORD and not in himself, his circumstances, or any human help. He recognizes that the LORD is the ultimate source of all blessings that come his way for he does not believe in luck.

**“the humble [poor; weak; meek] shall hear thereof, and be glad”** – Those who are poor and weak (unable to help themselves) will hear David’s boasting in the LORD and it will rejoice because of the hope it gives them. They will realize that they also can trust in the LORD and will be able to boast when the LORD helps them. David considers himself to be poor as well (v. 6) and so the “humble” can identify with him.

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3 O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together.

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David invites the other humble people to join him in exalting the name of the LORD. As David testifies later in this psalm, the LORD is worthy of our praise and He takes care of those who trust in Him. We can never go overboard when praising the LORD because no matter how highly we exalt Him, we are still not doing Him justice. Our human limitations prevent us from giving the LORD the glory and honor that He deserves.

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4 I sought the LORD, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears.

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**“I sought [to seek with the intent of consulting or inquiring] the LORD, and he heard [answered; responded] me”** – David sought the LORD in the face of his troubles in order to ask for His help. The LORD did not ignore David’s pleas but responded with help. **“and delivered me from all my fears”** – David asked for help concerning the things that he feared and the LORD responded by rescuing him from “all of my fears.” Notice that he didn’t necessarily say that the LORD fixed all the situations that he feared, but he did say that the LORD rescued him from the fears. David’s fears subsided because he knew that the LORD was in control and would take care of him regardless of how each situation turned out.

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5 They looked unto him, and were lightened: and their faces were not ashamed.

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**“They looked unto him, and were lightened [radiant; bright]”** – The “they” that David refers to are probably the humble he mentioned in v. 2. They look to the LORD for their help and were “lightened.” This could refer to the light of the LORD shining on them as He comes to their aid, but more likely it refers to their mood being “brightened” by the encouragement of knowing that the LORD was coming to their aid.

**“and their faces were not ashamed”** – Continuing the idea that they have become cheered up, their faces reflect the fact that they are not ashamed or embarrassed for trusting in the LORD for help. Their trust in Him was not a disappointment.

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

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**“This poor man cried, and the LORD heard him”** – David refers to himself as a poor man. He does not demand that the LORD help him and provide what he wants or needs. Instead he humbly cries out to the LORD for help as a poor and needy man and the LORD hears him and responds.

**“and saved him out of all his troubles”** – The LORD responded to David’s cry for help by rescuing him from his troubles. David may be speaking specifically of his trouble with Abimelech but more likely he is speaking more generally about how the LORD has consistently saved him from his troubles throughout his life.

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7 The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.

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When the angel of the LORD appears in the OT, he sometime accepts worship and speaks as if he is God. This characteristic implies the appearances of “the angel of the LORD” may have been pre-incarnate appearances of Jesus Christ. David is saying that this angel camps around those who fear (reverence; honor; obey) the LORD and rescues them. This verse brings to mind the occasion when the king of Syria sent his army to capture Elisha the prophet and this army surrounded the city where the prophet was staying. **2 Kings 6:15-17** “*And when the servant of the man of God was risen early, and gone forth, behold, an host compassed the city both with horses and chariots. And his servant said unto him, Alas, my master! how shall we do? And he answered, Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them. And Elisha prayed, and said, LORD, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the LORD opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha.*” David trusted that the LORD would protect him and the enemy would have go through the LORD’s encampment to get to him.

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8 O taste and see that the LORD is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him.

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“**O taste** [*to savor; to perceive*] **and see that the LORD is good** [*pleasant; agreeable; beneficial*]” – The Hebrew word does not necessarily mean to sample a small portion like we might think of when we are asked to taste something. It means to eat and savor the taste of a meal. David is urging us to experience the goodness of the LORD for ourselves so that we will see that it is very beneficial to trust in the LORD and to be under His care.

“**blessed** [*happy*] **is the man that trusteth** [*to seek refuge or protection*] **in him**” – Anyone who goes to the LORD for protection and refuge will happy that they did so because they will not be disappointed. They will have “tasted” the goodness of God and discovered the benefits of trusting in Him.

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9 O fear the LORD, ye his saints: for there is no want to them that fear him.

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“**O fear** [*to be afraid; reverence; honor*] **the LORD, ye his saints** [*holy ones; those who are set apart*]” – David now calls on the saints of God (those who belong to the LORD) to show reverence and honor to the LORD. They are to recognize that the LORD is worthy of praise, glory and honor and then render these things to Him.

“**for there is no want** [*need; lack; poverty*] **to them that fear him**” – The LORD will protect and provide for those who reverence and honor Him.

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10 The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger: but they that seek the LORD shall not want any good thing.

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“**The young lions do lack** [*to be poor or in want*], **and suffer hunger**” – These young lions, filled with youthful energy and strength, are normally able to seek out prey to fill their stomachs, but there will be occasions when even these predators will not find enough food to satisfy their hunger. David may be using young lions to represent the oppressors who prey on the poor or he may simply be preparing to contrast the ability of predatory animals to provide for themselves to those who trust in the LORD for their provision.

“**but they that seek** [*to go to; to inquire of*] **the LORD shall not want** [*to be in need*] **any good thing**” – In contrast to the young lions who are not entirely self-sufficient, those who seek the LORD’s help will not be lacking in the good things that they need. The LORD will provide for His people.

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**Verses 11-22:** David describes to us what the fear the LORD looks like so that we can do these things and enjoy His blessings. We are to obey the LORD and practice righteousness. Also, our heart should be broken and repentant over our sin. David promises us that the LORD will always be ready to rescue, provide for, and protect the righteous.