

Psalm 34:7

Title: *The Protective Benefits of Fearing the LORD*

Summary

Human life often feels uncertain, insecure, and unsafe because of the sudden arrival of problems and trials. These moments of fear and doubt often lead us to ask: “*How can I protect myself from such troubles?*” David provides an answer in Psalm 34, a hymn of thanksgiving for God’s intervention.

David recalled his desperate situation when King Abimelek plotted to kill him. To escape, David pretended to be insane before the king, who then released him. Yet David never credited his cleverness or skill for his survival. Instead, he testified that the LORD had surrounded and delivered him. For this reason, he began the psalm with a resolute declaration: “*I will bless the LORD at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth*” (Ps. 34:1). Later, in verse 7, he affirms: “*The angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear Him, and He delivers them.*”

Let us reflect on this verse and divide it into two parts for deeper reflection:

1. God is near to His people to protect them.
2. God rescues His people from danger.

I. God Is Near to His People to Protect Them

David proclaims: “*The angel of the LORD encamps.*” This figure, “the angel of the LORD,” is a unique divine messenger who often acts as God’s representative and, at times, is identified with God Himself.

The Hebrew verb **ḥānâ** (“to encamp”) means more than to “visit” or “pass by.” It carries the sense of establishing a camp, dwelling in a place, often in a military sense. For example, during Israel’s conquest of Canaan, the northern kings “*encamped together at the waters of Merom to fight against Israel*” (Josh. 11:5).

But here, in Psalm 34, it is not earthly armies but the angel of the LORD—God Himself—who encamps around those who fear Him. This communicates two vital truths:

First, God is not distant. Some claim that God is far away, but the text assures us that He is near. The Hebrew word **sāḥîḇ** (“around”) means to surround or enclose on every side. God does not merely stand nearby; He completely encircles His people, even when they feel forsaken. As Hebrews 13:5 reminds us: “*I will never leave you nor forsake you.*”

Second, God’s nearness is directed toward those who fear Him. To “fear God” is to live with deep reverence and awe toward Him—caring most about what He thinks, obeying His commands, and seeking His pleasure (Deut. 5:29; 6:2, 13). This is the essence of wisdom: “*The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom*” (Prov. 9:10; cf. Ps. 111:10).

Application: If you truly fear the LORD yet feel isolated in your journey, take heart—He has encamped around you. His presence is your support, strength, and shield.

II. God Rescues His People from Danger

David also reveals *why* God draws near: to deliver His people. What a mighty and gracious God we serve!

The Hebrew verb translated “rescue” means “to pull off,” “to draw out,” or “to remove.” Figuratively, it describes God’s act of delivering His people from danger or distress.

At times, God prevents His people from facing danger altogether. At other times, He allows them to walk through trials but carries them safely to the other side. Often, His deliverance is hidden, occurring in ways we may never perceive.

This is part of the ministry of God’s angels, who serve as His instruments of protection. They guard us, watch over us, and shield us from unseen threats—even when we remain unaware.

Application: If you have ever escaped danger or been rescued from harm, recognize that it was not mere chance, nor your own strength—it was God. His angels were encamped around you, fulfilling His promise of protection.

Psalm 34:7 assures us of two things: God’s nearness and His deliverance belong to those who fear Him. The angel of the LORD does not merely pass by but encamps—surrounding His people like a fortress. And His presence is not passive; it is active, drawing His people out of peril.

Thus, the believer may live in reverent awe, confident that the God who surrounds also saves.

Theological Questions for Reflection

1. Do you fear God?
 2. Do you sense His presence in your life?
 3. How has God delivered you recently?
 4. Did you know that, if you fear God, His angels watch over you?
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Conclusion

While physical and emotional deliverance are important, the greatest deliverance is spiritual. God sent His only Son, Jesus Christ, to rescue us from sin and spiritual death—eternal separation from Him. Through Christ's sacrifice, we are no longer enemies of God but His beloved children, for Jesus paid the full price for our sins.

Even amid calamity, we can fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith (Heb. 12:2). Truly, the victory belongs to Him. Amen!

Ismael Dora, PhD.