

The Attackers: David's Performance Earns Banishment from Gath, 1 Sam 21:14–15 cf. Ps 34: Superscription; David Scrape with Death Spark Reversion Recovery; Tanakh's Kethuvim Contains Praises for God; Ps 34 Is Alphabetical in Structure & Contains Many Problem-Solving Devices: v. 1: PSD #7; v. 2: PSDs #10 & #5; v. 3: Praise for God; v. 4: Divine Response to Rebound; v. 5: PSD #9 (Esoterike Harmonia); v. 6: PSD #1: David Rebounds, God Delivers

1. David's problem-solving device was to pretend to be insane. He was thinking clearly enough to remember the cultural practice of the Greek people and knew they would not kill him but "leave him to the punishment of the gods."
2. The Hithpoel stem of *halal* means to act foolishly or to be insane; the imperfect tense indicates continuous action. He was acting the fool.
3. Achish at least has a sense of humor about it all. He apparently had the same gaggle of advisers that we have among our political cast today.

1 Samuel 21:14 - Achish said to his servants, "You see the man behaves like he is mad [Hithpael participle of שָׁנַע (*shaga'*): to be insane]! Why have you brought him to me?"

v. 15 - "Am I deficient [חָסֵר (*chaser*): lacking] of madmen, that you have brought me this man to display his insanity in front of me? Should this man enter my house?"

1. Achish indicates that his staff is well-enough populated by madmen and he certainly does not need yet another one.
2. With that David is released and is able to escape from danger. It was not due to his faith-rest but his knowledge of Philistine culture that enabled him to fool the king.
3. This is the end of the passage but we learn of David's recovery from reversionism in Psalm 34, an acrostic psalm written by David.
4. We have just completed the narrative of the events in Gath involving David and Achish. Now we turn to the passage that informs us of what David was thinking during this time.
5. The psalm begins with a superscription:

Psalm 34: Superscription - A Psalm of David when he feigned madness before Abimelech,¹ who drove him away [the Piel imperfect of the verb שָׁרַשׁ (*gharash*): to banish as an outcast from society] and he departed.

1. Obviously, David had long since recovered from reversionism since he is now recounting his experiences under the Holy Spirit's ministry of enduement.
2. David got out of the plan of God and therefore made poor decisions from a position of weakness. He went to a heathen king for refuge rather than the God of Israel.
3. The future king of Israel is humiliated by a heathen king. The Piel imperfect of *gharash* is intensive which means the banishment was abusive and insulting.

¹ The Hebrew word for "king" is מֶלֶךְ (*melech*), therefore Abimelech is a royal title among the Philistines rather than a personal name. Here it refers to Achish, king of Gath.

4. Such contempt was a sure sign of David's reversionism. Yet he did recover as Psalm 34 reveals.
5. The spiritual life of the Israelites was limited to the application of the faith-rest drill. However, they did express quite eloquently respect and admiration for God. This is often the case in the *Kethuvim*, that section of the Tanakh that contains Psalms and Proverbs.
6. David uses a poetic structure that is called an acrostic, or better, alphabetical: the twenty-two verses begin with the letters of the Hebrew alphabet in descending order with two exceptions at verses 6 and 22.
7. The psalm expresses David's thanksgiving for being delivered from danger. From his experiences with divine provision and protection, he encourages others to remain loyal to the Word of God and to offer thanksgiving to the Lord.
8. We will note the psalm and point out several applications of the problem-solving devices used by David in his song.

Psalm 34:1 - I will love [Piel imperfect of בָּרַךְ (*barach*): maximum love; PSD #7] the Lord at all times; my mouth will continually sing praise [תְּהַלֵּל (*tehillah*): to offer thanksgiving from the source of biblically based adoration] to Him.

v. 2 - My soul shall celebrate [Hithpael imperfect² of the verb הָלַל (*halal*): occupation with Christ] the Lord. The doctrinally oriented [שָׁמַח ('*anaw*): grace mental attitude] shall hear and rejoice [שָׂמַח (*samach*): blessing by association] .

v. 3 - Magnify [Piel imperative of גָּדַל (*ghathal*): assign to greatness] the Lord with me and let us lift up [Piel imperfect of the verb רוּם (*rum*): exalt] His name together.

1. David is commanding those who follow him to join him in assigning greatness to the Lord thus asserting that it is not him personally that does anything but rather the Lord.

Psalm 34:4 - I hastened [דָּרַשׁ (*darash*): to beat a path to doctrine] to the Lord, and He answered and delivered [Hiphil perfect of נָצַל (*nasal*): from all the problems involved with his reversionism] me from my fears.

1. The fears from which David has been delivered refer back to his encounter in Gath with Achish whom he said he "greatly feared" (1 Samuel 21:12).

Psalm 34:5 - Those who are caused to look [Hiphil of נָבַט (*navat*): to have a perspective of life] to Him have inner happiness [נָהַר (*nahar*): in anticipation of blessing they had inner happiness under grace orientation] and their faces will never be ashamed.

² "In the Hithpael, *halal* means 'brag, boast.' But it is also possible to boast or glory in God, often in the context of rejoicing. In Psalm 34:2 where praise of God is coupled with boasting in him and the psalmist's deliverance is cited as the reason" (Cazelles, "הָלַל," in *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, 3:410).

v. 6 - This oppressed [עָנִי ('*aniy*): afflicted; wretched] man cried out [Qal perfect of קָרָא (*qara'*): to shout for help] and the Lord heard [שָׁמַע (*shama'*): divine response]; He saved [Hiphil perfect of יָשַׁע (*yasha'*): delivered] him from his troubles [צָרָה (*sarah*): the afflictions of reversionism].