

Psalm 33: 13-22 (ESV): Hope in the Lord

Main point: Put your hope in God, not the world around you.



Open with a short prayer, inviting God to teach us.

Background: No particular prefix for this one; assumed to be written by David.

Focus of the study:

- ¹³The Lord looks down from heaven;
he sees all the children of man;
¹⁴from where the Lord sits enthroned he looks out
on all the inhabitants of the earth,
¹⁵he who fashions the hearts of them all
and observes all their deeds.
¹⁶The king is not saved by his great army;
a warrior is not delivered by his great strength.
¹⁷The war horse is a false hope for salvation,
and by its great might it cannot rescue.
¹⁸Behold, the eye of the Lord is on those who fear him,
on those who hope in God's steadfast love,
¹⁹that the Lord may deliver their soul from death
and keep them alive in famine.
²⁰Our soul waits for the Lord;
he is our help and our shield.
²¹For our heart is glad in the Lord,
because we trust in his holy name.
²²Let your steadfast love, O Lord, be upon us,
even as we hope in you.

Questions:

1. *What/who does God see? What does God look upon? What does God observe?*
 - a. v. 13: all the children of man
 - b. v. 14: all the inhabitants of the earth
 - c. v. 15: observes all their deeds
2. *How "thorough" is God's vision? What word gets repeated in the first three verses?*
 - a. "All" is repeated again and again = Nothing escapes God's eye
3. *What do you see when you observe the Earth and its people? (**Pantomime standing in a low spot, not able to see very far; then standing on top of a hill and how much more you can see**)*
 - a. When you're down low, you have a limited view ... can't see very far
 - b. When you get up higher, you can see more
 - c. What we can see is limited because we are limited.
4. *Where is God "looking" from? What kind of view does God have?*
 - a. v. 14: from where God sits enthroned
 - b. Therefore, an eternal / big picture perspective

5. *How does the writer describe what God sees?*
 - a. v. 16-17: people: kings, great armies, warriors, great strength, war horses
 6. *How do these things look to us?*
 - a. All-powerful, imposing, frightening, in control
 7. *In contrast, how do these people and things look to God?*
 - a. Small, compared to God! From God's heavenly perspective, their size and might do not save them ("not saved; not delivered; a false hope for salvation; cannot rescue")
 8. *In v. 18, the writer calls out "Behold" – what does that mean?*
 - a. Look at this! Pay attention
 9. *Who does God see and help?*
 - a. v. 18: those who fear him,
 - b. Those who *hope* in God's steadfast love
 10. *What does God do for those people who honor and hope in God?*
 - a. v. 19: delivers their souls from death; provide for them
 11. *So what does the writer say our response should be if we hope and fear the Lord versus trusting in our own power and might? What should we do instead of fearing those who look like they have all the power and might on this earth?*
 - a. v. 20: we wait for the Lord: God is our help and shield, not an army of humans
 - b. v. 21: we are glad in the Lord: secure that God holds all things in *his* hands
 12. *Why can we wait in hope and be glad, even when things look scary or out of control in the world around us?*
 - a. Because we trust in God. *What exactly do we trust in and about God? What is God's character? What is God's heart?*
 - i. God's power and might
 - ii. God's eternal perspective
 - iii. God's *steadfast love* for us
 13. The psalm ends with a prayer: "Let your steadfast love, O Lord, be upon us, even as we hope in you." That's a good prayer!
 - a. *What does "steadfast love" mean to you?*
 - b. *How do you experience God's love as you put your hope in the Lord?*
- Ask for any prayer requests for today.
 - Close in prayer, naming people and needs listed.
 - End with a song, e.g., first verse of Amazing Grace

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