

Psalm 34:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The eyes of the LORD are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry.

Analysis

The eyes of the LORD are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry. This beautiful verse reveals God's intimate, personal attention to those who belong to Him. The Hebrew word for "eyes" (einayim, עַיִן) combined with "upon" (el, אֶל) conveys continuous, focused watchfulness—not distant observation but caring oversight. The LORD (YHWH, יְהֹוָה) uses His covenant name, emphasizing His faithful relationship with His people.

"The righteous" (tsaddiqim, צַדִּיקִים) refers not to those perfect in themselves, but to those declared righteous through faith and covenant relationship with God. This righteousness is both positional (imputed) and practical (lived out in obedience). The parallelism continues with "his ears are open" (aznav, אָזְנוֹ), depicting God's readiness to hear. Unlike pagan idols with ears that cannot hear (Psalm 115:6), the living God actively listens.

"Their cry" (shav'atam, שַׁבְּעָתָם) denotes urgent, desperate appeal—not casual prayer but heartfelt petition in distress. This verse assures believers that God is neither distant nor indifferent. He watches, He listens, and He responds. This truth provides comfort in trials and encouragement in prayer, pointing forward to Christ, our righteousness, through whom we have bold access to the Father (Ephesians 3:12, Hebrews 4:16).

Historical Context

Psalm 34 is a Davidic psalm written after he feigned madness before Abimelech (actually Achish, king of Gath—"Abimelech" being a royal title) and escaped (1 Samuel 21:10-15). This was one of David's lowest moments: fleeing from Saul, seeking refuge among Israel's enemies, reduced to acting insane to save his life. Yet from this desperate experience, David composed a psalm celebrating God's faithfulness and deliverance.

The historical context enriches verse 15's meaning. David had experienced God's watchful care when all human help failed. His testimony wasn't theoretical theology but lived reality. When he cried out in genuine need, God heard and delivered. This psalm became part of Israel's worship, teaching generations that God cares for His covenant people.

Peter quotes this verse in 1 Peter 3:12, applying it to believers suffering persecution. The early church, facing imperial hostility, found comfort in knowing God's eyes remained upon them and His ears open to their cries—the same assurance that sustained David centuries earlier.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How does knowing God's eyes are constantly upon you affect your daily decisions and behavior?
2. What does it mean to be "righteous" in God's sight, and how does this relate to Christ's imputed righteousness?
3. In what specific situations should this promise encourage you to cry out to God rather than relying on human solutions?

4. How can you cultivate deeper confidence in prayer knowing God's ears are truly open to your cry?
5. What does this verse teach about God's character that contrasts with deistic views of a distant, uninvolved Creator?

Interlinear Text

עֵין־יְהוָה עַל־צַדִּיקִים וְאֶל־אָזְנָבָם:
 The eyes of the LORD are upon the righteous and his ears
 H5869 H3068 H413 H6662 H241 H413
 are open unto their cry
 H7775

Additional Cross-References

1 Peter 3:12 (Righteousness): For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil.

Psalms 34:17 (Righteousness): The righteous cry, and the LORD heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles.

Psalms 33:18 (References Lord): Behold, the eye of the LORD is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy;

Job 36:7 (Righteousness): He withdraweth not his eyes from the righteous: but with kings are they on the throne; yea, he doth establish them for ever, and they are exalted.

Psalms 34:6 (References Lord): This poor man cried, and the LORD heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles.

2 Chronicles 6:40 (Parallel theme): Now, my God, let, I beseech thee, thine eyes be open, and let thine ears be attent unto the prayer that is made in this place.

Psalms 130:2 (References Lord): Lord, hear my voice: let thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications.

