

SBC – March 10, 2024

Psalm 18 (NKJV)

“Praise to the Deliverer”

Psalm 18 is a Psalm of David. It is the fourth longest Psalm in the book of Psalms (cf. 78, 89, 119). It was written after the death of Saul and evidently, after various wars and uprisings that God had seen David through. It is a Psalm celebrating the victory that God has given to David.

Psalm 18 is almost the same as 2 Samuel 22 which was sung by David at the very end of his life. So, this is like an overview of praise for the victory that God has given to David throughout his life.

It is likely that David composed this song as a younger man; yet in his old age David could look back with great gratitude and sing this song again, looking at his whole life. – David Guzik

To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David The Servant of the LORD, Who Spoke to the LORD The Words of This Song on the Day that the LORD Delivered Him from the Hand of All His Enemies and from the Hand of Saul. And He Said:

David saw himself as a SERVANT of the LORD. He was here to serve the purposes of God. He composed this Psalm in praise of the deliverance that the LORD had given him over all his enemies – but then note, “**and from the hand of Saul.**” It is phrased in such a way as to make a distinction not wanting to explicitly count Saul as an overt enemy. After all, Saul was David’s father-in-law, and he was the Lord’s anointed whom David was very careful not to try and harm.

Slide # 1

Psalm 18

“Praise to the Deliverer”

vv. 1-3 - David Praises God for Deliverance

vv. 4-6 - Facing Deadly Danger

vv. 7-19 – God’s Majestic Deliverance

vv. 20-24 – David’s Ethical Integrity

vv. 25-27 – God’s Principled Dealings with Man

vv. 28-30 – God Proved Himself to David

vv. 31-36 – God Gave David Strength & Skill

vv. 37-42 – God Gave David Victory

vv. 43-49 – God Established David’s Position

v. 50 – God Blesses His Anointed

1 I will love You, O LORD, my strength.

As God's people, we have all known His deliverance – ultimately, eternal deliverance through our Lord Jesus Christ. Our response should be to LOVE the LORD for what He has done for us. What a great way to start this celebration of deliverance.

[David] used a special word that means “to love deeply, to have compassion” (see Jer. 21:7). It's related to the Hebrew word for “womb” and describes the kind of love a mother has for her baby (Isa. 49:15), a father has for his children (Ps. 103:13), and the Lord has for His chosen people Israel (102:13; Deut. 13:17; Hos. 1:7). It's a deep fervent love... – **Warren Wiersbe**

David really sees God as his all. He did not see himself as a self-made man, but totally as a God-made man. He calls the Lord his “strength”.

2 The LORD is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer; My God, my strength, in whom I will trust; My shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.

Here in verse two David used 8 different descriptions of what God meant to him.

Slide # 2

My **Rock** (Stability)
 My **Fortress** (Safety)
 My **Deliverer** (Rescuer)
 My **God** (Higher Power)
 My **Strength** (Unmovable)
 My **Shield** (Protection)
Horn of My Salvation (Defender)
 My **Stronghold** (Refuge)

With this view of God no wonder David says, “in whom I trust”.

3 I will call upon the LORD, who is worthy to be praised; So shall I be saved from my enemies.

David knew the key to victory was through prayer – calling on the LORD. God is worthy to be praised because he saves from the enemy.

4 The pangs of death surrounded me, And the floods of ungodliness made me afraid.

5 The sorrows of Sheol surrounded me; The snares of death confronted me.

6 In my distress I called upon the LORD, And cried out to my God; He heard my voice from His temple, And my cry came before Him, even to His ears.

This is David's testimony. He was in a death threatening situation and in that position he called on the LORD and David says his prayer came right into God's temple – right into the ears of God. He heard!

7 Then the earth shook and trembled; The foundations of the hills also quaked and were shaken, Because He was angry.

8 Smoke went up from His nostrils, And devouring fire from His mouth; Coals were kindled by it.

9 He bowed the heavens also, and came down With darkness under His feet.

10 And He rode upon a cherub, and flew; He flew upon the wings of the wind.

In poetic language David describes the response of God to his prayer. God was angry with righteous anger with what David's wicked enemies were doing to him and God moved heaven and earth to save David from death.

When he says God "rode upon a cherub and flew; He flew upon the wings of the wind" David is emphasizing the speed of God's deliverance. Sometimes David had to WAIT upon the LORD and sometimes He answers with amazing SPEED!

11 He made darkness His secret place; His canopy around Him was dark waters And thick clouds of the skies.

12 From the brightness before Him, His thick clouds passed with hailstones and coals of fire.

13 The LORD thundered from heaven, And the Most High uttered His voice, Hailstones and coals of fire.

14 He sent out His arrows and scattered the foe, Lightnings in abundance, and He vanquished them.

15 Then the channels of the sea were seen, The foundations of the world were uncovered At Your rebuke, O LORD, At the blast of the breath of Your nostrils.

David describes God's deliverance in picturesque storm language. And perhaps God did use an actual fierce storm in this situation. There was darkness, hailstones, thunder, lightning, and horrendous winds that laid bare the sea floor which is described as "the blast of the breath of Your nostrils."

**16 He sent from above, He took me; He drew me out of many waters.
17 He delivered me from my strong enemy, From those who hated me,
For they were too strong for me.**

It was as though David was drowning in perilous trouble and God came to his rescue. The enemy was strong and their hatred was fierce but God Who is the "Most High" (v. 13) has all power and He came to David's aid.

18 They confronted me in the day of my calamity, But the LORD was my support.

This is just like hateful enemies. They look to take advantage in a time of calamity – but David's testimony is that the LORD was his support. God was there for him.

**19 He also brought me out into a broad place; He delivered me because He delighted in me.
20 The LORD rewarded me according to my righteousness; According to the cleanness of my hands He has recompensed me.
21 For I have kept the ways of the LORD, And have not wickedly departed from my God.
22 For all His judgments were before me, And I did not put away His statutes [decrees] from me.
23 I was also blameless before Him, And I kept myself from my iniquity.
24 Therefore the LORD has recompensed me according to my righteousness, According to the cleanness of my hands in His sight.**

David is not claiming sinlessness or being self-righteous here. He, however, insists that in this situation he had consistently acted with integrity. For example, in the case of Saul, he never retaliated. He never tried to kill Saul, even though he had the opportunity to do so. He never sinfully took matters into his own hands, but rather waited upon the Lord. And this went on for many years – perhaps for about 10 years.

In the matter of wars and how David dealt with his enemies his conscience was clear. He had consistently conducted himself uprightly with integrity.

God honors a walk of integrity. He works through prayer on behalf of those whose heart is right towards Him.

Slide # 3

1 John 3:22 (NKJV)

22 And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight.

Slide # 4

We believe this psalm – twice recorded in Scripture, with minor variations, both here and in 2 Samuel 22 – actually speaks from two contexts. Here, according to the title, it was sung first from David's victory over Saul and receiving of the throne of Israel. In 2 Samuel 22 David sang it as a grateful retrospect over his entire life.

– **David Guzik**

25 With the merciful You will show Yourself merciful; With a blameless man You will show Yourself blameless;

26 With the pure You will show Yourself pure; And with the devious You will show Yourself shrewd.

David, in effect, is reiterating how God deals with people, showing that they reap what they have sown. God often treats people in accordance with how they treat others! (cf. Mt. 7:2)

That line that God “with the devious” shows Himself shrewd is interesting. People think their crooked ways can get around God but they can't.

Charles Ryrie says this means, “He is at cross-purposes with those who are cross-purposes with Him.”

Verse 26b actually says, “To the twisted you will show Yourself twisted”. You say that is “twisted”. Jame Montgomery Boice says, “The idea seems to be that if a person insists in going devious ways in his dealings with God, God will outwit him, as that man deserves.” No one can outsmart God! It will boomerang on them!

27 For You will save the humble people, But will bring down haughty looks.

God gives grace to the humble, but He resists the proud (cf. Ja. 4:6; 1 Pet. 5:5).

28 For You will light my lamp; The LORD my God will enlighten my darkness.

29 For by You I can run against a troop, By my God I can leap over a wall.

30 As for God, His way is perfect; The word of the LORD is proven; He is a shield to all who trust in Him.

Again, David gives God all the glory! God lightens his way. God gives him the physical abilities to win the battle.

Not only is God's way BEST – it is PERFECT! The Word of the LORD is proven – literally meaning it is “tried in fire” and found to be pure. It withstands all tests and never fails!

Slide # 5

THE BIBLE STANDS

**The Bible stands every test we give it,
For its Author is divine;
By grace alone I will expect to live it,
And to prove it and make it mine.**

David's testimony is that God is a shield (a protection) to all those who trust or take refuge in Him. This is the believers SAFE PLACE!

31 For who is God, except the LORD? And who is a rock, except our God?

The question is rhetorical! Only YHWH – the covenant God of Israel is God! And there is no other firm foundation except God!

**32 It is God who arms me with strength, And makes my way perfect.
33 He makes my feet like the feet of deer, And sets me on my high places.**

34 He teaches my hands to make war, So that my arms can bend a bow of bronze.

35 You have also given me the shield of Your salvation; Your right hand has held me up, Your gentleness has made me great.

36 You enlarged my path under me, So my feet did not slip.

David saw God as behind every success! God had made him everything that he was. God had given him everything that he had.

And note that phrase, “Your gentleness has made me great”. God could instantly crush us if He wanted to. But He deals with us in gentleness.

Though David was a man of war, he recognized that it was God’s “gentleness” that made him what he was. The word means “condescension.” God condescended to look down and call David (1 Sam. 16), come down and answer David (Ps. 18:9), and reach down and save David (v. 16); and then He lifted him up to the throne (vv. 39-45). – **Warren Wiersbe**

We don’t often think of someone being made great by the gentleness of God. It is easy to underestimate the power of God’s gentleness, and we often want a more evidently spectacular work from God. Yet David – this great warrior – received from and responded to the gentleness of God. – **David Guzik**

37 I have pursued my enemies and overtaken them; Neither did I turn back again till they were destroyed.

38 I have wounded them, So that they could not rise; They have fallen under my feet.

39 For You have armed me with strength for the battle; You have subdued under me those who rose up against me.

40 You have also given me the necks of my enemies, So that I destroyed those who hated me.

The predominant thought throughout these verses is that David attributed every ability and victory of his to the Lord. Everything he had done and everything he now enjoyed was due to the Lord’s enabling. – **The Bible Knowledge Commentary**

41 They cried out, but there was none to save; Even to the LORD, but He did not answer them.

With God's intervention the tables were suddenly turned as God gave David the upper hand where the enemies were now on the run. They, in desperation, cried out for help – even to YHWH, but He did not answer them.

There is a certain kind of prayer that is all about SELF and not really about God. Some people have a "Crisis Christ". In times of crisis, you would think that they are the most spiritual people in the world, but it's all about SELF-SELF PRESERVATION. It is not truly God-honoring or God-oriented.

Slide # 6

Proverbs 28:9 (NKJV)

9 One who turns away his ear from hearing the law, Even his prayer is an abomination.

There is only one prayer from the wicked to which He gladly listens – the prayer of repentance. – *The Nelson Study Bible*

42 Then I beat them as fine as the dust before the wind; I cast them out like dirt in the streets.

43 You have delivered me from the strivings of the people; You have made me the head of the nations; A people I have not known shall serve me.

Note this refrain, "You have delivered me...You have made me". Again and again, David emphasizes that God has put him in the exalted position he is in. He was not a self-made man, but rather a God-made man.

As we get to the end of the Psalm (vv. 49-50) we clearly have a Messianic overture and very possibly from verse 43 on we see several Messianic overtures.

David saying that God has made him "head of the nations" had a partial fulfillment in him, but will see an ultimate fulfillment in the greater David – namely the Lord Jesus Christ Who will rule over all the nations in the kingdom.

44 As soon as they hear of me they obey me; The foreigners submit to me.

Again, this had a limited fulfillment in David, but will have a complete fulfillment in the Messianic Greater David!

Slide # 7

Genesis 49:10 (NKJV)

10 The scepter shall not depart from Judah, Nor a lawgiver from between his feet, Until Shiloh [to whom it belongs] comes; **And to Him shall be the obedience of the people.**

45 The foreigners fade away, And come frightened from their hideouts.

46 The LORD lives! Blessed be my Rock! Let the God of my salvation be exalted.

“If we begin with ‘The Lord is my Rock,’ we shall end with ‘Blessed be my Rock.’” - Alexander Maclaren

This is where David began in verse 2 and essentially where he ends in verse 46.

**47 It is God who avenges me, And subdues the peoples under me;
48 He delivers me from my enemies. You also lift me up above those who rise against me; You have delivered me from the violent man.**

**49 Therefore I will give thanks to You, O LORD, among the Gentiles,
And sing praises to Your name.**

David loves the Lord for what He has done for him (v. 1). He praises the Lord for what He has done as seen throughout the Psalm. And he thanks God openly even among the Gentiles.

In Romans 15:9 Paul quotes Ps. 18:49 to show David’s testimony and worship extended beyond the Jews to also include the Gentiles. And Paul’s use of this verse implies that David’s statement anticipated the greater David’s testimony among the Gentiles which would be cause of Gentile worship as well.

50 Great deliverance He gives to His king, And shows mercy to His anointed, To David and his descendants forevermore.

Certainly verse 50 applies to David, but many think it also has greater application to the Messiah. The Messianic implications in verse 49 (as seen in Romans 15:9) are further supported by the terms “anointed” (meaning “Messiah”) in verse 50.

David’s victories are prototypes of the victories of the great King to come. The use of the word anointed is appropriate for David, but it points forward to the Savior who is the Anointed One (2:2).

– *The Nelson Study Bible*

David used the word “forevermore,” so he must have realized that it would be through the promised Messiah that the kingdom promises would be fulfilled.” – *Warren Wiersbe*

Slide # 8

Revelation 11:15 (NKJV)

15 Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, “The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!”

As David again rehearsed this Psalm at the end of his life there was no bitterness for all the hard times he had been through – only praise for God’s faithfulness! I think when we get to glory that is exactly how we will see all we have gone through.

This my song through endless ages – Jesus led me all the way! And as Paul says, “Now thanks be to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ” (2 Cor. 2:14).

Difficulties are opportunities to TRUST God Who always proves Himself and His Word true! He is “worthy to be praised” as David says (Ps. 18:3).

Psalm 18 is David’s victory song of praise and gratitude for all that God had accomplished through him. Indeed, let us praise God for what he is doing in and through us for our good and for His glory. We have the promise that all things work together for good to those who love God (Rom. 8:28).