

“THE LORD IS MY ROCK, AND MY SALVATION”

Psalm 18:1-19

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INTRODUCTION

Psalm 18 is an amazing composition by David. As seen in the title to the psalm, he wrote this later in life after being delivered from the Lord from the hand of Saul and from the hand of all of his enemies. It is a psalm of thanksgiving and is meant to be used in worship and enjoyed by all of God’s people who go through similar experiences.

This psalm has a near duplicate in II Sam. 22. I believe that David wrote both, clarifying some points in II Samuel from the original of Psalm 18. Both are original compositions and are equally inspired.

Verse 49 is quoted by Paul in Rom. 15:9 as a reference to **Messiah**; such is not uncommon since David is a type of Christ in many psalms. Alexander comments that this is a Messianic psalm and that Christ is the “principal subject of the prophecy, though not the only one, nor even the one nearest to the eye of the observer” (74).

Notice the titles for David in this psalm: Servant of the Lord (title); His king (50); His anointed (50). Primarily he sees himself as God’s appointed servant to minister to all of God’s people.

The basic outline is:

- 1) His resource in God (1-3)
- 2) His Rescue by God (4-19)
- 3) God’s Reason and Principles for Rescuing David (20-29)
- 4) A Review of the Deliverance (30-45)
- 5) Final Rejoicing and Praise (46-50)

In this first of three messages on this psalm, we look at only the first two points; we will then examine point 3 separately, and points 4 & 5 together.

We all face “deep waters” of adversity in life, but in our times of distress when it seems that **death and hell** themselves are arraigned against us (vv. 4-5), all we need we must find in God (v. 2). He will deliver us **because He delights in us (19)**. Then once He does, and even before He does, let us tell him **how much we love him** (v. 1) and express ourselves with grateful words of **thanksgiving and praise**—all based upon who God is and what he does.

YOU MUST LOVE THE LORD AND THANK HIM: for HE IS YOUR ROCK AND YOUR SALVATION.

- I. YOUR RESOURCE IS IN GOD (1-3)
 - A. Your Relationship (1)
 1. Love for God

- The unique meaning of the word “love” in v. 1. Generally meaning “have compassion.” The verb is “impulsive and emotional” “I dearly love thee” would be a good rendering. The tense of the verb shows **I not only love thee now, but am resolved to do so for ever**”

- Meaning of Yahweh

2. Strength in God

- He gives me strength.
- He supplies the deficiencies of my strength.
- He substitutes His for my strength.
- He is my protector and deliverer (Alex. 75).
- This great love for Yahweh and strength found in Yahweh is expressed with the wealth of descriptive terms for Him found in v. 2; David can hardly contain himself as he piles up expression after expression that amplifies “the richness of His being” as evidenced in the manifestation to David in his experiences.

B. Your Refuge in God (v. 2 elaborates this in manifold ways!)

The Following are true of **Yahweh**

1. My Rock (place for hiding and security)
2. My Fortress (cf. cave of Adullam “where David first formed his band of outlaws)
3. My Deliverer

The Following are true of **God**.

4. My Rock (synonym, but stressing His solidity and immobility; note **The Rock**—Dt. 32:4; Is. 26:4—**the Rock of Ages**—“In Whom I take refuge”—“Let me hide myself in Thee”
5. My Shield-- Weapons of defense
6. The Horn of my Salvation-- Weapons of offence—not only is but brings about salvation
7. My stronghold—The emphasis here is a secure height and the inaccessibility.

C. Your Call to the Lord for Help (3)

1. The is worthy to be praised
2. I am saved from my enemies

David calls on **Yahweh** in His true character—for *Who He really is*—and is thus *worthy to be praised in that character*, that he is saved from all his enemies

II. YOUR RESCUE IS BY GOD (4-19)

A. Your Danger—vv. 4-5—David measures them by “their aggregated volume and pressure.”

David is but one small man; yet, in order to rescue him the Lord does personal battle with

- Death (v. 4) and Sheol (v. 5)
- He must free David from their **CORDS** and **SNARES**
- He must free David from the “torrents” of Belial”
- These “encompass” us, “surround” us, “confront” us, and “terrify” us.

B. Your Repeated Cry to the Lord for Help (6)

- Distress constricts and binds
- The call is to Yahweh

- The call is to my God (Eloah)
 - He hears from His Heavenly Temple
 - My cry registers in His ears
- C. The Lord's Powerful Response (7-19)
- This theophany (God revealed) reminds us of the Lord's deliverance of Israel by fire (cf. v. 8), cloud (cf. vv. 9ff), and the result in the parting of the Red Sea (cf. v. 15); similar also is the scene at Mt. Sinai where the mountain was quaking and wrapped in smoke when God descended upon it in fire (Ex. 19:18). Here of course the metaphor is expanded into a full-fledged thunderstorm with all the clouds and darkness (vv. 9, 11), hailstones (12, 13), with lightning and coals of fire (12, 13, 14) and thunder (13), and strong winds (10). *We never get a glimpse of God in this scene, only as Kidner says "the outskirts of his ways" (p. 92; Job 26:14).* God's deliverance of David was as real as if He had come down in such a real manifestation.
1. Effects on Nature
 - a. Earth (7-8, 15)—**Due to His anger—v. 7; smoke, fire—heated anger** like a fire breathing dragon: Leviathan—v. 8; **coals** like those from His holy presence in Is. 6; his **rebuke** (15) is due to the **mistreatment of His man/people**. The angry "blast of the breath of His nostrils" (15).
 - b. Heavens (9-14)

A Heavy thunderstorm of divine wrath

 - Heavens "bowed" down to the earth (9)
 - Thick darkness under His feet
 - Moves swiftly due to the Cherub and the "wings of the wind" (10)
 - Darkness veils His holiness from sinful men, His shelter (11)
 - Darkness of waters, thick clouds of the skies
 - His bright glory is veiled by clouds but is about to burst forth with (12)
 - Hailstones and coals of fire—lightning (twice in 12, 13 for emphasis)
 - He utters His voice with thunder (13)
 - He sends out His arrows of lightning (14)
 - The wicked enemies are "scattered" and "routed".
 2. Effects on The Believer (16-19)
 - a. Out of many waters (16); cf. v. 4.
 - His action came "from on high."
 - He drew me out
 - b. From enemy and haters (17-18)
 - They are **strong**.
 - They are mighty from me—too mighty for me!
 - They confronted me in the day of my trouble (18)
 - The Lord is my Staff and Support (18)
 - c. Into a Broad place (19)—No more constrictions of the distress)Ps. 4:1—made room for me in my distress; 31:8—my feet in a large place; 118:5—set me in a large place
- D. The Lord's Reason for His Response (19b)—"Because He delighted in me—His Grace.

CONCLUSION

Your Resource is in God—Including Your Relationship, Your Refuge, and Your Call

Your Refuge is in God—You face Danger, You Repeatedly Cry to Him, He Powerfully responds—Why?

Because He delights in you.

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