

Psalm 18 Continued

Verses 16-19: His sheer power, exhibited so dramatically (in verses 7-15), is now amazingly attested as coming to rescue the psalmist personally.

God delivered David as a lifeguard rescues a drowning person from the waters that threatens to overwhelm (144:7).

Psalm 18:17 "He delivered me from my strong enemy, and from them which hated me: for they were too strong for me."

The enemy that had more power than I had, and that was likely to overcome me. It is probable that the allusion here in the mind of the psalmist would be particularly to Saul.

"And from them which hated me": From all who hated and persecuted me, in the time of Saul, and ever onward during my life.

"For they were too strong for me": I had no power to resist them. And when I was about to sink under their opposition and malice, God interposed and rescued me. David, valiant and bold as he was as a warrior, was not ashamed, in the review of his life. To admit that he owed his preservation not to his own courage and skill in war, but to God. That his enemies were superior to himself in power. And that if God had not interposed he would have been crushed and destroyed. No man dishonors himself by acknowledging that he owes his success in the world to the divine precision.

The He here of course, is God. Jesus Christ defeated Satan on the cross. The war is won. We are still in a few skirmishes here on the earth, but the war is won. Most of the problems we have on this earth involve the short comings of still being in this body of flesh. We are no match for Satan at all, if we try to fight him our self. We must stand against him in the name of Jesus and through the power of the shed blood of Jesus. Speak the Word to him. Tell him, he is defeated. It is written, is a very good way to start on him.

Psalm 18:18 "They prevented me in the day of my calamity: but the LORD was my stay."

They anticipated me, or went before me (see the note at Psalm 18:5). The idea here is that his enemies came before him, or intercepted his way. They were in his path, ready to destroy him.

"In the day of my calamity": In the day to which I now look back as the time of my special trial.

"But the Lord was my stay": My support, or my prop. That is, the Lord upheld me, and kept me from falling.

Not only did God stay the hand of David's enemy, but He does the same for us.

Proverbs 16:7 "When a man's ways please the LORD, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him."

Psalm 18:19 "He brought me forth also into a large place; he delivered me, because he delighted in me."

Into heaven, a place of the glorious liberty of Christ, after His captivity to death and the grave. Where He ascended leading captivity captive, and of the children of God. And a spacious place, where there is room enough for Christ and all his people. Here

he now is, and will remain till his second coming. And from hence we expect him (see John 14:2; compare with this Psalm 31:8).

"He delivered me, because he delighted in me": God delivered David from all his enemies, because he was a man after his own heart, in whom he delighted. Not for any merit and worthiness in him, but of his good will and pleasure. He delivered Christ because He was His elect, in whom His soul delighted. And who was daily His delight, rejoicing in His presence before the world was. And He delivers his church and people, because they are His Hephzibah (my delight is in her), in whom is His delight (see Isa. 62:4). The Father delighted in them, and therefore chose them to salvation. The Son delighted in them, and gave Himself for them, and ransomed them out of the hands of him that is stronger than they. The Holy Spirit delighted in them, and therefore regenerates, renews, and sanctifies them, and seals them up unto the day of redemption.

Heaven is the largest place I know of. It is so large, it will never be overcrowded to receive you and me. What a wonderful thing to be able to say, (He delighted in me). Are you a sweet sound in the ear of the Lord?

Verses 20-24: No human can claim perfect innocence, but those who love the Lord, like David, seek to live full of integrity and godliness. The pattern of their lives is one of righteousness (Gen. 18:19).

These verses should not be taken out of context, making David look like an arrogant boaster. (As in verses 25-36 and 39-50), both David and the community, although responsible for living with integrity within the covenant relationship, are fully dependent on the resources of God to do so. Therefore, his "boasting" is biblical since it is ultimately in the Lord (Jer. 9:23-24).

Psalm 18:20 "The LORD rewarded me according to my righteousness; according to the cleanness of my hands hath he recompensed me."

That is, He saw that I did not deserve the treatment which I received from my enemies, and therefore He interposed to save me (compare Psalm 17:3).

"According to the cleanness of my hands": So far as my fellow-men are concerned, I have done them no wrong.

"Hath he recompensed me": By rescuing me from the power of my enemies. It is not inconsistent with proper views of piety, with true humility before God, to feel and to say, that so far as our fellow-men are concerned, we have not deserved ill-treatment at their hands. And, when we are delivered from their power, it is not improper to say and to feel that the interposition in the case has been according to justice and to truth.

Righteousness, as we have said over and over, is being in right standing with God. The only righteousness we have that could stand up to this standard, is our righteousness in Christ. I received my right standing with God, when I accepted Jesus Christ as my Savior and Lord. I traded Him my sin for His righteousness. We must continue to walk in that righteousness we received, until we are called to heaven. I believe (cleanness of my hands), means that my work must be acceptable. You do not have to work to be saved, but you will work for Him to remain in the salvation you received. Our hands will be doing good or evil. To be pleasing unto God, the work must be pure.

Psalm 18:21 "For I have kept the ways of the LORD, and have not wickedly departed from my God."

I have obeyed His laws. I have not so violated the laws which God has given to regulate my conduct with my fellow-men as to deserve to be treated by them as a guilty man.

"And have not wickedly departed from my God": "I have not been a sinner from my God;" an apostate; an open violator of his law. The treatment which I have received, though it would be justly rendered to an open violator of law, is not that which I have merited from the hand of man.

So many people, in our day, feel that all they must do is be baptized and they will go to heaven. To depart from God, after He has saved you, would cause God to call you wicked. Baptism is burying that old man of sin and living a new clean life in Christ Jesus.

Psalm 18:22 "For all his judgments [were] before me, and I did not put away his statutes from me."

That is, the precepts of the law of God, which David had a respect unto. He loved, took delight and pleasure in, and so had them all in his sight, and made them the rule of his actions. And the law of God is delighted in by regenerate persons, after the inward man. And though it is abolished as a covenant of works, it is a rule of walk and conversation to the saints. And as such they keep it in view, and regard it impartially, not only some of its precepts, but all. This in the

highest and fullest sense was done by Christ, who was made under the law, in whose heart it was, and who came to fulfil it, and has completely fulfilled it.

"And I did not put away his statutes from me": (in 2 Sam. 22:23), it is read, "and as for his statutes, I did not depart from them"; the sense is the same. This may have respect to the ceremonial law, and the ordinances of it which David abode by, and very strictly observed, renewed, and put in order. And which Christ, his antitype, never departed from. But David conformed unto throughout the whole of his life. Witness his circumcision, keeping of the Passover, attendance on the synagogue and temple worship.

David is making a statement that we should live by too. He says, God I have not forgotten your law. I keep it on my mind and do it. Look at the following Scripture with me.

Joshua 1:8 "This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success."

Read your Bible and know God's will, then do God's will.

Psalm 18:23 "I was also upright before him, and I kept myself from mine iniquity."

In heart and conversation, being sincere and faithful. So David was in the sight of God. But this is much truer of Christ, in whom there was no unrighteousness nor guile, neither in his heart, nor in his lips. He was of perfect integrity, and faithful in all things to him that appointed him.

"I kept myself from mine iniquity": I have watched over myself that I might not transgress, lest I should cherish any sin till it became a part of me. There is no reference to indwelling corruption or a besetting sin.

The main thing we are to notice in this is that David kept David from sinning. Temptation comes to all. We must not surrender to temptation. We must stay strong in ourselves. The battle is between the sinful things the flesh wants to do and the spirit which wants to follow God. Let your spirit rule over your flesh.

Psalm 18:24 "Therefore hath the LORD recompensed me according to my righteousness, according to the cleanness of my hands in his eyesight."

Having proved and supported this proposition by the above reasons, it is repeated, for confirmation's sake.

"According to the cleanness of my hands in his eyesight": This phrase, "in his eyesight", is here added, to show that the righteousness of Christ was clean, pure, and spotless in the sight of God.

In the eye of divine justice. Hence those that are clothed with it are holy and unblamable, and unprovable in His sight (Col. 1:22).

Notice in this whose eyesight it was important to be right in. David probably did not appear to be righteous in people's eyes. Stop worrying about what others think and start pleasing God.

Verses 25-29: The psalmist has argued that the love of God moves heaven and earth for the sake of His own (18:7-19). Now he offers instruction regarding what God expects of His children. God's character evokes a desire in the godly to devotedly follow His ways.

Psalm 18:25 "With the merciful thou wilt show thyself merciful; with an upright man thou wilt show thyself upright;"

From the particular statement respecting the divine dealings with himself the psalmist now passes to a general statement (suggested by what God had done for him), in regard to the general principles of the divine administration. That general statement is, that God deals with men according to their character. Or, that he will adapt his providential dealings to the conduct of men. They will find him to be such toward them as they have shown themselves to be toward him. The word "merciful" refers to one who is disposed to show kindness or compassion to those who are guilty. Or to those who injure or wrong us.

"Thou wilt show thyself merciful": Thou wilt manifest toward him the same character which he shows to others. It is in accordance with this that the Savior teaches us to pray, "And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors" (Matt. 6:12). And in accordance also with this he said, "For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses" (Matt. 6:14-15).

"With an upright man": Literally, a perfect man, see (Job 1:1), where the same word is used in the original, and rendered perfect. The idea is that of a man who is consistent, or whose character is complete in all its parts (see note at Job 1:1).

"Thou wilt show thyself upright": Thou wilt deal with him according to his character. As he is faithful and just, so will he find that he has to do with a God who is faithful and just.

Psalm 18:26 " With the pure thou wilt show thyself pure; and with the froward thou wilt show thyself froward."

Those who are pure in their thoughts, their motives, their conduct.

“Thou wilt show thyself pure”. They will find that they have to deal with a God who is himself pure. Who loves purity, and who will accompany it with appropriate rewards wherever it is found.

"And with the froward thou wilt show thyself froward": The froward are such as are of perverse dispositions, and of stubborn and obstinate tempers. And whose ways are crooked and distorted; and such were the people of the Jews in the times of Moses, and of Christ (Deut. 32:5). And who seem here to be designed; even the Jews in Christ's time, who were just the reverse of the above characters. Were cruel and unmerciful, faithless and hypocritical, filthy and impure. Disbelieved the Messiah, rejected and crucified him, were contrary to God, and to all men. And therefore, God walked contrary to them, as he threatened (Lev. 26:27). The same as showing Himself froward to them. For God is not froward and perverse in Himself, nor in His ways, which are all equal, just, and pure. And though there is one and the same word used in our version, yet there are two different words in the Hebrew text. The same word that is used of the froward is not used of God. That which is used of God, as before observed, signifies wrestling, and designs God's contending with the people of the Jews, in a way of wrath and fury. Which came upon them to the uttermost, and issued in their entire ruin as a people and nation. The words here had their fulfilment in the destruction of Jerusalem.

When Jesus taught the disciples to pray, He taught them (forgive me my trespasses as I forgive those who trespass against me). In modern language, I can expect to receive from God what I dish out to others. If I am merciful, I will receive mercy. If I am upright in all my dealings with others, God will deal uprightly with me. God will deal with us as we deal with others. If we want God to forgive us, we must forgive others when they ask.

Psalm 18:27 "For thou wilt save the afflicted people; but wilt bring down high looks."

As the people of God commonly are; they are afflicted with sin, and the corruption of their own hearts. And with Satan and his temptations, and with the world, its reproaches, and persecutions. But God in his own time saves them out of them, if not here, yet hereafter.

"But wilt bring down high looks": Or proud men, whom God humbles. These he abhors, resists, sets himself against, scatters and destroys. The Jews were a very proud people, and behaved in an insolent and insulting manner towards Christ and his followers. But the high looks of the chief priests, Scribes, and Pharisees, were brought down to a purpose, when their city, temple, and nation, were destroyed (see Isa. 2:11).

We must humble our self to receive from God. Proud arrogant people feel that they are self-sufficient. They do not feel as if they need a Savior. Jesus said in Mark:

Mark 2:17 "When Jesus heard [it], he saith unto them, They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

God will not force salvation upon anyone. The person must need and want salvation, and then they can receive salvation.

Psalm 18:28 " For thou wilt light my candle: the LORD my God will enlighten my darkness."

Or lamp: in (2 Sam. 22:29), it is, "Thou art my lamp, O Lord". Which may either design outward prosperity, and the flourishing condition of David's kingdom. Or internal spiritual light, and an increase of it, by giving fresh supplies of the oil of grace, to cause the lamp to burn more clearly. Or rather the prosperous estate of Christ's kingdom; and may be the same with the lamp ordained for the Messiah (Psalm 132:17).

"The Lord my God will enlighten my darkness": Or "cause light to shine in my darkness". That is, bring me out of darkness into light. Either out of adversity to prosperity, or from walking in darkness to the enjoyment of the light of his countenance. And is true of Christ, not only of the prosperity of His kingdom and interest, but of him personally. Who though, when on the cross, was in darkness of soul, being forsaken by his God. Yet, when raised from the dead, He was received up to heaven, and set down at the right hand of God. And was made full of joy with his countenance (Acts 2:28).

In the study on Revelation, we saw that each church had its light. Not only is Jesus the light for each church, but He is the light for each individual as well. The world that we live in is full of darkness. We may live in a darkened world, but we can have the Light of Jesus with us. The Light that Jesus shines in each Christian is the only real Light in the world today. The beautiful thing about our candle is the fact that the fire of God lights it. In this terrible dark world that we are living in, we must let our candle shine forth brightly, so that those in darkness will see the Light and come to it.

Psalm 18:29 "For by thee I have run through a troop; and by my God have I leaped over a wall."

The word troop here refers to bands of soldiers, or hosts of enemies. The word rendered run through means properly to run; and then, as here, to run or rush upon in a hostile sense. To rush with violence upon one. The idea here is that he had been enabled to rush with violence upon his armed enemies. That is, to overcome them, and to secure a victory. The allusion is to the wars in which he had been engaged (compare Psalm 115:1).

"And by my God": By the help derived from God.

"Have I leaped over a wall": Have I been delivered, as if I had leaped over a wall when I was besieged. Or, I have been able to scale the walls of an enemy, and to secure a victory. The

probability is that the latter is the true idea, and that he refers to his successful attacks on the fortified towns of his enemies. The general idea is, that all his victories were to be traced to God.

Christians, how many times have your friends told you that the job you are trying to do for God is impossible? When I first started writing these Bible studies, many of my friends told me that this job was too big for one person to do. They were right, I cannot do this job, it is too big, but PRAISE GOD! Christ within me can do the job. The wall may be high and look like it is impossible to climb, but with God's help I can climb any mountain He puts before me.

Psalm 18:30 "[As for] God, his way [is] perfect: the word of the LORD is tried: he [is] a buckler to all those that trust in him."

His counsel and providence, though it may sometimes be dark and hard to be understood, yet is always wise and just, and every way perfect or unbearable.

"The word of the Lord is tried": The truth of God's promises is certain, and approved by innumerable experiences, and mine among the rest.

"He is a buckler to all those that trust in him": Not in man, nor in themselves. In their own righteousness, or in any creature or creature enjoyment or performance. But in the providence and power of God. In his grace and mercy, in his word, and especially in his Son. In his person, blood, and righteousness; to such He is a buckler or shield. His power is all around them, his favor encompasses them, and His truth, or faithfulness in His word, is their shield and buckler. And so is his Son, who is both a sun and shield to them. And such are his precious blood, his spotless righteousness, and stoning sacrifice. Which, being held up by faith, repel the fiery darts of Satan.

We may not always understand what God is doing at the moment in our lives, but we can be assured it is the right thing. God is perfect. He does not make mistakes. Whatever problem we are facing at the moment; we can trust that our God can handle it. Our job is not to question, but to trust Him. To have faith is one thing, but trust goes beyond faith. Many married people who have been together for many years will tell you that trust of their spouse, regardless of how the circumstances look, is what has held them together. Remember, we got into the meaning of buckler in a previous lesson, and found that it went much further than just a protection. It means protector, but it also means shield, armed and defense.

Psalm 18:31 "For who [is] God save the LORD? or who [is] a rock save our God?"

"A rock" (compare verses 2, 46). Moses, at the beginning of his great song about the Lord (in Deut. chapter 32), called God "The Rock" (verse 4). The Lord is indeed a massive, unshakable foundation and source of protection.

We find in this statement a truth almost too deep to comment upon.

1 John 5:7 "For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one."

From the beginning of time to all of eternity, we will still be trying to understand the fullness of who God is. The Spirit is one. The personalities of that One Spirit are three. We know that Jesus was and is, the Rock. He is the Rock that we must build our house upon. He was the Rock in the wilderness that Moses struck to bring forth water. He not only was the Rock, but is the Water that flows from that Rock as well. I have said it before but it has need to be said again. God is everything good and wonderful. He is my all in all. Without Him I can do nothing. With Him I can do all things.

Psalm 18:32 "[It is] God that girdeth me with strength, and maketh my way perfect."

For battle (as in Psalm 18:39), with strength of body and fortitude of mind. Both which are from the Lord, and were in David. And were acknowledged by him as bestowed on him by the Lord. And which confirms what he had before said of him. Or with spiritual strength, with strength in his soul, against sin, Satan, and the world. And to do the will and work of God. Saints are girded by the Lord with the whole armor of God, and among the rest with the girdle of truth. And are prepared and ready to every good work (see 1 Sam. 2:4). Hannah's song is referred to (in 2 Sam. 22:33), the words are, "God is my strength and power". They are true of Christ, the man of God's right hand, whom He promised to strengthen, and whom He has made strong for himself (Psalm 80:17).

"And maketh my way perfect": Or safe, or prosperous. God removed every impediment and obstacle out of his way, and made it plain and easy, as Jarchi observes. And succeeded him, and gave him victory over his enemies. This has been verified in Christ, who has conquered sin, Satan, the world, death, and the grave. For this is not to be understood of the way and course of David's life and conversation, which was not perfect and unspotted. But had many blemishes and imperfections in it, which he often owns, confesses, and bewails.

I would suggest that you read (Ephesians 6:11), to truly understand the help of the Lord. All of the items that the soldier in Ephesians was to wear were things God would have to give the soldier. The Israelites learned firsthand how easy it was to lose a battle when God was not with them. If the Ark of the Covenant went before them, on orders from God, they won the battle. If it were a battle of their own making, they lost. God will make our way perfect if we stay in His way and not our own.

Psalm 18:33 "He maketh my feet like hinds' [feet], and setteth me upon my high places."

See (Hab. 3:19), "He maketh my feet like hinds' [feet]": The hind is the female deer, remarkable for fleetness or swiftness. The meaning here is, that God had made him alert or active, enabling him to pursue a flying enemy, or to escape from a swift-running foe.

"And setteth me upon my high places": The towers and fortresses, and strong and fortified places, where he was safe from his enemies. And in a spiritual sense, may design the everlasting love of God, the covenant of grace, its blessings and promises. And Christ himself, with the fullness of grace in him, on which believers may be said to be set, when their faith is directed to them. And they live and dwell upon them (see Hab. 3:19). And the words were fulfilled in Christ, when God highly exalted him at His right hand, and set Him above all principalities and powers, and made Him higher than the heavens.

A deer has feet that are swift and also, they can jump over high obstacles. If we are like a deer, we are not easily stopped. Notice that it is God who puts you on high places.

Psalm 18:34 "He teacheth my hands to war, so that a bow of steel is broken by mine arms."

From whence it appears, that war in some cases, is lawful. And that all the skillfulness and art in training men for war, in the use of armor, in marshalling of armies, in forming sieges, etc. is all from God (see Psalm 144:1). And so is all that spiritual skill, in making use of the whole armor of God against every enemy, sin, Satan, and the world. And even the wisdom and skill, counsel and instruction, which Christ as man and Mediator had, when it was the hour and power of darkness. When he was engaged with principalities and powers, and got the victory over them, were from the Lord (see Psalm 16:7).

"So that a bow of steel is broken by mine arms": That is, the bow of an enemy falling into his hands, which might be literally true of David. It is in the Hebrew text, "a bow of brass"; and so Apollinarius renders it. Which Kimchi and Ben Melech interpret strong iron, that is, steel. And so the Targum (see Job 20:24). Satan is an archer; his temptations are darts, and fiery ones. And his strong bow may be said to be broken by the arms of faith, when his temptations, under the influence of divine grace, are repelled and rendered ineffectual. And especially his bow was broken by Christ. Not only in the wilderness, when he was vanquished by him; but in the garden, and on the cross. When Satan could find nothing in him, and get no other advantage over him, but to bruise his heel. When he himself had his head broke, his works ruined, and he himself destroyed. Some render the words, "mine arms have bent a bow of steel". That is, such skill and strength were given him that he was able to bend, draw, and shoot a bow or steel. The Targum is, "and hath strengthened mine arm as a bow of brass", or "steel"; and so the Syriac and Arabic versions. And to the same purpose the Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, and Ethiopic versions.

Some people are offended that we are soldiers, in a battle to the death for the Lord. When David went into battle, it was a war that he was fighting with the blessing of God. The Holy Spirit of God teaches the Christian the way to win the war that we are in. Our weapons are not carnal.

2 Corinthians 10:4 "(For the weapons of our warfare [are] not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;)"

The weapon of the Christian is the two-edged sword, which is the Word of God. Are you ready to do battle for the Lord? There is a spiritual war, and there is a physical war. Christians are called to the spiritual war.

Psalm 18 Continued Questions

1. Who has already defeated Satan?
2. What are most of the problems we have in this earth caused by?
3. How can a Christian come against the devil?
4. How large is heaven?
5. What is righteousness?
6. When does a Christian become righteous?
7. What does cleanness of my hands probably mean?
8. What would cause God to call you wicked?
9. Describe what baptism really is.
10. What does Joshua chapter 1 verse 8 tell us about keeping God's law?
11. Who kept David from sinning in verse 23?
12. What is the battle that we fight every day?
13. What lesson can we learn from verses 25 and 26, that Jesus taught the disciples in the Lord's prayer?
14. Who did Jesus come to save?
15. Not only is Jesus the Light for the church, but for each _____, as well.
16. What is the only light in the world today?
17. When you take on a big job for God, what will many of your friends tell you?
18. What does buckler mean?
19. Can you explain trust?
20. What is one, in the verse above?

21. Who is the Rock?
22. Who is the Water that flows from that Rock?
23. Where do we find the Scriptures on the armor of God?
24. What does the Scripture mean that says, we have feet like hinds'?
25. Who teaches the Christian how to war?