

This psalm basically mirrors 2Samuel 22; there are minor differences.

Psalms 18:0 ¶ To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David, the servant of the LORD, who spake unto the LORD the words of this song in the day *that* the LORD delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul: And he said,

This preface is actually a quote from 2Samuel 22:1 and affirms David as its author. It is a song of praise and thanksgiving to the LORD for delivering David and giving him victory over all of his enemies.

Psalms 18:1 ¶ I will love thee, O LORD, my strength.

This verse was not included in 2Samuel. I think it was probably added as a declaration of David's love for the LORD to which he testifies in the words of the song that follow.

Psalms 18:2 The LORD is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower.

David first identifies the LORD as his rock and fortress, the faithful, unmovable source of his strength, his stronghold or safe place. He declares the LORD to be his deliverer, recognizing that it is only through the LORD's enablement that he has been able to escape the harm of his enemies.

As David's rock, his strength and safeplace, he has learned to trust in the LORD and flee to Him as his refuge. By calling the LORD his shield, he is acknowledging Him as his protector. "The horn of my salvation, my high tower, and my refuge," all again emphasize the truth that it is in the LORD that David finds refuge and safety. "My savior" references the truth that David's safety has been totally dependent upon the LORD's intervention on his behalf.

Psalms 18:3 I will call upon the LORD, *who is worthy* to be praised: so shall I be saved from mine enemies.

In light of all the many ways the LORD has provided for him, David declares His worthiness to be praised. He recognized that all his victories and deliverance from his enemies were accomplished in the strength and provision of the LORD.

As we continue to read this song, it stands out to me that David's faith in the LORD has grown in light of his experience. That should be true of every believer today as well. First, we must learn to recognize, as did David, the many ways that the LORD provides and intercedes for us, especially in answer to our prayers. I think sometimes we take such provision for granted—much as do most children regarding the care and provision of their parents.

I loved Spurgeon's comment on prayer and praise: "...if you have prayer in one hand, have praise in the other. The mixture of these two perfumes will make an

exceedingly sweet incense to present unto the Lord. To praise and pray, to pray and praise, is an admirable way of living. Have I not often told you that it resembles our breathing? By prayer we breathe in, and by praise we breathe out."

Psalms 18:4 The sorrows of death compassed me, and the floods of ungodly men made me afraid.

Psalms 18:5 The sorrows of hell compassed me about: the snares of death prevented me.

Psalms 18:6 In my distress I called upon the LORD, and cried unto my God: he heard my voice out of his temple, and my cry came before him, *even* into his ears.

In this section of verses, David acknowledges that there had been times when he felt death closing in and was afraid. In those times he called upon the LORD and knew that God had heard him. I think "from his temple" is a reference to God's throne in heaven.

We can have the same confidence that God hears our prayers. Scripture declares many places that the LORD hears the cries of men and women who have placed their faith in Him.

Psalms 34:15 "The eyes of the LORD are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry."

Proverbs 15:29 "The LORD is far from the wicked: but he heareth the prayer of the righteous."

John 9:31 "...if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth."

Hebrews 4:16 "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."

1 Peter 3:12 "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."

1 John 5:14–15 "And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him."

Psalms 18:7 Then the earth shook and trembled; the foundations also of the hills moved and were shaken, because he was wroth.

Psalms 18:8 There went up a smoke out of his nostrils, and fire out of his mouth devoured: coals were kindled by it.

Psalms 18:9 He bowed the heavens also, and came down: and darkness *was* under his feet.

Psalms 18:10 And he rode upon a cherub, and did fly: yea, he did fly upon the wings of the wind.

Psalms 18:11 He made darkness his secret place; his pavilion round about him *were* dark waters *and* thick clouds of the skies.

Psalms 18:12 At the brightness *that was* before him his thick clouds passed, hail stones and coals of fire.

Psalms 18:13 The LORD also thundered in the heavens, and the Highest gave his voice; hail stones and coals of fire.

Psalms 18:14 Yea, he sent out his arrows, and scattered them; and he shot out lightnings, and discomfited them.

Psalms 18:15 Then the channels of waters were seen, and the foundations of the world were discovered at thy rebuke, O LORD, at the blast of the breath of thy nostrils.

I think David is saying that in answer to his cries, the LORD responded to his enemies in anger. I think he is expressing the thought that he recognized that God had supernaturally intervened on his behalf and painting a word picture of an angry, all powerful God who has the forces of nature under His control and will readily use them to fight His enemies—and the enemies of His faithful servants.

Clarke made an interesting observation on the first part of verse 9: “The ancients placed the seat of anger in the nose, or nostrils; because when the passions are warm and violent, it discovers itself by the heated vehement breath which proceeds from them.”

And again on the first part of verse 12: “...as thick heavy clouds deeply charged, and with lowering aspects, are always the forerunners and attendants of a tempest, and greatly heighten the horrors of the appearance: and the representation of them, spread about the Almighty as a tent, is truly grand and poetic.”

There are several places where the LORD’s voice is connected to thunder.

Exodus 19:16–17 “And it came to pass on the third day in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; so that all the people that was in the camp trembled. And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet with God....”

Job 40:9 “Hast thou an arm like God? or canst thou thunder with a voice like him?”

Psalms 29:3–4 “The voice of the LORD is upon the waters: the God of glory thundereth: the LORD is upon many waters. The voice of the LORD is powerful; the voice of the LORD is full of majesty.”

Psalms 104:1–7 “Bless the LORD, O my soul. O LORD my God, thou art very great; thou art clothed with honour and majesty....Who laid the foundations of the earth, that it should not be removed for ever. Thou coveredst it with the deep as with a garment: the waters stood above the mountains. At thy rebuke they fled; at the voice of thy thunder they hasted away.”

Revelation 14:1–2 “And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father’s name written in their foreheads.

And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder...."

Psalms 18:16 He sent from above, he took me, he drew me out of many waters.

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

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

David is praising the LORD for personally delivering him from his enemies, enemies that were much stronger than David, especially when they chose to attack when David was most vulnerable.

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

"A large place" is a reference to a place of safety, a place not hemmed in by danger. David knew that the LORD delivered him because "He delighted in me," was pleased with him.

What a beautiful truth that we can share with David! We can know that He delights in us as well because He sees us as His sons and daughters clothed in the righteousness of Jesus.

2 Corinthians 5:21 "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

John 1:12 "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name...."

Isaiah 61:10 "I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels."

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

"A large place" is a reference to a place of safety, a place not hemmed in by danger. David knew that the LORD delivered him because "He delighted in me," was pleased with him.

What a beautiful truth that we can share with David! We can know that He delights in us as well because He sees us clothed in the righteousness of Jesus.

2 Corinthians 5:21 "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

Isaiah 61:10 "I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for

he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels."

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

Psalms 18:22 For all his judgments *were* before me, and I did not put away his statutes from me.

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

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

David recognizes that the LORD has dealt with him in accordance with his actions, his determination to do the things that honored the LORD. For the most part he had chosen to do right before the LORD. Yes, David was a sinner, a truth very evident in the record of scripture. However, David's sins were an aberration. David was quick to repent and beg God's forgiveness when confronted with his sin. His life in general was characterized by his love for and obedience to the LORD.

I liked Guzik's observation: "We might say that David simply believed what the Prophet Nathan told him in 2 Samuel 12:13: *The LORD also has put away your sin.* David knew he was a forgiven man, and that the cleanness of his hands was because God cleansed them, not because they had never been dirtied."

I think this is a valid observation based on another one of his psalms.

Psalms 103:8–12 "The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy. He will not always chide: neither will he keep his anger for ever. He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him. As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us."

Psalms 18:25 With the merciful thou wilt shew thyself merciful; with an upright man thou wilt shew thyself upright;

Psalms 18:26 With the pure thou wilt shew thyself pure; and with the froward thou wilt shew thyself froward.

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

This section actually builds on the truth from the previous section. David declares that man should not expect God to treat him any differently than he is willing to treat others. Those whose lives show them to be merciful and morally blameless, sincere and truthful (from the Hebrew for *upright*) can expect the LORD to treat him accordingly. Those who prove themselves to be clean and pure can expect a good response from the LORD accordingly. Those, however, who show themselves to be false and wicked can expect to continually wrestle and struggle (from the Hebrew for the 2d *froward* in v26) with the LORD. Those

who recognize they are needy can look to the LORD for salvation; while those that are haughty and prideful can expect that the LORD will bring them down.

I couldn't help but be reminded of Jesus' words in the Sermon on the Mount.

Matthew 5:3–8 “Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven....Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth....Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.”

And this verse in Proverbs: *Proverbs 16:18 “Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall.”*

And from Peter: *1 Peter 5:5 “...for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.”*

I liked this quote from Spurgeon: “Note that even the merciful need mercy; no amount of generosity to the poor, or forgiveness to enemies, can set us beyond the need of mercy.”

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

David declares that the LORD is his light, his source of direction. It was through the light of God's word that he was able to find his way and make good choices in this dark world of wickedness. Again, other verses come to mind.

Psalms 119:105 “NUN. Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.”

John 8:12 “Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.”

2 Corinthians 4:6 “For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.”

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

David is basically saying that with the LORD on his side, there is nothing he cannot do. It reminds me of yet more scripture.

John 15:5 “...for without me ye can do nothing.”

Luke 1:37 “For with God nothing shall be impossible.”

Romans 8:31 “What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?”

Psalms 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.

Psalms 18:31 For who is God save the LORD? or who is a rock save our God?

What wonderful words of truth and praise about our God. His way is perfect—entirely righteous, sincere and full of truth. God’s word is tried—purged, refined, proven true. All David had to do was remember how his and Israel’s history testified to that truth. God is a shield and protector of all those that place their trust in Him.

The two questions in verse 23 are rhetorical. David knows that the LORD is the one true God, the one rock or true refuge for all men and women who place their faith in Him.

We don’t have to take just David’s word for this. Again, scripture repeats these truths throughout.

Deuteronomy 33:27 “The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms:”

Proverbs 30:5 “Every word of God is pure: he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him.”

Isaiah 54:17 “No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and their righteousness is of me, saith the LORD.”

Nahum 1:7 “The LORD is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him.”

2 Thessalonians 3:3 “But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil.”

Psalms 18:32 It is God that girdeth me with strength, and maketh my way perfect.

Psalms 18:33 He maketh my feet like hinds’ feet, and setteth me upon my high places.

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

Psalms 18:35 Thou hast also given me the shield of thy salvation: and thy right hand hath holden me up, and thy gentleness hath made me great.

Psalms 18:36 Thou hast enlarged my steps under me, that my feet did not slip.

David continues to praise the LORD God for being his strength and power and for continuing to guide him on a path of moral integrity. He compares himself to a surefooted deer when he is following God’s will in obedience and faith. When he trusts in the LORD as he faces the enemy, he experiences supernatural strength. It is in God that he has found the protection afforded by the salvation He provides. It is through the LORD’s chastening (from the Hebrew for *gentleness*) that he has become a force to reckon with. Again, David

acknowledges that it is the LORD that has made his path safe.

Psalms 18:37 I have pursued mine enemies, and overtaken them: neither did I turn again till they were consumed.

Psalms 18:38 I have wounded them that they were not able to rise: they are fallen under my feet.

Psalms 18:39 For thou hast girded me with strength unto the battle: thou hast subdued under me those that rose up against me.

Psalms 18:40 Thou hast also given me the necks of mine enemies; that I might destroy them that hate me.

David recalls how the LORD had empowered him to pursue and destroy his enemies. He emphasizes that it is the LORD that had given him the strength to fight his enemies; it is the LORD that subdued them through David.

Psalms 18:41 They cried, but *there was none to save them: even unto the LORD, but he answered them not.*

Psalms 18:42 Then did I beat them small as the dust before the wind: I did cast them out as the dirt in the streets.

David notes that his enemies could find no one to save them or protect them from David's sword. Even those that looked to the LORD found no provision because they refused to surrender to His will that David be the king of Israel (e.g., Saul and Absalom).

Psalms 18:43 Thou hast delivered me from the strivings of the people; and thou hast made me the head of the heathen: a people *whom* I have not known shall serve me.

Psalms 18:44 As soon as they hear of me, they shall obey me: the strangers shall submit themselves unto me.

Psalms 18:45 The strangers shall fade away, and be afraid out of their close places.

David acknowledges that it was the LORD that had delivered him from those of his people who tried to promote controversy and rebellion against him. It was God that had allowed him to subdue heathen nations and put them to tribute. Many of these nations submitted to his authority with a fight because they feared him.

I liked this statement from the NIV Commentary: "Since the enemies of God can be expected to "cringe" before him, there is no reason why foreigners under David's control should not "come cringing" to the Lord's anointed."

This is actually a truth that every true believer in Jesus can claim as his/her own. We have nothing to fear from man or Satan if we but look to God in faith for His provision and direction.

Hebrews 13:5-6 "...for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me."

1 John 4:4 "Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world."

Isaiah 41:10 "Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness."

Romans 8:38–39 "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Psalms 18:46 The LORD liveth; and blessed *be* my rock; and let the God of my salvation be exalted.

Psalms 18:47 *It is* God that avengeth me, and subdueth the people under me.

Psalms 18:48 He delivereth me from mine enemies: yea, thou liftest me up above those that rise up against me: thou hast delivered me from the violent man.

David knew that he served a living God, in contrast to the impotent idols of the heathen nations. He was an enduring source of strength and salvation to David. It was God that avenged David of his enemies and subdued them to serve David. It was the LORD that gave him the victory over his enemies and put him in his position as king.

Psalms 18:49 Therefore will I give thanks unto thee, O LORD, among the heathen, and sing praises unto thy name.

Psalms 18:50 Great deliverance giveth he to his king; and sheweth mercy to his anointed, to David, and to his seed for evermore.

David ends his song by once again declaring his intention to testify of his thanks to the LORD among the heathen for all He had done for David. A song of praise to the LORD will ever be on his lips. Those songs will declare the LORD as the tower of David's salvation and the source in whom David and his descendants will forever find mercy.