

April 23

Scriptures: Read Psalm 18

Key Verse: “The Lord lives! Blessed be my Rock! Let the God of my salvation be exalted.”
(Psalm 18:46)

Overview

In Psalm 18 David beautifully expresses his love and gratitude to God for delivering him from his “strong enemy”, that “violent man” Saul, and others who sought to kill him (vv. 17, 48). David described God as his deliverer and strength, as well as using five figurative terms (rock, fortress, shield, horn, and stronghold, v. 2) to illustrate the greatness of God and the protection He had given him while hiding from Saul. On his own, David would not have had the strength to withstand them. He had to be patient, obedient to God, and persistent in prayer, until the time was ripe for God’s miraculous deliverance; but until that came, God was his strength and his protector during hardship and close encounters with death (vv. 4-5).

Finally, when David cried out in distress, God intervened with great power to conquer the enemy. With graphic figures, David described the mighty power, majesty, and fierce wrath of God against the wicked oppressors of His child (vv. 7-15). Yet with His child, He is merciful and gentle; holding him up so that his feet would not slip (vv. 25, 35-36). We learn from David’s experience that prayer is definitely the key to seeing God’s salvation (cf. Romans 10:13).

David expressed the reason for God hearing his prayer and delivering him: “He delighted in me” (v. 19). Why was God pleased with him? He trusted in the Lord (vv. 2, 30; he had the faith that God would bring deliverance); he was righteous, pure, and blameless; he walked in the ways of the Lord, kept God’s judgments and statutes (obeyed God’s Word), and kept himself from iniquity (v. 20-24); he was also merciful to others, and therefore God was merciful to him (v. 25). These were the reasons for God’s intervention in David’s life. If we do these same things, the Lord will also be pleased with us, and He will hear our prayers and bring us “out into a broad place” (v. 19) — a place of safety where there are no snares and no places of ambush set against us, so that no harm can come to us from the enemy, Satan.

Although David had a small army of his own, he did not give any credit to them or to himself for their victory. All the credit was given to God, and if David did display any strength, it was only because God had given it to him (vv. 29, 31-34, 39-50). The victorious deliverance proved God’s faithfulness and the truth of His Word. He is indeed “a shield to all who trust in Him” (v. 30). He is indeed the One and only true God who lives and who alone is worthy to be exalted (v. 46). After David’s victory, the people would have naturally exalted him as their new king, but David turned that exaltation over to God, his King. David rightly believed that it was a higher honour to be a servant of God than to be a powerful, conquering king.

At the conclusion of the psalm, we find verses of Messianic significance. The Apostle Paul understood David’s Lord (v. 49) to be Jesus, who will be praised among the Gentiles of the earth (Romans 15:9) and reign forevermore, bringing the ultimate deliverance from the enemy, Satan.

Prayer

Lord, You are our Solid Rock in an unstable world. Thank You for that firm foundation. Help us to attract others to that stability which they too can experience by placing their trust in You.