

THE LORD, MY STRENGTH
Psalm 18

Intro: This Psalm is a kind of spiritual autobiography of David. Its importance is seen in the fact that it appears twice in the Scriptures. You will also find it in 2 Sam. 22:1-51.

The superscription indicates that it must have been written at some time during the middle of his reign. This is also what 2 Sam. 22:1 indicates.

David was obviously occupied with the might, the power, the strength of the Lord, and we see in the Psalm how that power had been experienced in his life.

As the Psalm begins we see him multiplying titles for the Lord which all amount to practically the same thing:

I. THE MIGHTY POWER OF GOD (Psa. 18:1, 2).

He obviously is devoted to the Lord in a very great way, and it is all because of what he has found the Lord to be to him.

The Lord is all that David said he was, but the significant thing about these two verses is David's use of the word, "my." He used it 9 times in these two verses. Thus, it was not just that God was all of these, but he was all of these to David!

From this David moved on to tell . . .

II. WHAT THE STRENGTH OF THE LORD HAD DONE FOR HIM (Psa. 18: 3-19).

Time and time again David had been faced with hopeless situations which would have been fatal time him if the Lord had not exercised His own mighty strength in preserving him and delivering him.

The Lord's people often experience this. Remember, e.g., what the Lord did for the children of Israel at the Red Sea. Cf. Ex. 14:13, 14. Cf. also what the Lord did to the enemies of Jehoshaphat in 2 Chron. 20:14-19.

This happens more than we realize--the Lord preserving us from demons as well as from men who would gladly see our downfall once and for all.

But the Lord does another thing in exercising His strength in our lives. This also we see again and again in the lives of people of God, as David saw it:

III. WHAT THE STRENGTH OF THE LORD HAD DONE IN HIM (Psa. 18: 20-36).

We see all of the characteristics which David claimed in vv. 20-26. This is what the Lord had done in his life. It is usually in times of trial that we grow the most because it is then that we are more incline to look to the Lord.

But then notice how David began to speak beginning with v. 28, and he continued along the same line down through v. 36. Notice what he wrote in v. 30. Why was he so satisfied with such dreadful ways? It was because of the way he had experienced the work of the Lord in his own life.

And then we come to the next part:

IV. WHAT THE STRENGTH OF THE LORD HAD DONE THROUGH HIM (Psa. 18:37-45).

In v. 32 he said that the Lord had girded him with strength. In v. 39 he told why the Lord had girded him with strength: "unto the battle."

We are to "be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might" (Eph. 6:10). We may face the opposition of people, but our real battle is against the Enemy! Sometimes it is with circumstances which have been ordered by our Enemy. Cf. what Paul wrote in Phil. 4:13.

The last words of the Psalm are devoted to . . .

V. WORDS OF PRAISE (Psa. 18:46-50).

Actually the Psalm ends as it begin, with David praising and magnifying the Lord.

When we go through experiences like David had had, we are not inclined to take any credit for ourselves. He gave all the praise to the Lord. And here he reverted to the use of the word, "my," again--see v. 46.

He recognized that the Lord was alive (v. 46a). Then he blessed Him (v. 46b). God is the subject of the statements made in vv. 47, 48). And so he gave thanks to the Lord even among the Gentiles (v. 49). And the Psalm closes with a great statement of David's faith,

- 1) For himself.
- 2) For his descendants.
- 3) And possibly for Christ, the seed of David, the Anointed One.

Concl: Thus David has traced for us God's dealings in his life and how God worked, not to destroy him, but to strengthen him.

It is wonderful to think also that this was written with the sufferings of our Lord Jesus Christ in mind.

But this also can be our spiritual biography. The Lord makes Himself known to us, weak and as inadequate as we are in ourselves, that we may learn to pray, that we may trust Him, that we may see what He will do for us, then in us, and, finally, through us--that we might praise Him more and more.

Remember v. 30 (the best known verse in this Psalm). It will help us when the way seems hard and the outlook grim. God knows what He is doing with us. Let us say as Job said,
But he knoweth the way that I take:
when he hath tried me (or, if he trieth me),
I shall come forth as gold.