

In Lesson 17, we saw that this final section of 2 Samuel is like an appendix to the story of David, added before the focus of the historical books switched to David's successor, Solomon. We saw how David faced several confrontations, we saw how he handled guilt left from the wicked dealings of Saul, of having to make restitution to others, how to be restored after not having fully dealt with some issues, and facing confrontations with his old enemies, the Philistines. We saw how David, as he was aging, had overcome the stigma of his sin, and once again was the "lamp of Israel." We saw how the younger generation of his men had learned from David, and how they were able to defeat these strong enemies just like he had. From this we learned that we can all have an impact for the kingdom of God, whether it is directly or in training others to pick up where we can no longer physically serve. Lastly, we learned how we can face the giants in our lives and deal with them when they begin to rear their ugly heads.

This week, we have the privilege of studying David's Song of Deliverance. It is basically the same as Psalm 18, except for a few details. Most likely they were two separate drafts of the same song and were recorded with their differences for some purpose.¹ When this was written is unclear. Some commentators, like Warren Wiersbe² and Mary Evans,³ indicate that it must have been written between the events of 2 Samuel 10 and 11. This is due to the sins with Bathsheba, Uriah, and other events being in conflict with things David says here in verses 20–27. It also doesn't have the same humble attitude as other psalms like 32 and 51. However, others like John MacArthur,⁴ Ivor Powell,⁵ and Charles Swindoll⁶ feel that this was written in David's older years, given the language of maturity of character it relates, as well as a deeper understanding of God. This chapter, 365 words in Hebrew, is the longest quotation of David.⁷ It is indeed awesome and encouraging for us all. It really is a picture of the true heart of David. Charles Swindoll well summarized how this psalm reflects four themes of David's life:

- When times are tough, God is our only security (verses 2–20).
- When our days are dark, the Lord is our only light (verses 21–31).
- When our walk is weak, the Lord is our only strength (verses 32–40).
- When our future is foggy or fuzzy, the Lord is our only hope (verses 50–51).⁸

Let's go ahead and examine this wonderful psalm and what it teaches us about becoming people after God's own heart.

DAY 1

A Strong Savior 2 SAMUEL 22:1-10

Please read 2 Samuel 22:1–10 and answer the following questions.

[1] We see first off that this song, or psalm, was sung after God delivered David from Saul and from the hand of his enemies. This theme of salvation and deliverance is the centerpiece of the psalm, meaning to be snatched away and freed from or out of some situation.⁹

What were some of the powerful terms David used to describe our awesome Deliverer (verses 2–3)?

[2] How did David feel when he was under the thumb of his enemies (verses 5–6)? What did he do about it (verses 4, 7)?

[3] What descriptive terms did David use to record God's response to his cries for help (verses 8–10)?

EXPANDED QUESTIONS

[1] What a strong foundation, strong Savior, and strong Deliverer we have in our God! He will help us be victorious over the distresses and trials we face, over the enemies of our lives, the world, the flesh, and the devil. God is indeed worthy to be praised. In fact, the word *praise* in Hebrew is *halal*, meaning to be praiseworthy. It is the root word of *hallelujah!*¹⁰ What are some further things that the following passages from the psalms say about our strong Savior?

Psalm 46:1–3

Psalm 84:11

Psalm 91:2

Psalm 97:1–6

[2] What a blessing it is to know that we can cry out to the Lord with the trials, troubles, and temptations we face—and He will hear us. In fact, what does Proverbs 15:8 tell us about how He feels about our praying to Him? How do Psalm 34:6, 15 and John 14:13–14 further encourage us to call out to the Lord for help?

Daily Life Point: God certainly is a rock and strong foundation upon which we can rely; He is our deliverer, carrying us away safely;¹¹ He is all the things that David described Him to be and more. Best of all, He is our Savior, a title which interestingly means "to be open, wide, and free," as opposed to being restricted and cramped up; in fact, the word also became the root of the word *Hosanna*.¹²

What have been some of the distresses you have faced? How did God work to show Himself strong on your behalf and deliver you from them? How does this also give you strength and encouragement for difficulties you may be facing now?

MEMORY PASSAGE

This week we will memorize 2 Samuel 22:4, 47. Review the passage several times throughout each day. By the end of the week, you should have it memorized.

I will call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised; so shall I be saved from my enemies. The Lord lives! Blessed be my Rock! Let God be exalted, the Rock of my salvation! (2 Samuel 22:4, 47 NKJV)

DAY 2

A Strong Supporter
2 SAMUEL 22:11-20

Please Read 2 Samuel 22:11–20 and answer the following questions.

[1] David used powerful, symbolic language to describe God's response to his cries for help. This was a common practice in other sacred hymns and songs of the day.¹³

What were some of the terms and phrases David used to describe God's powerful intervention on his behalf (verses 11–16)?

[2] What was the result of God's coming to help David (verses 17–18)?

[3] How did God act as a strong Supporter for David in this (verses 19–20)?

EXPANDED QUESTIONS

[1] What a strong Supporter we have! God will respond to our needs with all the resources of heaven and intervene on our behalf. The idea of a supporter, or as the KJV puts it, "my stay," means to be a protector, sustainer, to keep us through something.¹⁴ Interestingly, this Hebrew word was also the name for a staff with a bowed top, used by shepherds to pull their sheep out of dangerous situations.¹⁵ In view of this, how does Psalm 23:1–4 take on a new light? What further comfort and encouragement does Isaiah 43:1–2 add?

[2] The *New Living Translation* translates the first part of verse 19, "They attacked me at a moment when I was weakest," while *The Message* paraphrases it, "They hit me when I was down." The enemy will always do this to us. Yet we can be confident, because God will support and deliver us, not because we are worthy, but because of the mere fact that He delights in and loves us! The Hebrew term for *delight* means to take pleasure in, to have affection and a strong positive attraction to something.¹⁶ He helps us because He loves us out of His amazing grace.

What does Deuteronomy 7:6–8 say about why He acted as He did toward His people Israel? Why does God act as He does toward us (John 3:16; Ephesians 2:4–10)?

Daily Life Point: God is such a strong Supporter. He will intervene mightily on our behalf out of His amazing love and grace toward us. Certainly, we have not physically seen God swooping down on the back of a cherub, or smiting our enemies with lightning bolts, but His intervention is real none the less.

How has today's study helped you realize how much God is willing to do for you personally in the things you have faced or still are going through out of His love and delight for you personally? Share some thoughts here.

MEMORY PASSAGE

Fill in the blanks by memory. Then review the passage several times throughout the week.

I will call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be _____; so shall

I be _____ from my enemies. The Lord lives! Blessed be my

Rock! Let God be _____, the Rock of my salvation! (2

Samuel 22:4, 47 NKJV)

DAY 3

A Strong Shield
2 SAMUEL 22:21-31

Please Read 2 Samuel 22:21–31 and answer the following questions.

[1] David knew it was out of God's delight and grace toward him that He intervened, yet what did he add about his efforts to remain right with the Lord (verses 21–25)?

[2] How will God respond according to one's heart attitude (verses 26–28)?

[3] What were some of the ways that God equipped David to stand strong against his enemies (verses 29–31)?

EXPANDED QUESTIONS

[1] We technically will never stand on our own righteousness, and that is not what David is saying here. Our righteousness is like filthy rags before the Lord (Isaiah 64:6); we have all sinned and fallen short of God's standard, and no one knew this more than David! It is in the grace and righteousness of Christ we alone can stand. David is not saying here that our righteousness can earn God's favor, or that we are justified by works, or should have sinless perfection, but rather, he referred to having a blameless conscience before God.¹⁷ Being blameless refers to being upright in heart and conduct and "is the divine standard which man must attain."¹⁸ David took steps in his life to discipline himself to know and keep God's Word, "keeping his hands clean" by confessing his sins, paying careful attention to himself, and setting up a guard against further sin.¹⁹

As we take these steps ourselves, we in a sense will be living the Beatitudes Jesus taught in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:3–11), as verses 26–28 reflect.

What are some things that these passages exhort us about pursuing a blameless conscience and godly life before the Lord?

Acts 24:16

Titus 2:11–14

1 Peter 1:13–16; 3:15–16

[2] Through all the things we face, our God is a strong Shield and help to us. He becomes our lamp and light in the darkness; He empowers us to stand strong against seemingly insurmountable enemies and obstacles; His perfection and His Word, tried in the fires and refined like gold,²⁰ becomes our mighty Shield.

How do the following related passages further encourage you today?

Psalm 3:3; 28:7

Psalm 12:6; 33:4

Psalm 119:105; Proverbs 6:23

Daily Life Point: The Christian life is a war zone. But we have our awesome Shield and His resources to help us. We do have a duty though as participants in the war, as Paul told Timothy: "You therefore must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier" (2 Timothy 2:3–4 NKJV).

What are some things that you can do to better pursue a godly, blameless life before the Lord, using the spiritual resources He has give to help you through? Record some thoughts here and share them with your group if you wish.

MEMORY PASSAGE

Fill in the blanks by memory. Then review the passage several times throughout the week.

**I will call upon the Lord, who is _____ to be
_____ ; so shall I be _____ from my enemies. The
Lord lives! Blessed be my _____ ! Let God be _____ ,
the Rock of my salvation! (2 Samuel 22:4, 47 NKJV)**

DAY 4

Confrontation
2 SAMUEL 22:32-43

Please Read 2 Samuel 22:32–43 and answer the following questions.

[1] What are some further ways that God equipped David to stand against the enemies of his life (verses 32–35)?

Note: Some other manuscripts read "It is God who arms me with strength" or "sustains me with strength," which is more in line with Psalm 18.²¹

[2] How else did God support David against his foes (verses 36–37)?

[3] To what extent did God subdue David's enemies through him (verses 38–43)?

EXPANDED QUESTIONS

[1] God has shared with us His power, His perfect ways, to help us walk in spiritual victory. His gentleness makes us great, or better, as it is literally in Hebrew, a myriad, or an indefinitely large number.²² Because He did "stoop down" to us, we are able to experience these great resources. As Warren Wiersbe well said, "The gracious condensation of the Lord is a theme too often neglected by God's people."²³

How did Paul describe this in Philippians 2:5–8? What has this accomplished for us (2 Corinthians 8:9; 2 Peter 1:2–4)?

[2] What a great "Subduer" we have in Christ. He can bring about the utter subduing of the enemies in our lives, not able to rise victoriously over us again as long as we let Him keep subduing them through us! Habakkuk also picked up on this theme of David's when he faced a very difficult time.

How did he learn to rejoice (Hebrew: to jump for joy,²⁴ spin around in joy, expressed by singing or shouting²⁵) despite his own circumstances in Habakkuk 3:16–19?

Daily Life Point: God's power and strength is yours through the Holy Spirit to assist you in seeing all the enemies of your life subdued. It's too bad we often don't allow these enemies to be ground into the dust, but let them remain alive enough to come back and trouble us!

How can you afresh let Him subdue the enemies of your life so you can spin around, jump for joy, and be victorious despite your circumstances? Will you let Him make you an insurmountable and unstoppable army for Him anew? Please share some thoughts on this here paper and with your group.

MEMORY PASSAGE

Fill in the blanks by memory. Then review the passage several times throughout the week.

I will _____ upon the Lord, who is _____ to be
_____; so shall I be _____ from my enemies. The
Lord lives! Blessed be my _____! Let God be _____,
the Rock of my _____! (2 Samuel 22:4, 47 NKJV)

DAY 5

A Strong Salvation
2 SAMUEL 22:44-51

Please Read 2 Samuel 22:44-51 and answer the following questions.

[1] What else did David experience deliverance from (verses 44-46)?

[2] What further praise did David have for the strong salvation he had received from the Lord (verses 47-50)?

[3] How does David close out this great psalm (verse 51)?

EXPANDED QUESTIONS

[1] God will be with us through strivings in our own home and in our interpersonal relationships as we let Him do so. Perhaps family or relational struggles are the hardest to deal with, yet He can bring salvation and renewal within them. Maybe you are facing unsaved relatives too as part of the struggle; David here spoke of the foreigners not of Israel in their midst, and that we are to sing forth God's praises and give thanks among the Gentiles or nonbelievers.

Although written primarily to women married to nonbelievers, what was Peter's advice to those with unsaved spouses in being a witness to them (1 Peter 3:1–2)? How about our conduct in general toward those unsaved in our family and other relationships (Colossians 4:5–6; 1 Thessalonians 4:12; James 3:13)?

[2] God is a tower of salvation for us all, and He will show His mercies to His children forever more (Hebrew: *olam*, meaning from the vanishing point to the distant future, always, everlasting, without end²⁶). He truly deserves to be praised and exalted, as our living Lord, Rock, and Savior. This is so especially true when we see God's work through us when His power is shown despite our weaknesses. As Charles Swindoll well said, "God is never stronger in His work when we are admittedly weak. When we come to an end, He steps up and shows Himself strong."²⁷ How did Paul address this in 2 Corinthians 12:7–10?

Daily Life Point: In closing out this great psalm today, think through how you can seek to have greater peace in your own relationships with others, especially of your own household. Also, think of ways you can be praising God, our living Lord and Rock, our tower of salvation, for the awesome mercy He has shown you. Record some of your thoughts and how you will better put these things into practice in your life.

MEMORY PASSAGE

2 Samuel 22:4, 47 NKJV:

Write out this week's passage by memory. Then review the passage throughout the week.

DAY 6

Pursuing God's Heart

[1] Where are you at in your own battles with the enemies of your life? What has especially spoken to you this week as you examined the things David learned about God's intervention in his own situation? Please record some thoughts here to share with and pray through with your group.

[2] Warren Wiersbe said, "Your life today may seem hard, but keep trusting and obeying. One of these days, God will give you your own victory song, and you will experience greatness from the gentle hand of God."²⁸

Today may be that day, because what we are going to do is write out our own psalm of praise to God to help us tie this all together personally. It doesn't have to be poetic, nor anything more than writing down some thoughts. Remember to include the elements that we read of this week: Our God is a strong Savior, helping us be victorious despite our distress, hearing our prayers; He is our strong Supporter, responding to our needs with all the resources of heaven; He is our strong Shield, protecting and helping us through the surety of His promises and His perfect ways; He is the strong Subduer of the enemies, with His gentleness enabling us to become an insurmountable and unstoppable army; He is our strong tower of Salvation, our Rock, deserving of our praise!

Write out your psalm in the space provided here for you, and take time in your group to share at least part of what you have written. Make sure you put it in personal terms, as what it means for you in your life today:

MEMORY PASSAGE

From memory, write out this week's passage below. Then review the passage throughout the day. Be prepared to share the verse with your group.

2 Samuel 22:4, 47 NKJV:

PARTING THOUGHTS

We spent this week looking at this wonderful psalm of David. You are encouraged to take time once these studies are completed to go through the rest of the psalms of David, because they show us the real him and the work that God performed in his inner man. "David's psalms help us to understand how, with all his failings, he was 'a man after God's own heart.'"²⁹

Rather than closing by meditating on a different psalm, let's look at some of 2 Samuel 22, as paraphrased by Eugene Peterson in *The Message*. He really captures the heart of what David was saying in many places. God bless you as you meditate on His awesome Word.

God is bedrock under my feet,
the castle in which I live,
my rescuing knight.
My God—the high crag
where I run for dear life,
hiding behind the boulders,
safe in the granite hideout;
My mountaintop refuge,
he saves me from ruthless men.

I sing to God the Praise-Lofty,
and find myself safe and saved.

The waves of death crashed over me,
devil waters rushed over me,
Hell's ropes cinched me tight;
death traps barred every exit.

A hostile world! I called out to God,
to my God I cried out.
From his palace he heard me call;
my cry brought me right into his presence—
a private audience!

But me he caught—reached all the way
from sky to sea; he pulled me out
Of that ocean of hate, that enemy chaos,
the void in which I was drowning.
They hit me when I was down,
but God stuck by me.
He stood me up on a wide-open field;
I stood there saved—surprised to be loved!

God made my life complete
when I placed all the pieces before him.
When I cleaned up my act,
he gave me a fresh start.
Indeed, I've kept alert to God's ways;
I haven't taken God for granted.

Every day I review the ways he works,
I try not to miss a trick.
I feel put back together,
and I'm watching my step.
God re-wrote the text of my life
when I opened the book of my heart to his eyes.

Live, God! Blessings to my Rock,
my towering Salvation-God!
This God set things right for me
and shut up the people who talked back.
He rescued me from enemy anger.
You pulled me from the grip of upstarts,
You saved me from the bullies.
That's why I'm thanking you, God,
all over the world.
That's why I'm singing songs
that rhyme your name.

NOTES

- 1 Ronald F. Youngblood, "1, 2 Samuel," in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, vol. 3, ed. F. E. Gaebelein (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan Publishing House, 1992), p. 1064.
- 2 Warren W. Wiersbe, *Be Restored* (Colorado Springs: Victor Books, 2002), p. 138.
- 3 Mary J. Evans, *1 and 2 Samuel*, New International Biblical Commentary (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson Publishers, Inc., 2000), pp. 234–236.
- 4 *The MacArthur Study Bible*, ed. John MacArthur (Nashville: Word Bibles, 1997), p. 460.
- 5 Ivor Powell, *David, His Life and Times* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Kregel Publications, 1990), p. 328.
- 6 Charles R. Swindoll, *David: A Man of Passion and Destiny* (Dallas: Word Publishing, 1997), p. 264.
- 7 Robert D. Bergen, *1, 2 Samuel*, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, Publishers, 1996), p. 450.
- 8 Charles Swindoll, *David*, pp. 264, 267, 269, and 270.
- 9 Spiros Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study Old Testament* (Chattanooga, Tenn.: AMG Publishers, 1994), p. 2342.
- 10 *Ibid.*, p. 2311.
- 11 James Strong, "A Concise Dictionary of the Words in the Hebrew Bible with Their Renderings in the Authorized English Version," in *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1890 Reprint), p. 95.
- 12 Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study*, p. 2324.
- 13 Bergen, *1, 2 Samuel*, p. 455.
- 14 Strong, "A Concise Dictionary," p. 74.
- 15 Bergen, *1, 2 Samuel*, p. 456.
- 16 Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study*, p. 2317.
- 17 Youngblood, "1, 2 Samuel," p. 1072.
- 18 Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study*, p. 2381.
- 19 *Ibid.*, p. 2376.
- 20 *Ibid.*, p. 2358.
- 21 *The New Scofield Study Bible*, NKJV (Nashville: Nelson, 1989), p. 396.
- 22 *Ibid.*, p. 106.
- 23 Wiersbe, *Be Restored*, p. 143.
- 24 Strong, "A Concise Dictionary," p. 88.
- 25 *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, ed. R. L. Harris, G. L. Archer, and B. K. Waltke (Chicago: Moody Press, 1980), p. 670.
- 26 Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study*, pp. 2347–2348.
- 27 Swindoll, *David*, p. 270.
- 28 Warren W. Wiersbe, *With the Word Bible Commentary* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, Publishers, 1993), p. 415.
- 29 Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study*, p. 871.

