

PSALM 18

This is a psalm of thanksgiving offered up at the close of David's life and is recorded as part of his history in the 22nd chapter of Second Samuel. In it he recalls the glorious displays of God's immediate providence over and in behalf of his chosen people; and the figurative representations he makes of the effect of God's presence and of his wrath cannot but display his awe-inspiring divine majesty.

For the choir director. A Psalm of David the servant of YAHWEH, who spoke to YAHWEH the words of this song in the day that YAHWEH delivered him from the hand of all his enemies and from the hand of Saul. And he said

- 1 I love you, O YAHWEH, my strength.
- 2 YAHWEH is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer;
my God, my rock, in whom I take refuge,
my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.
- 3 I call upon YAHWEH, who is worthy to be praised, and I am saved from my enemies.

- 4 The cords of death encompassed me; the torrents of destruction assailed me;
5 the cords of Sheol entangled me; the snares of death confronted me.
- 6 In my distress I called upon YAHWEH; to my God I cried for help.
From his temple he heard my voice, and my cry to him reached his ears.

- 7 Then the earth reeled and rocked;
the foundations also of the mountains trembled and quaked, because he was angry.
- 8 Smoke went up from his nostrils, and devouring fire from his mouth;
glowing coals flamed forth from him.
- 9 He bowed the heavens and came down; thick darkness was under his feet.
- 10 He rode on a cherub and flew; he came swiftly on the wings of the wind.
- 11 He made darkness his covering, his canopy around him, thick clouds dark with water.
- 12 Out of the brightness before him hailstones and coals of fire broke through his clouds.

- 13 YAHWEH also thundered in the heavens, and the Most High uttered his voice,
hailstones and coals of fire.
- 14 And he sent out his arrows and scattered them;
he flashed forth lightnings and routed them.
- 15 Then the channels of the sea were seen,
and the foundations of the world were laid bare at your rebuke, O YAHWEH,
at the blast of the breath of your nostrils.

- 16 He sent from on high, he took me; he drew me out of many waters.
- 17 He rescued me from my strong enemy and from those who hated me,

for they were too mighty for me.
18 They confronted me in the day of my calamity, but YAHWEH was my support.
19 He brought me out into a broad place; he rescued me, because he delighted in me.

20 YAHWEH dealt with me according to my righteousness;
according to the cleanness of my hands he rewarded me.
21 For I have kept the ways of YAHWEH, and have not wickedly departed from my God.
22 For all his rules were before me, and his statutes I did not put away from me.
23 I was blameless before him, and I kept myself from my guilt.
24 So YAHWEH has rewarded me according to my righteousness,
according to the cleanness of my hands in his sight.

25 With the merciful you show yourself merciful;
with the blameless man you show yourself blameless;
26 with the purified you show yourself pure;
and with the crooked you make yourself seem tortuous.
27 For you save a humble people, but the haughty eyes you bring down.
28 For it is you who light my lamp; YAHWEH my God lightens my darkness.
29 For by you I can run against a troop, and by my God I can leap over a wall.
30 This God—his way is perfect; the word of YAHWEH proves true;
he is a shield for all those who take refuge in him.

31 For who is God, but YAHWEH? And who is a rock, except our God?—
32 the God who equipped me with strength and made my way blameless.
33 He made my feet like the feet of a deer and set me secure on the heights.
34 He trains my hands for war, so that my arms can bend a bow of bronze.
35 You have given me the shield of your salvation,
and your right hand supported me, and your gentleness made me great.
36 You gave a wide place for my steps under me, and my feet did not slip.
37 I pursued my enemies and overtook them,
and did not turn back till they were consumed.
38 I thrust them through, so that they were not able to rise; they fell under my feet.
39 For you equipped me with strength for the battle;
you made those who rise against me sink under me.
40 You made my enemies turn their backs to me, and those who hated me I destroyed.
41 They cried for help, but there was none to save;
they cried to YAHWEH, but he did not answer them.
42 I beat them fine as dust before the wind; I cast them out like the mire of the streets.

43 You delivered me from strife with the people;
you made me the head of the nations; people whom I had not known served me.
44 As soon as they heard of me they obeyed me; foreigners came cringing to me.
45 Foreigners lost heart and came trembling out of their fortresses.

- 46 YAHWEH lives, and blessed be my rock, and exalted be the God of my salvation—
47 the God who gave me vengeance and subdued peoples under me,
48 who rescued me from my enemies;
yes, you exalted me above those who rose against me;
you delivered me from the man of violence.
- 49 For this I will praise you, O YAHWEH, among the nations, and sing to your name.
50 Great salvation he brings to his king, and shows steadfast love to his anointed,
to David and his offspring forever.

PRAYER

Almighty and eternal God, you so loved the world that you gave your only begotten Son that whoever believes in him should not perish but have everlasting life. Mercifully hear us now as we call upon you in his name. Make us rightly understand what Christ our Saviour has done and suffered for us. Fill our hearts with gratitude and our tongues with praise. Help us show forth our love toward you, not only with our lips but in our lives, by devoting ourselves to your service and walking before you in holiness and righteousness all our days. Pour out upon us the gracious influence of your Holy Spirit, for of ourselves we can do nothing. We are weak and sinful creatures, ready at all times to fall into evil. Put into our hearts a dread of sin, and so guide us by your counsel and uphold us with your might. Keep us, we pray, as we pass through things temporal while looking forward to things eternal. This we beg for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.