

## The Book of Psalms

### Psalm 18

#### Lesson 3 – 18:30-50

#### Opening Prayer

#### ***Read Psalm 18:30-50***

#### Overview

Psalm 18 is a royal psalm recounting David's political and military victories brought about by God's direction. It is one of the longer psalms that we have studied at some 50 verses. Since it is fairly long we will divide the psalm into 3 lessons. See below in the outline for the explanation of the division.

In the first lesson on Psalm 18 we covered verses 1-15 which recalled the psalmist's crying out to God for help in verses 1-6 and the Theophany in verses 7-15 which followed. In the second lesson on Psalm 18, covering verses 16-29 we were given God's answer to the crying out of the psalmist and the result. In this lesson, which concludes the psalm, David praises God's uniqueness and lays plain the result of what His unique God has done in verses 30-45. The psalm then concludes with an appropriate doxology in verses 46-50.

#### Outline/Structure

- I. David take's refuge in God (18:1-30)
  - a. Introductory hymn of praise – (18:1-3, Lesson 1)
  - b. Account of the crisis – (18:4-6, Lesson 1)
  - c. The theophany – (18:7-15, Lesson 1)
  - d. The rescue – (18:16-19, Lesson 2)
  - e. The psalmist's righteousness – (18:20-24, Lesson 2)
  - f. The Lord's response – (18:25-29, Lesson 2)
- II. **There is no god besides Yahweh**
  - a. **Confession of praise – (18:30-36, Lesson 3)**
  - b. **David's rehearsal of his exploits – (18:37-42, Lesson 3)**
  - c. **David's rehearsal of God's deliverance – (18:43-45, Lesson 3)**
- III. **Final Doxology – (18:46-50, Lesson 3)**

## Confession of Praise – 18:30-36

- :30-31 - These verses serve as a kind of thesis statement and verses 31-36 are the proofs based on what God has done. The thesis would look like this succinctly:
- a. God is perfect (30a)
  - b. His Word is perfect (30b)
  - c. He protects those who take refuge in Him (30c, 31b)
- The word translated as “flawless” in the NIV is actually the word for “refined” or “smelted” in the Hebrew. Therefore the idea is that the Word of God has been tested and found to be perfect.
- :32 - The strength found in the “shield” and “rock” of verses 31 and 32 is transferred to those who take refuge in God. He “girds” or “surrounds” us with strength *because* we take refuge in Him. The strength is not ours but God's. Likewise the “blamelessness” is not ours but God's or messianically Christ's. ***Read 2 Corinthians 5:21***
- What is the “divine exchange” that is made?*
- :33 - In order to understand this verse we must know what a “hind” is. A hind is a female deer that can place her back feet exactly where her front feet stepped. Not one inch off! She is able to run with abandonment! In times of danger, she is able to run securely and not get “off track.” The hind is able to scale unusually difficult terrain and elude predators. (***See also Habakkuk 3:19***)
- How then is this verse reassuring to us?*
- :34-35 – David now uses military language to describe God's help to him. Perfectly appropriate when we remember the main background of the psalm is David's political and military victories.
- There is a broad picture of help that comes from the Lord in these verses from strength to gentleness. David is able to “bend a bow of bronze” demonstrating the strength that comes from God. Yet, by the end of verse 35 it is God's “gentleness” that makes him great.
- Why are both God's power(strength) and love(gentleness) necessary to us taking refuge in Him? How are they both demonstrated in the cross and resurrection event?*
- :36 - In verse 33 David speaks of the sure footing coming and compares our steps to that of the hind deer. Here he emphasizes the same idea of a sure footing with the Lord, but pictures it as the enlarging of the very places that he steps. Both convey the idea that our footing is assured in the Lord's care.

## David's Rehearsal of His Exploits – 18:37-42

:37-42 – This entire section is a complete picture of the end of the battle. The enemy has realized their defeat and turn to run away. While at other times David has spared the lives of his enemies, this time he pursues them until they are no more.<sup>1</sup>

- The enemies in verse 41 also cried out to God for help, but He did not answer them. This is the same word used for David's cry for help in verse 6 of the psalm.

*Why does the Lord not answer the enemies of David? **Read Job 27:7-9; James 5:16.***

## David's Rehearsal of God's Deliverance – 18:43-45

:43 - David attributes his entire leadership vocation to God's doing. It was God who placed him in a place where people "he had not known serve him".

*What is a vocation?*

*How does understanding that God has placed you into each of your vocations equip you for them?*

:44-45 – David is not deceived into believing that the obedience or submission of the foreigners is real. In verse 44 the word translated as "cringed" or "submitted" in some translations literally means "feigned obedience". David knows that it is only out of fear that the foreigners are obeying him.

*Do we obey God out of fear or love or both?*

## Final Doxology – 18:46-50

:46-50 - The psalm began with a hymn of praise directed to "God, my rock" and concludes in the same way. This verse begins the bookend of the end of the song to the God who delivers David and parallels verses 1-3 with much the same language.

- Notice also that the verbs in verses 46-50 are present tense participles. God has not only done these things, but is doing them. David had talked about the accomplishment of defeating his enemies as a past event(v.37-42), but here in the final doxology he acknowledges the ongoing help that God gives to him.

*How do past events strengthen our faith for current crises?*

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<sup>11</sup> David spared the lives of Saul(2 *Samuel* 24:1-8), Nabal (2 *Samuel* 25:21-35), and Shimei (2 *Samuel* 16:5-12).

:47 - It is only God who is to execute vengeance not us. ***Read Deuteronomy 32:35; Matthew 5:38-48***

*What is God calling us to do in Matthew 5?*

*What does such love demonstrate?*

### Summary

Psalm 18 is a song around the political and military victories that God gave to David, the king. Yet within these verses we can find tremendous reassurances for our own faith. We can be reminded of the God who gives us strength for our vocations and equips us to love even our enemies.

Closing Prayer