

Psalm 18



DAILY DEVOTION

Shandy

Day 1

***“...I will love thee, O LORD, my strength.”
(Psalm 18:1)***

Could there be a better theme for the life of the believer? To not only be in love with the Creator of the whole earth who became your Saviour on Calvary, but to wilfully and purposefully love the LORD is clearly presented in this verse. I will - I choose - I make a decision that today I will love my God. The world mistakenly thinks that love is a soft, warm feeling toward someone or something that they feel affectionate toward. Of course that is a part of love, the emotional part. But there is an intellectual side to love that is motivated to do things for and toward the one you love. A mother nurses a baby because she loves. God sent His Son Jesus into this world to die for our sins because He loves. And the child of God is to keep the commandments of Jesus Christ because he loves (If ye love me, keep my commandments. John 14:15). Well, if David chose to love the LORD, we then must ask ourselves: why? What had God done for David that lit up David's heart with love? The word 'love' is actually a root word. That means it is used to describe other things, not other things used to describe it. White is white, dark is dark, God is God, love is love. It is really that simple. You cannot break down the word love into its parts. So, what had so touched David deep down in his heart & spirit that he chose to direct his love toward God? For our meditation on this verse, look at the very next verse in Psalm 18: The LORD is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower. Here are eight things that David describes God as, eight things that indicate the reasons he loves God.

The LORD is David's rock, fortress, deliverer, God, strength, buckler, horn of salvation and high tower. If we were to meditate on each of these words, I think we should understand the reasons for David's love. And, if these same reasons stir up love in our own hearts toward our Saviour, then I think we can sensibly conclude that we have the very same love as David. And more so, that we love the very same LORD that David does. A worthy study indeed, yes?



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Day 2

This ROCK

***“...I will love thee, O LORD, my strength ... the LORD is my rock...”
(Psalm 18:1-2)***

At long last, David's years of fleeing from Saul and dealing with the enemies of Israel has come to an end. He can now settle down and lead Israel in the worship and service of Jehovah God. Through the last few years of hiding in caves and woods, David has needed a solid foundation for his life - a hope, a purpose, a cleft in a rock. So, in our Psalm, a ROCK is the first description he gives of the God that has sustained him through such adversity. Of course, you must start with God as your Rock, or you have no foundation on which to build your fortress, which is the very next word in our string of eight words describing the God of David. Interestingly, in Scripture you see wicked people hiding under rocks - idols were at times worshipped under rocks and those who refuse to repent during the Tribulation will rather have rocks fall and cover them than turn to God over their sinful deeds. Yet, believers are described as building their life UPON a rock - the wise man built his house upon a bedrock foundation, when Israel needed water in the wilderness it issued forth out of a rock, when Moses brought forth the people to meet with God it was at the great rock we call Sinai, and when David needed a sure foundation he knew exactly where to go: From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I. (Psalm 61:2). We are to love our God simply because He is our Rock. Our life extends from Him, our confidence is built upon Him. Our expectations are from Him. Our enemies are crushed by Him.

Indeed, when Jesus Christ spoke of building His church, He was to build it upon Himself, THE Rock. Perhaps now we gain a little insight as to why the child of God enjoys reading about the life of David in the Books of the Kings and the Psalms. It is magnetic reading for us because we have something in common with David - a common salvation, a common hope, a common help - a Common Rock. Not that God is common in any manner, but all children of God know the same Rock, because there is only one God. And right here, on this very point, the world does not understand the love a believer has for God, because the world simply does not trust God like the believer does. If you were to read a little further into Psalm 18, you would read these verses: 'For who is God save the LORD? or who is a rock save our God?' (v31), and 'The LORD liveth; and blessed be my rock; and let the God of my salvation be exalted' (v46). And what makes our hearts rejoice that God is our Rock? Well, the reality that God is our Rock is not a feeling, but a fact. David needed this sure and steadfast hope when his feelings and fears overran him during his wilderness years. He did not need a hug or some soft and warm feeling sentiment whispered in his ear, rather he needed to know with complete confidence that God was for Him. Isn't it calming for your soul to know that the LORD God is your Rock? Verily, yes. SDG.



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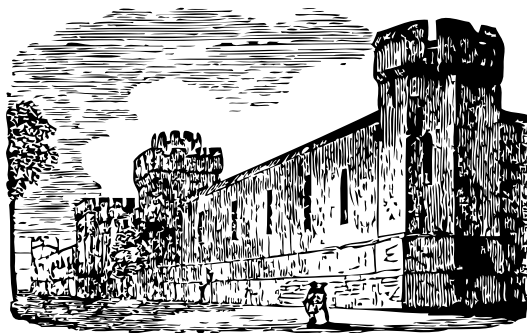
Day 3

This FORTRESS

***“I will love thee, O LORD, my strength. The LORD is my ... fortress.”
(Psalm 18:1-2)***

In our last meditation, David informed us that the LORD was his Rock. Jesus Christ told us in the gospels that the man who digged deep and built his house upon the foundation of a rock, was safe when the storms beat vehemently upon his house. Like the lighthouse at sea, that seemingly sits on its own tiny piece of rock with the seas raging around it, David was able to sit secure and safe amidst his life storms. Yes indeed, when you have believed upon Jesus, you are grounded upon the Rock of Ages. But you are also inside a fortress that is upon that Rock. A fortress that is built upon a rock, just like the lighthouse that is built upon a rock, just like every person that has ever believed upon Jesus Christ – is on solid ground. In Christ, you are safe inside His Fortress. But, consider this: what did you do to be in Christ? What works did you perform to be saved? The answer, of course, is none. So this fortress that your God is to you, this fortress that you are in because you are saved, how did you get into it? Did you scale the walls, or beat down the gate, or trebuchet over the ramparts? If this fortress is a picture of the Mercy & Grace of God, then you did nothing to enter it. You were brought inside by Him Who loved you and gave Himself for you. You are a guest, not a conquerer! You are a refugee, not an invader! You have been taken in because you accepted an invitation to enter on His condition of repentance and belief! And here is my point – whilst the word ‘fortress’ does indeed mean castle or strong place, it also means capture, hold, net and snare. Paul spoke about being apprehended by Jesus Christ, and that his ministry was now to apprehend the lost for Christ.

Paul even spoke about himself as a prisoner of the LORD. At another place he spoke about being a servant of Christ. A believer is captured by Christ for God, and in many ways we could say that the believer has been netted or snared. Not against his own will, of course. Now, if you understand what I have been saying here, you will understand my next statement, and it is in two parts. Part 1: How secure am I, how safe, how beloved and how privileged that am I inside this fortress, a captive by the Love of God! Part 2: Because of this security, this surety, this safety, I tremble that I could easily have avoided this net that God set for me in His Only Begotten Son, saying no to His offer of salvation inside His Fortress, struggling and kicking to avoid being born again whilst continuing on my lost path to Hellfire & damnation. To conclude, what can I say to these things? Sometimes I give out a hearty 'amen', or bear a huge smile, or sing a song at full volume when I think of my inheritance in Christ. But, in this moment, knowing of such destruction that awaited me, and knowing that I could easily have avoided being netted by the Gospel of Christ, I am content to bow my head and whisper ever so softly, but purposefully Heavenward: I thank Thee, my Father, for capturing me, for Jesus' Sake. SDG.



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Day 4

This DELIVERER

***“I will love thee, O LORD, my strength. The LORD is my ... deliverer.”
(Psalm 18:1-2)***

When we define this word, deliverer, your mind will flood with stories from the Bible. Jonah was spat out of the whale's belly, David escaped the javelin Saul hurled at him, Lot was brought out of Sodom by the angels, Israel was led out of Egypt by Moses. These and many others are examples of deliverance, and more specifically, the deliverance of the LORD God. Deliverance has the thought of slip out, escape, carry away safe. Many times David was carried safely out of a situation by God - killing the lion and bear when shepherding the sheep, battling against Goliath (The LORD that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine. 1Sam 17:37). It is because of our strong enemies that we need deliverance. Sin is enslaving, a harsh taskmaster, not letting us go except the Blood of Jesus Christ delivers and frees us from its penalty. Satan is a wicked being, more powerful than we are, working in a realm that we cannot see with our eyes, so capable to trick and trap us, and unless God delivers us we remain in his grasp. Even from our very own selves do we need to be delivered at times, from foolish thoughts, wrong actions and unrighteous paths that we take. David surely understood and rejoiced that God kept him safe, or delivered him into safety when he needed it. Yet, there is an unexpected side to the deliverance of God. When David was in the cave and Saul and his men came in to sleep, David had opportunity to kill Saul. Indeed, his men told him that he should kill Saul as he slept. David himself would go on to say that the LORD had delivered Saul into his hand that day, but that he chose not to kill Saul.

David CHOSE NOT TO ACCEPT GODS DELIVERANCE. Why? Because it was wrong to kill the king and raise your hand against God's anointed. So quickly we can accept a solution to our problems that at times we do not even recognise that it was a test from our Father that we might not take the easy way out, but that we would continue to do right no matter the depth of agony we may be in. Sometimes, staying in the place of hurt but trusting the Heart of God by faith is the deliverance! In Hebrews 11, there is a simple little phrase, 'not accepting deliverance', which refers to those who were tortured for Christ, and that often to death, but who would not recant their faith. They did not accept the offer of having the torture stopped because they knew it would have been selling out God. Yes, God is our deliverer, and we should reach out to take His Hand when He offers us deliverance from our woes. But I suggest to you that there is a greater deliverance than simply being carried away safe out of all the things that hurt and trouble us - it is to live by faith, not by sight, even when you are pressed out of measure on all sides. Not every deliverance that is held out to us in our need has been offered for our taking, but rather it has been offered as a trial, a test, to prove that we are mature in Christ or still a spiritual baby clutching at every straw. QED.



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Day 5

This GOD

***“I will love thee, O LORD, my strength. The LORD is my ... God.”
(Psalm 18:1-2)***

If I were to ask you for a word that has been so abused, so misunderstood, so shamefully handled, you would have God right near the top of the list. The others would be Jesus and Christ. Yet, God is not a difficult word to comprehend, because it is a name. Yes, God is the Name of the Supreme Being we call Jehovah. I have heard believers blaspheme and use God's Name as a curse word or an exclamation, and this ought not to be so! If James teaches us not to speak sweet words out of one side of our mouth and then curse men out of the other side, how much more so if the Name being used to curse is God's Name?! Now, read our text again, and it says: 'The LORD is my ... God', not 'God is my ... LORD'. David is describing to us everything that the LORD is to him. LORD is Who He is, the self-existent One, but God describes What he is. Simply put, God means supreme magistrate, the highest judge, the top authority. God is your Supreme Judge! He is the One that reserves right to judge your heart and actions, to be able to judge any chastisement you need, and to be able to decide what help and protection you need at any given point in time. But it also means something else. As David was running from Saul, he had to endure many lies and stories about him, many hurtful untruths and many people who were against him simply because they followed his dark-hearted enemy, Saul the king. Here in Psalm 18, David's enemies are now all dealt with and he enjoys rest from the Hand of God.

Now when David says that the LORD is his God, he is telling us that God is his Supreme Judge, and that God has judged that Saul was wrong and he was right. Child of God, others might judge you, act wickedly toward you, slander you and hurt you, but your LORD is your God - your Supreme Judge. In the New Testament we read 'God is my witness' (Romans 1:9) and 'God is my record' (Philemon 8). Yes indeed, God is your Judge, and He knows the truth of all things, so take your rest now and stop worrying about other people and what they think of you and do toward you. Here is how Paul speaks to this topic: 'But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment: yea, I judge not mine own self. For I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord. Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God' (1Corinthians 4:3-5). QED.



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Day 6

This STRENGTH

***“I will love thee, O LORD, my strength. The LORD is my ... strength.”
(Psalm 18:1-2)***

If I were to ask you for a word that has been so abused, so misunderstood, so shamefully handled, you would have God right near the top of the list. The others would be Jesus and Christ. Yet, God is not a difficult word to comprehend, because it is a name. Yes, God is the Name of the Supreme Being we call Jehovah. I have heard believers blaspheme and use God's Name as a curse word or an exclamation, and this ought not to be so! If James teaches us not to speak sweet words out of one side of our mouth and then curse men out of the other side, how much more so if the Name being used to curse is God's Name?! Now, read our text again, and it says: 'The LORD is my ... God', not 'God is my ... LORD'. David is describing to us everything that the LORD is to him. LORD is Who He is, the self-existent One, but God describes What he is. Simply put, God means supreme magistrate, the highest judge, the top authority. God is your Supreme Judge! He is the One that reserves right to judge your heart and actions, to be able to judge any chastisement you need, and to be able to decide what help and protection you need at any given point in time. But it also means something else. As David was running from Saul, he had to endure many lies and stories about him, many hurtful untruths and many people who were against him simply because they followed his dark-hearted enemy, Saul the king. Here in Psalm 18, David's enemies are now all dealt with and he enjoys rest from the Hand of God.

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Day 7

This BUCKLER

***"I will love thee, O LORD, my strength. The LORD is my ... buckler."
(Psalm 18:1-2)***

When the Israelite army went to battle, the soldiers carried two types of shields. The larger was as tall as a man so that he could stand behind it. I believe this size of shield is spoken of by Paul in Ephesians 6: Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. It was able to shield the soldier fully. But the buckler was the smaller of these two shield. It did not cover the whole body. But, it did allow for the soldier to remain agile in battle. He could run with it and continue fighting with his weapon in the other hand. When Nehemiah was rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem, his workers had one hand on the task of rebuilding and the other hand holding a weapon. Now, the buckler is not a weapon, but it is always ready to be quickly deployed with just one hand. How can we apply this to our daily faith? How is the LORD our buckler? We will speak reverentially, because He is our Creator and Judge, but just as the buckler could be turned in any direction to protect against an attack, so also in any direction we turn, our God can be in front of us to absorb the attack. Any problem you face, any attack that comes, any enemy that approaches, face to turn that trouble and know that the LORD God is standing between you and the incoming assault as your personal Buckler. And that incoming enemy will haply be found to be fighting against your God.

What a wonderful thought! We are not left to our own devices in withstanding Satan and the world, rather we take refuge behind this Divine, Omnipotent, Omnipresent and Omniscient Shield. Solomon wrote: He is a buckler to them that walk uprightly (Proverbs 2:7), and 2Samuel 22:31 states: He is a buckler to all those that trust in him. Notice also the portability of the buckler, able to be slung over the back when running and then held to face any direction fore and aft. You see, David was a man of war and very experienced at running into battle. He was not one for sitting idly by and doing no work himself. He mixed works - fighting in the battle, and faith - trusting God to protect him. I often wonder if David ran into battle with his buckler in one hand as a symbol of his faith in God, and the little sling he used to take down Goliath in the other. Do you see faith & works together? So, gird up the loins of your mind, take up your buckler of faith in God, and run into the battle! QED.



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Day 8

This HORN OF MY SALVATION

“I will love thee, O LORD, my strength. The LORD is my ... horn of my salvation.”

(Psalm 18:1-2)

We could look at the Hebrew word that horn was translated from to understand its meaning. But, let us remain purely with the word itself as presented to us in the Word of God - horn. Some have thought it refers to the horn of an animal to attack and defend with. Others yet that horn refers to the ornamental horns placed on the helmets of warriors. Yet others suppose it alludes to the horns of the alter in the Tabernacle. Some take it to be a horn shaped vessel to carry liquids in. Perhaps it might even refer to the highest point of a mountain peak. Looking at the verse, whatever horn is, it is related closely to salvation. Not just the salvation of being born again, but also and perhaps more so in David's case it refers to the daily salvation he needs from his enemies. These things said, we can be assured that as God has been the strength or reality behind our previous salvation from dangerous predicaments, so He will once again deliver us in times to come. Even in the dark times we may be going through today. When Hannah rejoiced over God giving her a baby, she said 'mine horn is exalted in the LORD'. In another place, God said of David, 'in my name shall his horn be exalted'. think that the meaning of 'the horn of my salvation' is now quite simple, and it is this: it is not just that we have access to salvation when we need it (rescue from our troubles), but that the LORD God Who empowers that salvation is Himself our very strength indeed.

I What better could there be than being rescued from our troubles, than to know and love Almighty God Who IS that salvation! Glory! QED.



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Day 9

This HIGH TOWER

***“I will love thee, O LORD, my strength. The LORD is my ... high tower.”
(Psalm 18:1-2)***

David has been telling us why he loves the LORD. Indeed, He opened our Psalm with a statement that would be worthy of our very last breath on earth: I will love thee, O LORD, my strength. To help us understand why the LORD is our strength, David has used a string of descriptors to show us just Who our God is to us. And, now, to close these devotions off, David has one last, all encompassing phrase - high tower. Look back over the descriptors of the LORD - rock, fortress, deliverer, God, strength, buckler, horn of my salvation - and you can only come to a singular conclusion. The conclusion is this: If God be for us, who can be against us? (Romans 8:31). If THIS Rock, if THIS Fortress, if THIS Deliver, if THIS God, if THIS Strength, if THIS Buckler, if THIS Horn of My Salvation is my LORD, then I stand in an unassailable, inaccessible, utterly secure and safe place. We could say that we are in a high tower. A tower that our enemies may throw fiery darts at, and may even stand at the base of the tower yelling insults at our faith in God, but nonetheless a tower that we are safe in. Well, that is not only a theory, but a reality! David, under inspiration of the Holy Ghost, is telling us that the child of God stands exactly in a high tower. Indeed, the LORD God is that high tower. It is no wonder that Proverbs 18:10 tells us that 'The name of the LORD is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe. And if you needed any more persuasion on your security as a believer, the underlying Hebrew word for 'high tower' is also translated as 'refuge'.

Yes, child of God, 'The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah.' (Psalm 46:7 & 11). SDG.

Postscript: Now that we have concluded these short meditations, we might ask one question of David. That question would be: David, because of your descriptors, we see our LORD & God clearer through your descriptions of His Nature, but what are we to do now?' I should say that his answer might be on this wise: Do what I did - love Him'.



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