

Psalm 18:31–50

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- 31 For who is God, except the LORD?
And who is a rock, except our God?
- 32 It is God who arms me with strength,
And makes my way perfect.
- 33 He makes my feet like the feet of deer,
And sets me on my high places.
- 34 He teaches my hands to make war,
So that my arms can bend a bow of bronze.
- 35 You have also given me the shield of Your salvation;
Your right hand has held me up,
Your gentleness has made me great.
- 36 You enlarged my path under me,
So my feet did not slip.
- 37 I have pursued my enemies and overtaken them;
Neither did I turn back again till they were destroyed.
- 38 I have wounded them,
So that they could not rise;
They have fallen under my feet.
- 39 For You have armed me with strength for the battle;
You have subdued under me those who rose up against me.
- 40 You have also given me the necks of my enemies,
So that I destroyed those who hated me.
- 41 They cried out, but there was none to save;
Even to the LORD, but He did not answer them.
- 42 Then I beat them as fine as the dust before the wind;
I cast them out like dirt in the streets.
- 43 You have delivered me from the strivings of the people;
You have made me the head of the nations;
A people I have not known shall serve me.
- 44 As soon as they hear of me they obey me;
The foreigners submit to me.
- 45 The foreigners fade away,
And come frightened from their hideouts.
- 46 The LORD lives!
Blessed be my Rock!
Let the God of my salvation be exalted.
- 47 It is God who avenges me,
And subdues the peoples under me;
- 48 He delivers me from my enemies.
You also lift me up above those who rise against me;
You have delivered me from the violent man.
- 49 Therefore I will give thanks to You, O LORD, among the
Gentiles,
And sing praises to Your name.
- 50 Great deliverance He gives to His king,
And shows mercy to His anointed,
To David and his descendants forevermore.

There is only one God Who can strengthen, v31–34.

The strengthening of v32a comes from the strong God of v31.

The perfect way of the man in v32b comes from the God Whose way is perfect in v30a.

The marvel of our covenant God isn't just Who He is; it's that He has made Himself to be ours!

Whatever else He has done in creation may be marshalled unto our good, v33a.

Since He is high and lifted up, He can appoint to us such a position, v33b.

When God is your Drill Sergeant (v34a), you are trained in accomplishing the impossible (v34b; 'break' not just 'bend')

God strengthens us unto independence, v35–36.

Biblical faith is counter-intuitive. Our shield is not that we may save ourselves, but that He saves us (v35a). Not that our right hand is strong, but that His right hand is what holds us up (v35b). It is that wonderful, counter-intuitive fact that we are not great by being great in ourselves, but by the fact that God is gentle toward us and merciful under us (v35c). We gain our balance and footing not from how nimble and deft we have become, but by the fact that the God of almighty and sovereign providence suits our circumstances exactly to us (v36)!

God gives us participation in the victory of Christ Himself, v37–50.

To understand the completeness of the victory promised in vv37–42, we must understand it in light of the clear, Messianic prophecy of vv43–50. Though our English translation puts much of this in the past tense, the Hebrew stem is one that is almost always present or future. Yes, the Lord has done this for David, but it is talking about things that He perpetually does for His people, because He does it for His anointed.

Consider all of the direct references to Christ here: Delivered from the strivings of the people (43a), Head of the nations (43b), Served by a foreign people (43c), Bringing obedience merely by His being proclaimed (44a), Foreigners submit (44b), etc., until the most obvious in v50, "His king," "His anointed," and "David and his seed [singular in the Hebrew!]." Indeed, in Romans 15:9, the Holy Spirit authoritatively interprets v49 as belonging primarily to Jesus.

Yes, there is a sense in which all of this is for David, but the focus is much more on the Lord Jesus. David's victories and reign are the tiniest foreshadowing by comparison to Christ's victory. So the Spirit has not given it to us only to sing and pray as David's but Christ's. And to us, also, He has given this, because to us also it belongs in Christ. Romans 15:9 will give way a few paragraphs later to Romans 16:20, "And the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly."

Indeed, there is no strengthening from God apart from Christ; apart from Christ, He refuses even to hear prayer (v41). There is only one God (v31), Who alone is the living God (v46).

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording referenced above)

All right this week we come to Psalm 18 where we left off last week in verse 31 and we'll take all the way to the end of the Psalm. Psalm 18. Verses 31 through 50, these are God's words. For who is God, except Yahweh. And who is around? Except our God.

It is God who arms me with strength. And makes my way perfect. He makes my feet like the feet of deer. And sets me on my high places. He teaches my hands to make war. So that my arms can bend a bow of bronze. You've also given me the shield of your salvation.

Your right hand has held me up. Your gentleness. Has made me great. You enlarged my path under me. So my feet did not slip. I have pursued my enemies and overtaken them. Neither did I turn back again till they were destroyed. I have wounded them. So that they could not rise.

They have fallen under my feet. You for you have armed me with strength for the battle. You have subdued under me those who rose up against me. You have also given me the neck of my enemies. So that I destroyed those who hated me. They cried out but there was none to save even to Yahweh, but he did not answer them.

Then I beat them as fine as the dust before the wind. I cast them out like dirt in the streets. You have delivered me from the strivings of the people. You have made me the head of the nations. A people I have not men shall serve me. As soon as they hear of me.

They will obey me. The foreigners submit to me the foreigners fade away and come frightened from their heads. Yoho lives. Blessed be my rock. Let the God of my salvation be exalted. It is God who Avenges me and subdues the people's under me. He delivers me from my enemies.

You also lift me up above those you rise against me. You have delivered me from the violent, man. Therefore, I will give thanks to you all among the Gentiles. And sing praises to your name. Great deliverance. He gives to his king. And chose Mercy to his anointed. Today that and his descendants.

Forevermore.

Man, thus far the. Reading of God's inspired and inherent word. There is only one God. And therefore there is only one God who can save. And whom we can find our refuge and strength who will be our rock and fortress and deliver and shield and horn and strong hold all of these marvelous words with which David initiated the Psalm and the first three verses.

And that's the point of the last twenty verses here. In fact, when it says for who is bad except Yahweh the word used for God there is actually in the singular we usually hear Elohim plural only four times in the entire Old Testament, do you have Aloha in the singular so it's probably better to translate for who is A God.

Except Yahweh. Those who go by other names are not God's but as the Apostle says in first Corinthians 10 are really and truly demons who impress themselves upon the minds of men and men, of course come up with the idol Gods. When that's the great difference between Yahweh or God as we know him Elohim Father Son and Spirit and the other Gods as verse 46 says Yahweh lives I guess I could have said that about Barry on the spring, but then there would have to sing Belle.

Dies every fall? Many of these ancient Near Eastern Gods supposedly died every fall and rose again every spring reliable you don't want to God who might die on you at any time because he ran out of gas for the year. And so it's marvelous for who is a God, except you always there's only one God who can strengthen and you can see.

When he says it is God who owns me as strength. He is the one who is this rock from the last half of verse 31 and then the second part of verse 32 and he says and he makes my way perfect. Well, if we had the time we're taking the time to do the entire assignment once we were to remember that that's right out of verse 30.

It's glad who is perfect to begin with. And so if you want your way perfected your best belong to the God who's own way is already perfect. Here is the only God who can strengthen. So verse 33, he makes my feet like the feet of the deer. Wonderful thing about having the true.

God is your God as you can look at the rest of his creation and wherever he's put speed or nimbleness or wisdom or cleverness, wherever he's put strength and endurance all of these things are queried by him. And he has an infinite capacity to give us every good that he has ever designed.

Not only does he have a capacity or wheeled all of his career activity and prominence for our good that he does in creation. He also even. Brings us into that which belongs to himself. There's a whisper here for shattering of wonderful. New Testament blessings. We've seen this several places in the Psalms where things are claimed for and given to men that we say that really only belongs to God.

And that of course prepares us for God himself to come and become a man to be our redeemer that our salvation would be in him that we would be joint inheritors with him. It's writing to someone just today who is going through anxious circumstances and one of the many favorite verses for that is Ephesians.

1:11. That the one who is working all things according to the Council of his will. That same will has determined that we would be heirs through trusting in Jesus. Verse verse 11 and then into verse 12 in Ephesians 1:11, so not only first half of verse 33 that everything that we see God has

given to his creatures he is willing and able to give us as soon as and so far as it is for our good and his glory but the second half.

Of verse 3, he sets me on my high places this isn't just high places in terms of the high ground for fighting this is a general term that refers to places of power and authority and the Lord himself is the one to whom all authority and power belong. So whatever else he has done in the creation may be marshalled under our good and since he is high and lifted up it belongs to him to a point to us.

Whatever position he wishes. He teaches my hands to make war verse 34a you remember last week. When we questioned whether or not we could really call it exaggeration or hyperbole and we looked forward to verse 34 so that my arms can bend and the word here is now a word that you ordinarily use for bend in terms of you know, I graph reading in English right?

I thought you know, that really he's really pulling hard on that string and what I'm wonderful string it must be because the bronze bow is bending it's alert that's used for breaking. The idea is he snaps the bronze bit of the enemy not that he draws his own bronze, bow you feel bad for an enemy who opposes someone who has God as his strength and God as his shield and God as his trainer.

It's kind of like the weakling you didn't know what he was getting into in the story or in the film and the enemy he catches all the errors that are being shot at him throws him in the dirt grabs the bad of his and snaps it and do. The image in verse 34 is actually much stronger than what I grew up reading and understanding and it was delicious.

In other words, when bad as your drill sergeant if he's the one who trains your hands or teaches your hands to make war you are trained and accomplishing the impossible. And that's because your mightiness is inverted your mightiness comes from your weakness. And that's versus 35 and 36 so there's only one God and therefore there's only one God who can strengthen versus 31 through 34 and the way that God strengthens us is unto dependents.

This is the opposite of how we tend to think isn't it? We think that when we're strengthened then we're going to be able to be really independent. We'll finally have Italian to the height of our training and we'll be muddy. But God gives us the shield of his salvation.

You know how strong you are by the fact that someone had to hold you up the whole time. Unless you're a believer and the someone is the Lord and he is the one who holds you up. That's infinitely stronger. Than any personal resources or ability that we could attain to.

Your right hand has helped me up. Your gentleness has made me great. Very interesting to study the third part of verse 35 because many of the translations from the Septuagint to some of the older translations of the first millennium after Christ, they're all on a monkey with the word gentleness.

Because it doesn't sound like something that can make you great and yet the Hebrew word is very clear and the truth is one that the Scripture teaches us. That it is by God's stooping down to us. By God's showing us mercy. That we are great and the image in verse 36 actually goes right along with it.

We want to thank that in the analogy for our life as it were that the way we are going to be not slipping is by how well balanced we learned to be and how nimble and death we are able to be. But that's not what the what the prophet what David here is saying he's saying because I lack those abilities wherever I have needed it in order not to slip God broadened to the ground under me.

How many agendas on the beam? Would have benefited from having God as the one who enlarges the ground beneath him or beneath her. I guess only the gals do the beam. That's the description that we see here and in another place where he's talking about overcoming the enemy in the destruction of the enemy making it through the attacks of the enemy remember revelation chapter 12 and the serpent producing a flood of water to go after the woman and her children and how God commands the earth in the earth swallows up the flood.

So that if you have an almighty God who is ruling and over ruling all things at all times. Mightiness does not come by independence. It does not come by attaining to a level of personal greatness. It comes by God stooping down to us learning to rest upon. Him whose right hand holds us up.

He is our shield. He even enlarges the path underneath us. And so, Verses 31 through 34, there's only one God who can strengthen versus 35 through 36. Gods strengthens us unto dependence upon him. And verses 37 through 50, this is. Especially by our being united to the Lord Jesus himself.

His translation difficulty in verses 37 through 42. But also sounds pretty past tense in our English it reads present and future in the Hebrew. He uses the. The imperfect form of the verb stems almost exclusively in in these six verses. Now the problem is it sounds like David talking about what has happened in his life, certainly it appears to be that way when we see it in second Samuel.

You remember in second Samuel chapter 22, this psalm appears is almost the last thing in the book almost the last thing in David's life. But he's talking about things that are present and future because they don't just belong to David They both excuse me, they belong especially to Christ.

And therefore you remember the. The end of last week, he taught us to say that.

He was a shield to all who trust in him and diverse thirty, the David was laying down for us something that we could all claim for ourselves that you didn't have to be. The anointed who David was you had to be in the anointed trusting in the anointed whom Christ is.

Therefore, I pursue my enemies which turn these into present tenses. I pursue my enemies and ever take them. Neither do I turn back again until they are destroyed? I wound them so that they cannot arise. They fall under my feet. For you army was strength for the battle, you subdue under me those who rise up against me.

You give me the next and the word could be next or backs, but the point is the same that God gives. Victory how many times we read in the various battles of his people with enemies? That they turn and run they give them the back as it were. You have all you also give me the next of my enemies so that I destroy those who hate me.

They cry out, but there is none to save. Even to Yahweh, but he does not answer them. I beat them as fine as dust before the wind. I cast them out like dirt in the streets. Now, how is it that David can say this and hey is it the David can teach us who trust in him all who trust in him into verse 30 to be able to say this?

Hell is it that we can know that Satan will be crushed under our feet. Well, you know the way the verses written in Romans 16. It's because the God of peace. Is the one who crushes Satan under our feet and he does that especially in and for Christ. It's not difficult in the rest of the Psalm from 43 to verse 50 to see that it's Christ.

The biggest giveaway the easiest give away, of course is if the Holy Spirit takes a verse that he says this is about Christ and so when Romans 15 verse 9 quotes verse 49 of chapter of Psalm 18. Therefore. I will give thanks to you all way among the nations and sing praises to your name.

He puts that unquite slips. Another one of those verses that reminds us that it is Jesus, especially who sings God's praise through. His church. But that's our great clue by the Holy Spirit, we have another almost as clear clue in verse 50. Great deliverance, he gives to his king.

Well, that could just be David and says mercy to his anointed well perhaps, that is also just David. Today and we can't any longer be just David. Like the Centurion who asks Philip is he talking about himself or someone else or like Peter preaching on same 16 at Pentecost he says Can't be David Sauk corruption, you go visit his breath.

Jesus didn't. Of course, it helps us a little bit to know that seed in verse 50, there is singular. To David and his seed capital S, or if you want to keep the New King James word we'll have to take the S off the end to David and his descendant capital D.

Forevermore. It is Jesus who is delivered from the strivings of the people who reference to Psalm 2 there and haired and the Jews together with Pilate and the Gentiles all gathered against him it is Jesus who has had not only ever. There one nation of Israel, but overall the nations.

First forty three be people have not man shall serve me. So wonderful work of missions. Or you take the name of Jesus to people that have never heard it before and there are of course subjects for Christ there who are subdued by the Holy Spirit and come to be able to sing the rest of soulmate team along along with us come to be able to sing versus 37 through 42 and this certain and ultimate victory.

And so if there are not coming to God in Jesus, then they have no one to help them they call out verse 41. But there's none to save even if they quiet to Yahweh he will not answer them one of the things that we need to be careful of in our day in which you know, people use phrases like people of faith or sending thoughts and prayers your way or even seemingly innocuous phrases, like rest in peace, well people of faith in what?

And thoughts and prayers to whom. And thoughts and prayers depending upon him. The picture in verse 41 is of those who try out any number of the gods and they even get to Yahweh in the quality all over Yahweh doesn't listen to them. Because they're not coming to him through faith in Jesus Christ.

They're not coming to him and that helped lessness that font that finds only in Jesus any good. Becoming Tim more like. The rich young ruler did on the Lord's day. What must I do? And you could teach them some Christian lingo, but they're not crying out to God and desperation for Jesus and dependence upon Jesus and God is not listening to their prayers.

Hear me children. When you pray to God, you must do so independence upon Jesus. And clinging to him. Any prayer that comes to God apart from Jesus Christ is offensive to God. The way he is your strength and the one who makes you strong and the one who perfect your way and the one who enlarges the ground beneath you so that you do not slip and the one in whom you know that you will at last have ultimate victory it's all only through Jesus whom God has made Jesus to be to you your righteousness your way of calling out upon him great deliverance has been given to Jesus, not just Jesus rose again from the dead.

But this is the only name under heaven by which men may be saved. That means you might know the name Yahweh, but unless you're coming to your way through Jesus. That name will do, you know more good than it does the people in verse 41. God is very jealous for the glory of his son.

He's not like Aslan. In the last battle. Who tells the task worshiper, oh I'm known by many names in many lands. No. He's made himself known by the name Jesus. And it is in Jesus that we can be sure. Of God as our salvation. So let us come to God through Jesus tonight in prayer.