

Psalm 18

David's Song At the End of His life

When you study and compare Psalm 18 to II Samuel 22, you will discover a striking similarity. The language and style of the two chapters are almost exactly the same.

II Samuel 22 contains a reference in the center of the margin in your Bible, citing Psalm 18:2-50. Both passages deal with the history of David's life, and how the Lord delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul. Both chapters look back, and detail how the Lord's faithfulness preserved Israel's greatest king.

The similarities between these chapters have led some Bible commentators to suggest that both Psalm 18 and II Samuel 22 were written around the same time when David was near the end of his life. For instance, we read in II Samuel 23:1, "Now these be the last words of David," inferring that David was at the close of his life.

Therefore, Psalm 18 might have been one of David's last recorded songs he sang to the Lord. John Gill writes, "David delivered and sung this song in so many express words, in public, before all the congregation of Israel, to the honor and glory of God: for it seems to have been written in his old age, at the close of his days."

The song of David is a testimony of thanksgiving for the many deliverances Christ had wrought for him in his life. The Psalm is a celebration of the faithfulness and grace of Christ to David.

The question is, "What will you sing at the end of your life? Will it be, "I Did It My Way?" Or will it be the words of verse 1, "I will love thee, O LORD, my strength."

David doesn't say I want to love you Lord but..... Or I hope to love you Lord. No, he declares I WILL love the Lord. David determined in his heart as a young and middle aged man to love Christ; and now when he is an old man, as his life is drawing to a close, David determines to love Christ even more.

Is that your supreme desire today? “I will love the Lord.” Children, do you love Christ? Young person, do you love the Lord? Middle aged person, do you love Christ? Older person, do you love the Lord? Or do you love self, and the world more than Christ?

Loving Christ was David’s souls longing, and chief aim in life. David was confident he would see and love Christ even after death. “I will love the Lord,” proclaims David’s confidence in the future. David is saying, “Even in death I will continue to love the Lord.” David looked forward to seeing and loving Christ in heaven.

The Apostle Paul writes in Romans 8:38-39, “For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

But Psalm 18 has an extraordinary quality about it that makes it even more special.

Adam Clarke writes, “The strong current of commentators and critics apply this Psalm to Christ; and to oppose a whole host of both ancients and moderns would argue great self-confidence. In the main I am of the same mind; Bishop Horne has applied the whole of it to Christ.”

Psalm 18 was written by David but he sings ultimately about our dear and gracious Savior, Jesus Christ. What a person to sing about! What a song to sing!

Therefore, the title of my message for today is, “David’s Song at the End of His Life: Singing about Christ.” What did David sing regarding the person and work of Jesus Christ? Let us consider two things from Psalm 18.

1. David sings about Christ exercising perfect faith in His Heavenly Father.

We read in verse 2, “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.”

This verse is quoted in the New Testament in Hebrews 2:13, “And again, **I will put my trust** in him. And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me.” The subject of Hebrews 2 is the Lord Jesus Christ.

Therefore, Hebrews 2 confirms that Psalm 18:2 refers to Christ. He says, “I will put My trust in Him.” During his earthly ministry, Christ exercised faith in His Father. Christ declares and demonstrates in Hebrews 2:13 that even though He experienced persecution in the flesh, Christ as fully God and fully Man, depended on His Father and placed His complete trust in Him!

We get a glimpse into the mind of our Lord who although clothed in the frailty of human flesh, choose to exercise trust in His Father!

We read in Hebrews 5:7-9, “Who in the days of his flesh (speaking about Christ), when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared; Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him.”

The Son's trust reached a climax on the Cross, when in His final words of dependence He cried out, “Father, into your hands I commit my spirit” (Luke 23:46).

C.H. Spurgeon writes, “There are some passages which we should never have thought related to the Messiah if the New Testament had not told us that they do, and Psalm 18 is one of those passages.

Hence I have no doubt that we much more often err in not seeing Christ in the Old Testament than in seeing him there, for there may be many other passages besides those which are supposed to speak of Christ which do speak of him.

This is our Lord Jesus Christ putting his trust in the Father, overcoming by faith, even as we do. Oh, what a marvellous oneness there is here between Christ and his people! Well might the apostle say that both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one?"

"I will put my trust in Him" expresses Christ's confidence in God as His Father, to whom He flees from His sufferings, and is not disappointed; which His believing brethren imitate, *trusting* solely in the Father through Christ, and not in their own merits.

Does your faith rest in Jesus Christ alone? Is He the only object of your faith and hope? It can't be your good works. They are tainted with sin. It can't be your religion or church affiliation. They are imperfect.

What you need and I need is a perfect righteousness before God. Only Christ lived a perfect life according to the Law, and died an atoning death for sin. Only in Christ can sinners obtain a perfect righteous standing before an Holy God. Trust in Christ to save you from your sins and He will forgive you and give you His perfect righteousness.

The importance of Christ exercising faith in his life is expressed by Alexander Maclaren, “A perfect manhood must needs be a dependent manhood. A reasonable creature who does not live by faith is either God or devil: Jesus Christ’s perfect manhood, sinless, stainless, did not absolve Him from, but obliged Him to, a life of continual dependence upon God; His divinity did not, in the smallest measure, interfere with the reality of the faith which, as man, He exercised, and which was the same in kind as ours.

His perfect manhood modifies and perfects His faith. In Him dependence had no relation to a consciousness of sinfulness, as it must have in us, but in Him it had relation to a consciousness of need of a continual derivation of life and power from the Father; His faith being the faith of a perfect manhood, was a perfect faith. Our hands tremble as they hold the telescope that looks into the far-off unseen. His hand was steady. Our faith wavers and is interrupted, an intermittent fountain. His was a perennial flow. His perfect faith issued in perfect results in His life; in a perfect obedience, ‘I do always the things that please Him,’ and in a perfect communion.

Like two metal plates of which the surfaces are so true that when you bring them into contact they adhere, that perfect nature of Jesus Christ's, by the exercise of its perfect faith, clung in unbroken fellowship to the Father — 'He hath not left me alone, because I do always the things that please Him.'"

Out of Christ's example of faith we may take both shame and encouragement — shame when we consider the awful disparity between our wavering and His fixed faith; In Him we see what humanity has in it to become, and what by the path of faith is He, the Captain of the faith, the Leader of the hosts of believers, conquered because He said 'I will put my trust in Him'; and He has left us the same weapon for ours, that we, too, may conquer. 'This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.'

Our faith is imperfect and wavering but Christ's faith is perfect and steady. Let us look to Christ, the one with perfect faith.

David sings about Christ exercising perfect faith in His Heavenly Father, and so must we, who are redeemed by His precious blood.

2. David sings about Christ's mercy to sinners

We read in verse 49, “Therefore will I give thanks unto thee, O LORD, among the heathen, and sing praises unto thy name.”

This verse is quoted in Romans 15:9, “And that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy; as it is written, For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name.”

Adam Clark writes, “As the Jews were to glorify God for his truth, so the Gentiles were to glorify God for his mercy. The Jews received the blessings of the Gospel by right of promise, which promise God had most punctually and circumstantially fulfilled. The Gentiles had received the same Gospel as an effect of God's mere mercy, having no right in consequence of any promise or engagement made with any of their ancestors, though they were originally included in the covenant made with Abraham; and the prophets had repeatedly declared that they should be made equal partakers of those blessings with the Jews themselves; as the apostle proceeds to prove.”

Where would we be today if Christ had not shown mercy and grace to our sinful souls? Some of us might be in hell right now. All of us would still be dead in our sins and dead to God. It is of the LORD's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not (Lamentations 3:22).

Maybe you are here today and you need Christ to show you mercy? The Bible teaches Christ shows mercy to sinners.

We read in Micah 7:18 declares, “Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy.” He delighted in mercy!

Psalm 77:9 asks the question, “Hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies?”

We, who are Gentile believers, make up most of the church today and, although we are undeserving of the least of the mercies of Christ, we have a right in glorifying God for his mercy in Christ.

Moses declares in Deuteronomy 32:43, “Rejoice, O ye Gentiles, with his people.”

And again, it is evident, from Ps 117:1-2, that praise to God is not to be confined to the Jews only, but that all people, as they all share in his goodness, should also join in thanks to their common benefactor: “O praise the Lord, all ye nations, (Gentiles,) praise him all ye people; for his merciful kindness is great towards us; and the truth of the Lord endureth for ever.”

We read in Isaiah 11:10, “There shall be a root of Jesse, (that is, the Messiah,) and he shall rise to reign over the Gentiles, and in him shall the Gentiles hope.”

And therefore the apostle Paul in Romans 15:9 quotes from Psalm 18:49 to prove that both Jews and Gentiles, who were probably unwilling to join with each other in religious fellowship, had both an equal right to glorify God, being equally interested in his mercy, goodness, and truth; and that, from the evidence of the above scriptures, the Gentiles have as much right to hope in Christ, for the full enjoyment of his kingdom, as the Jews had.

John Calvin writes, “There is in Psalm 18:49 an implied contrast between the ordinary worship of God which the faithful were then accustomed to perform in the temple, and this thanksgiving of which David speaks, which could not be confined within so narrow limits.

The meaning, therefore, is, O Lord, I will not only give thee thanks in the assembly of thy people, according to the ritual which thou hast appointed in thy law, but thy praises shall extend to a greater distance, even as thy grace towards me is worthy of being recounted through the whole world.

Moreover, from these words we conclude that this passage contains a prophecy concerning the kingdom of Christ, which was to come. Unless the heathen had been allured into the fellowship of the chosen people, and united into one body with them, to praise God among them would have been to sing his praises among the deaf, which would have been foolish work and lost labor.

Accordingly, Paul very properly and suitably proves from this text, that the calling of the Gentiles was not a thing which happened by chance, or at a venture, (Ro 15:9.) We shall afterwards see in many places

that the Church is appointed to be the sacred dwelling-place for showing forth the praises of God. And, therefore, the name of God could not have been rightly and profitably celebrated elsewhere than in Judea, until the ears of the Gentiles were opened, which was done when God adopted them, and called them to himself by the gospel.”

We are all Gentiles gathered here this morning, and how we should praise the Lord Jesus Christ for including us in the company of the Redeemed.

We read in Ephesians 2:1-7, “And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.”

David sings about Christ’s mercy to sinners, and so must we sing today

In closing, The song David sang at the end of his life was about Jesus Christ. David sings about Christ exercising faith in His Heavenly Father, and Christ’s mercy to sinners. Is that who you are singing about today? Are you looking to Christ as the object of your faith? Will David’s song be your song at the end of your life? Cry to Christ for mercy. He forgives sin. He makes sinners into new creatures. Let us pray!