

The Life of David

David's Song of Deliverance

2 Samuel 22:1-51

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David's Song of Deliverance

Scripture

Chapters 21-24 of Second Samuel form an epilogue to “The Life of David.” The epilogue is in the form of what is known as a “chiasm.” That is, the first and last section are parallel to one another, the second and next-to-last section are parallel to one another, and so on. There are six sections in chapters 21-24 of Second Samuel. Commentator John Woodhouse suggests that we can outline these sections as follows:

- a. 21:1–14: A problem in David's kingdom, part 1.
- b. 21:15–22: The strength of David's kingdom, part 1.
- c. 22:1–51: The hope of David's kingdom, part 1.
- c. 23:1–7: The hope of David's kingdom, part 2.
- b. 23:8–39: The strength of David's kingdom, part 2.
- a. 24:1–25: A problem in David's kingdom, part 2.¹

Today we come to the third section in the epilogue. This is what Woodhouse calls “The hope of David's kingdom.” It covers all of chapter 22, and I am calling it “David's Song of Deliverance.”

It is a marvelous song in which David praises God for the many ways in which he delivered David. It is a long song and we could profitably spend many weeks examining the various portions of this song. However, for the sake of time, I will just examine in detail the first portion of the song in which David praises God for his deliverance.

Let's read David's song of deliverance in 2 Samuel 22:1-51, although we will only examine verses 1-3 today:

¹ And David spoke to the LORD the words of this song

¹ John Woodhouse, *2 Samuel: Your Kingdom Come*, ed. R. Kent Hughes, Preaching the Word (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2015), 483.

on the day when the LORD delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul. ² He said,

**“The LORD is my rock and my fortress
and my deliverer,**

**³ my God, my rock, in whom I take refuge,
my shield, and the horn of my salvation,
my stronghold and my refuge,
my savior; you save me from violence.**

⁴ I call upon the LORD, who is worthy to be praised,
and I am saved from my enemies.

⁵ “For the waves of death encompassed me,
the torrents of destruction assailed me;

⁶ the cords of Sheol entangled me;
the snares of death confronted me.

⁷ “In my distress I called upon the LORD;
to my God I called.

From his temple he heard my voice,
and my cry came to his ears.

⁸ “Then the earth reeled and rocked;
the foundations of the heavens trembled
and quaked, because he was angry.

⁹ Smoke went up from his nostrils,
and devouring fire from his mouth;
glowing coals flamed forth from him.

¹⁰ He bowed the heavens and came down;
thick darkness was under his feet.

¹¹ He rode on a cherub and flew;
he was seen on the wings of the wind.

¹² He made darkness around him his canopy,
thick clouds, a gathering of water.

¹³ Out of the brightness before him
coals of fire flamed forth.

¹⁴ The LORD thundered from heaven,
and the Most High uttered his voice.

¹⁵ And he sent out arrows and scattered them;
lightning, and routed them.

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- ¹⁶ Then the channels of the sea were seen;
the foundations of the world were laid bare,
at the rebuke of the LORD,
at the blast of the breath of his nostrils.
- ¹⁷ “He sent from on high, he took me;
he drew me out of many waters.
- ¹⁸ He rescued me from my strong enemy,
from those who hated me,
for they were too mighty for me.
- ¹⁹ They confronted me in the day of my calamity,
but the LORD was my support.
- ²⁰ He brought me out into a broad place;
he rescued me, because he delighted in me.
- ²¹ “The LORD dealt with me according to my righteousness;
according to the cleanness of my hands
he rewarded me.
- ²² For I have kept the ways of the LORD
and have not wickedly departed from my God.
- ²³ For all his rules were before me,
and from his statutes I did not turn aside.
- ²⁴ I was blameless before him,
and I kept myself from guilt.
- ²⁵ And the LORD has rewarded me
according to my righteousness,
according to my cleanness in his sight.
- ²⁶ “With the merciful you show yourself merciful;
with the blameless man you show yourself blameless;
²⁷ with the purified you deal purely,
and with the crooked you make yourself
seem tortuous.
- ²⁸ You save a humble people,
but your eyes are on the haughty to bring them down.
- ²⁹ For you are my lamp, O LORD,
and my God lightens my darkness.
- ³⁰ For by you I can run against a troop,
and by my God I can leap over a wall.

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- ³¹ This God—his way is perfect;
the word of the LORD proves true;
he is a shield for all those who take refuge in him.
- ³² “For who is God, but the LORD?
And who is a rock, except our God?
- ³³ This God is my strong refuge
and has made my way blameless.
- ³⁴ He made my feet like the feet of a deer
and set me secure on the heights.
- ³⁵ He trains my hands for war,
so that my arms can bend a bow of bronze.
- ³⁶ You have given me the shield of your salvation,
and your gentleness made me great.
- ³⁷ You gave a wide place for my steps under me,
and my feet did not slip;
- ³⁸ I pursued my enemies and destroyed them,
and did not turn back until they were consumed.
- ³⁹ I consumed them; I thrust them through,
so that they did not rise;
they fell under my feet.
- ⁴⁰ For you equipped me with strength for the battle;
you made those who rise against me sink under me.
- ⁴¹ You made my enemies turn their backs to me,
those who hated me, and I destroyed them.
- ⁴² They looked, but there was none to save;
they cried to the LORD, but he did not answer them.
- ⁴³ I beat them fine as the dust of the earth;
I crushed them and stamped them down
like the mire of the streets.
- ⁴⁴ “You delivered me from strife with my people;
you kept me as the head of the nations;
people whom I had not known served me.
- ⁴⁵ Foreigners came cringing to me;
as soon as they heard of me, they obeyed me.
- ⁴⁶ Foreigners lost heart
and came trembling out of their fortresses.

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⁴⁷ “The LORD lives, and blessed be my rock,
and exalted be my God, the rock of my salvation,
⁴⁸ the God who gave me vengeance
and brought down peoples under me,
⁴⁹ who brought me out from my enemies;
you exalted me above those who rose against me;
you delivered me from men of violence.

⁵⁰ “For this I will praise you, O LORD, among the nations,
and sing praises to your name.

⁵¹ Great salvation he brings to his king,
and shows steadfast love to his anointed,
to David and his offspring forever.”

(2 Samuel 22:1-51)

Introduction

Allen Dale Golding, of La Mirada, CA, said that when he and his family were missionaries in the Philippines, they vacationed in Baguio City in the mountains of Northern Luzon. While there, they visited the St. Louis Silver School, where silversmiths are trained. They admired exquisite workmanship in the workshop and gift shop, and took home a souvenir—a pure silver money clip embellished with a distinctive design. Allen carried that clip for the next 24 years. One day it finally broke as he slipped a few bills into it. He then took the two pieces of the money clip back to the silver school in Baguio. One workman, about Allen’s age, asked if he could help him. Allen explained his predicament and laid the pieces in the workman’s outstretched hand.

After examining the pieces for a minute or so, the workman looked up at Allen and said, “I designed this clip. I was the only one to make this design. I made all of these that were ever made.”

Allen asked, “Can you fix it?”

He said, “I designed it. I made it. Of course I can fix it!”²

² See <https://www.preachingtoday.com/illustrations/2001/september/13246.html>.

I think that David had a wonderfully clear understanding that God was his designer, creator, and fixer. David had faced more trouble in his life than most of us will ever know. Yet, he knew the One to whom he could turn whenever he faced difficulty.

Lesson

Second Samuel 22:1-51 teaches us to praise God for his deliverance.

Let's use the following outline:

1. The Context of Praising God for His Deliverance (22:1)
2. The Content of Praising God for His Deliverance (22:2-3)

I. The Context of Praising God for His Deliverance (21:15-17)

First, let's look at the context of praising God for his deliverance.

The author of 2 Samuel writes in verse 1 of chapter 22, **“And David spoke to the Lord the words of this song on the day when the Lord delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul.”**

Almost identical words are found as the title to Psalm 18, “To the choirmaster. A Psalm of David, the servant of the Lord, who addressed the words of this song to the Lord on the day when the Lord delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul.” The song in 2 Samuel 22 is almost identical to the psalm of Psalm 18.

Commentator Gordon Keddie observes,

It may be that the fuller version in the Psalter was David's final version for public use in the worship of God. The differences

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are fairly numerous, but the teaching is the same. Both are the inspired Word of God: the one set in a historical context, the other in the manual of praise.³

David wrote this song of deliverance in 2 Samuel 22 after **“the Lord delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul.”** David looked back over his forty years as king over all Israel and also the many years prior to his coronation. He saw how the Lord had delivered him on numerous occasions from many enemies. He recalled also how the Lord had delivered him from Saul’s many attempts to kill him.

So, David wrote a song praising God for his deliverance.

II. The Content of Praising God for His Deliverance (21:2-3)

And second, let’s learn about the content of praising God for his deliverance.

There are fifty verses in which David praised God for his deliverance. However, we are going to focus our attention on just for the first two verses to learn how David praised God for his deliverance.

David’s praise of God included several ascriptions of how David saw God.

A. *God Is My Strength* (22:2, 3)

First, God is my strength.

David saw God as a “rock” in verses 2 and 3. He said in verse 2, **“The Lord is my rock,”** and again in verse 3, **“...my God, my rock.”**

In the Bible, a **“rock”** often conveys the idea of strength and

³ Gordon J. Keddie, *Triumph of the King: The Message of 2 Samuel*, Welwyn Commentary Series (Darlington, England: Evangelical Press, 1990), 203.

a foundation. It is something solid and stable. David said that the Lord is his strength and his foundation. God was able to deliver him from many situations because the Lord is solid and stable.

Do you remember Jesus' most famous sermon? We call it "The Sermon on the Mount," and it is recorded in Matthew 5-7. Jesus was teaching his disciples how to live as citizens of his kingdom in world full of sin. He concluded his sermon with an application to his listeners to build their lives on the rock. This is how Jesus expressed it in Matthew 7:24-27:

²⁴ "Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. ²⁵ And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. ²⁶ And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. ²⁷ And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it."

God was David's rock. He praised God for his deliverance because God was his strength.

As you face trouble, build your life on Jesus, your rock.

B. *God Is My Shield* (22:2, 3)

Second, God is my shield.

David said in verse 2, "**The Lord is...my fortress,**" and in verse 3, "**...my shield.**"

The Hebrew word for "**fortress**" (*mesudah*) refers to a mountain stronghold. The word for "stronghold" is the same as the word for "**fortress.**" We read about David and his growing number of supporters living with him in the "stronghold" (1 Samuel 22:4). The Hebrew sounds very much like the place we know today

as Masada, which is a flat piece of land on top of a tall mountain. Masada is about 30 miles southeast of Jerusalem. It is famous for the Jewish revolt against Rome that resulted in the suicide of 960 rebels who were stationed there.

So, a **“fortress”** protects one from the enemy. A **“shield”** also protects one from the attacking missiles of the enemy. In a sense, they do the same thing; they protect one from the enemy.

When Ira Sankey was at the height of his ministry, traveling on a steamer in the Delaware River, he was recognized by some passengers. They had seen his picture in the newspaper and knew he was associated with evangelist D. L. Moody. When they asked him to sing one of his own compositions, Sankey said he preferred the hymn by William Bradbury, “Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us.” He suggested that everyone join in the singing. One of the stanzas begins, “We are thine, do thou befriend us; be the guardian of our way.”

When he finished, a man stepped out of the shadows and inquired, “Were you in the army, Mr. Sankey?”

“Yes, I joined up in 1860,” said Sankey.

The man asked Sankey, “Did you ever do guard duty at night in Maryland, about 1862?”

“Yes, I did,” Sankey answered.

“Well, I was in the Confederate Army,” said the stranger. “I saw you one night at Sharpsburg. I had you in my gun sight as you stood there in the light of the full moon. Then just as I was about to pull the trigger, you began to sing. It was the same hymn you sang tonight,” the man told an astonished Sankey. “I couldn’t shoot you.”⁴

Just as he shielded Sankey from the Confederate soldier’s bullet, so God was David’s shield.

Only glory will reveal how often God has shielded us.

⁴ See <https://www.preachingtoday.com/illustrations/2001/october/13303.html>.

C. *God Is My Savior (22:3)*

Third, God is my savior.

David said in verse 3 that the Lord is “...**the horn of my salvation,...my savior.**”

The expression “**the horn of my salvation**” occurs only here and in the parallel expression in Psalm 18:2. The idea is that a “**horn**” is a symbol of an animal’s strength or power. The *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* explains the reference to God as the “horn of salvation” by saying that “God is the source of all true salvation, hence he is termed ‘the horn of salvation.’”⁵ That is why David also said that God was a “**savior.**”

As David contemplated the ways in which God had delivered him from so many situations, he praised God for being his savior. God saved David not only from the conflicts in this life but he also saved David from the condemnation of sin.

David’s savior was his Greater Son, Jesus. When Peter preached on the Day of Pentecost, in which three thousand souls were saved (cf. Acts 2:41), he quoted David at one point. David wrote Psalm 16 about God being his savior. Peter used David’s psalm to point to Jesus. But listen to what David said, as quoted by Peter, in Acts 2:25-28:

- ²⁵ “I saw the Lord always before me,
 for he is at my right hand that I may not be shaken;
²⁶ therefore my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced;
 my flesh also will dwell in hope.
²⁷ For you will not abandon my soul to Hades,
 or let your Holy One see corruption.
²⁸ You have made known to me the paths of life;
 you will make me full of gladness with your presence.”

⁵ Leonard J. Coppes, “2072 קָרַן,” ed. R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer Jr., and Bruce K. Waltke, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1999), 816.

David praised God for his deliverance because God was his savior.

Let me ask you: Is God your savior?

D. God Is My Security (22:3)

Fourth, God is my security.

David said in verse 3 that the Lord is “...**my stronghold.**”

The Hebrew word (*misgab*) refers to high point where a person is secure against hostile attacks. Using the same word as here, David wrote in Psalm 9:9, “The Lord is a stronghold for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble.”

Early in David’s life, particularly before he became king, Saul was constantly trying to hunt him down and kill him. David spent years running and hiding from Saul. He spent many a day and a night in various strongholds, places from which he could perceive an approaching enemy from afar and take the appropriate action. In his stronghold, he had a strong sense of God delivering him from attacks.

Joan Marie Arbogast tells the story of a time when she was flying with her young daughter. Her daughter was terribly anxious the first time she flew in a plane.

“What if the plane falls down?” she asked as we boarded.

“What’s that sound?” she questioned as the engines revved.

During take-off she squeezed Joan’s hand till her knuckles turned white. However, once they were above the clouds, she released her grip and announced, “It’s okay now. I’m not afraid. We’re above the clouds...and next to heaven.”⁶

Her perspective had changed and she felt secure.

When you encounter all kinds of scary situations in your life, are you able to say that God is your security?

⁶ See <https://www.preachingtoday.com/illustrations/1997/february/533.html>.

E. *God Is My Safety (22:3)*

And finally, God is my safety.

David said in verse 3 that the Lord is “...my refuge.”

The Hebrew word for “refuge” (*manos*) refers to a shelter from danger or hardship. When David was young and constantly on the run from Saul, it seems that he knew every hill, every valley, every cave, and every place to hide from Saul. It was in these places of refuge that God provided a refuge and safety for David.

Pastor Gordon MacDonald tells the following story:

In the fall of 1956, I began my final year at the Stony Brook School, then a boys' college preparatory school in New York. Among the required courses that last year was *Senior Bible*, taught by the school's headmaster, Dr. Frank E. Gaebelien, a man who required us to memorize 300 verses of Scripture over the course of that year. If he met a student on the pathway from the class room to the dining hall, he might say, “Gordon, give me John 13:34 please.” He expected us to recite the verse from memory without faltering.

One of the passages he tasked us to memorize was Psalm 46. For days we memorized, recited, memorized, recited until the Psalm 46 was part of us. “God is our *refuge* and strength, a very present help in trouble period. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea....”

In the spring of 1957, *Senior Bible* ended. We put our index cards away, graduated from Stony Brook, and went off to college. Occasionally, I returned to Psalm 46. As a pastor I preached on it a few times.

Now 56 years have passed. A few days ago my doctor called me. “Gordon, I have some difficult news for you. There's a tumor in the back of your head in the lining of the brain. It is not malignant, but it will have to come out.” I have spent my whole life helping other people face doctor-call moments like these. Now it was my turn and the very first thing that began to surge through

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my mind was: “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble period. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed....”⁷

No matter what David encountered, he praised God for his deliverance because God was his safety.

Are you able to say with David and Gordon MacDonald, “God is my refuge”?

Conclusion

Therefore, having analyzed the account of David’s song of deliverance in 2 Samuel 22:1-51, let us praise God for his deliverance.

David’s song of deliverance in 2 Samuel 22:1-51 is a marvelous song. David praised God for being his strength, shield, savior, security, and safety. As I read verses 2-3 for you again, please pay attention to David’s use of the personal pronoun “my”: **“The Lord 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 and *my* refuge, *my* savior; you save me from violence.”** David used the word “my” ten times in these two verses.

Friends, Christianity is a religion in which we get to have a personal relationship with our God. A religious person may say that God is a strength, a shield, a savior, a security, and a safety. But it is only the child of God who can sing the song of deliverance, “God is *my* strength, *my* shield, *my* savior, *my* security, and *my* safety.” Amen.

⁷ See <https://www.preachingtoday.com/illustrations/2014/january/5010614.html>.

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is:

*To bring people to Jesus Christ
and membership in his church family,
develop them to Christlike maturity,
equip them for their ministry in the church
and life mission in the world,
in order to magnify God's name.*

Sermons by Rev. Freddy Fritz

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