

# PSALMS OF PRAYER AND PRAISE

## Psalm 18: Psalm of Deliverance

The story of David's life is sketched in this psalm. It is a record of the deliverances and victories given him by the Lord. It is a record also of David's own heart, the truth of his affection toward God and the integrity of purpose by which he had been influenced.

Throughout David's life, he was troubled by enemies who sought to kill him:

1. Before he came to the throne, he was hunted by Saul.
2. After he became king, he was harassed by rivals who disputed his authority and tried to steal away the hearts of the people.
3. Pursued by his own son, Absalom, he was compelled to flee for his life.
4. After these trials, he was engaged in a long and fierce war with foreign nations.

Though David experienced the treachery of trusted friends and his own son, he was never completely forsaken. David always had a shield of defense, the love and presence of the Lord. With the Lord's help, every enemy was subdued. In his old age as he looked back with thankfulness on the past, David sang this great song of praise to the God of his life. With a heart full of love, he recounted how God had delivered him. Then he visualized the force of his peril and his escape. He pictured a stooping of the Most High from heaven to save him. God delivers those who trust in Him. David expressed his covenant relationship with God. He had been a true Israelite. Therefore, God, the true God of Israel, had dealt graciously with him. At last David, the servant of God, found his reward.

The psalm concludes as it had opened, with a joyful thanksgiving to God. This psalm is repeated in [2 Samuel 22](#) with some variations.

There are **five divisions** in [Psalm 18](#).

1. [Verses 1-3](#) are the introduction. David expressed all that God was to him. Some intellectuals cannot imagine a personal relationship with a living God. But King David did. David loved God because God first loved David. This is true for each of us today. [1 John 4:19](#) "*We love Him because He first loved us.*"

David uses many military terms in metaphors to describe his relationship with God.

- (a) **Rock**—firm, dependable
- (b) **Fortress**—place of safety where the enemy cannot follow
- (c) **Deliverer**—one who rescues in time of certain disaster
- (d) **Strength**—power not of one's own, but from God
- (e) **Buckler**—body length shield of protection impenetrable by the enemy
- (f) **Horn of my salvation**—word picture denoting strength, as horns of a bull
- (g) **High tower**—place of refuge, mountain stronghold in excellent strategic fighting position

Though we may not be warriors in physical battles, there are spiritual truths we can learn from these terms. Apply each of these words to your relationship with God in prayer this week.

2. [Verses 4–19](#) are a record of David’s sufferings and dangers and God’s deliverance. David is writing poetry of the highest order, rich with word pictures and symbols.
3. [Verses 20–30](#) give the reason for David’s deliverance. It is based on the character of God and principles of His moral government. [Verses 20](#) and [24](#) mention David’s righteousness, which was all he could claim. David lived in the time Christ. We live in the time after Christ and have Christ’s righteousness, not our own. It is through the power of the Holy Spirit that we as believers now keep the ways of the Lord ([vs. 21](#)).

David mentions an interesting principle in [verses 25–26](#). God deals with people in the same manner they deal with others. [Matthew 6:12](#) reiterates this: “*Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.*” The Scripture is true: what you reap is what you sow ([Galatians 6:7](#)). This may be a time to examine how you wish to be treated based on how you treat others.

4. [Verses 31–45](#) give praise for the Lord’s help and strength in battle and victory over all enemies. David could have taken credit himself, but rather credits God with the victories. David was a man after God’s own heart ([1 Samuel 13:14](#)) and perhaps we could learn from him to take less credit for ourselves and give more to God. [Verses 40–42](#) might seem unusual in a psalm crediting God’s goodness but we must remember that God’s love and justice are two sides of the same coin. God cannot love without hating evil. David was merciful to several enemies (i.e. Saul, Absalom), but to those incorrigible men who hated him, David simply asked God to give them what they deserve. This is a request for justice not vengeance.
5. [Verses 46–50](#) are the joyful conclusion. They consist of a jubilant thanksgiving and acknowledgment of all God’s mercies. David points to God, not himself, as great and to be exalted. David gives credit where credit is due. Singing is a natural response to God’s goodness and salvation.