

## 2 Samuel 22:1-51 (and Psalm 18)

### A Psalm of Deliverance

This is a Psalm sung by David at the very end of his life, as recorded in **2 Samuel 22**. It is virtually the same as **Psalm 18**.

It is read every year on the seventh day of Passover. It is also a Haftarah reading for **Exodus 32-33**, where God promises to go up with Israel (**Exodus 33:17**) "for thou hast found grace in my sight, and I know thee by name." This promise is narrowed to focus on David, as a type of the Messiah, as he describes all the ways God has been faithful to deliver him. It offers insight into God's faithfulness to believers, if they are "in Christ."

This a penultimate "Last Words of David" statement. (His actual last words are in chapter 23). Probably it was composed much earlier in his life, but it sums up David's character, and his attitude toward life and his dependance on God..

Historically, David is rejoicing in his deliverance from Saul, when he believed he faced almost certain death, and his victory over his enemies.

But it projects and prophetically reflects Christ's resurrection, and his ultimate victory over death. David's kingdom is a prototype for Christ's kingdom.

This is a song that has universal relevance for believers. And it is one of what the rabbis called the Ten Songs of Israel.

The Midrash Yalkut Shimoni (Chukat Note 764) commenting on the Song of the Well (**Numbers 21:16-19**) says "...after 40 years, the people finally matured and began to sing a song on their own accord, saying, "Master of the Universe, it is now incumbent upon You to do miracles for us and for us to sing, as it is written: 'It has pleased the Lord to deliver us and that is why we sing our song all the days of our lives...' " (See **Isaiah 38:20**)

### The Ten Songs of Israel

Yalkut Shimoni on the **Joshua 10** story of the sun standing still, notes that the Targum says Joshua "sang praises to God" rather than he "spoke to God" as in the KJV. It adds that there are ten songs of praise in Israel's history:

- The Song sung on Exodus night
- The Song of the Sabbath, originally sung by Adam, then forgotten but reintroduced by Moses and written down as Psalm 92.
- The Song of the Sea after crossing the Red Sea.
- The Song of the Well - "Spring up O well"
- The Song of Moses in **Deuteronomy 32:1-52**
- The Song of Deborah and Barak in **Judges 5**
- Joshua's song in Joshua 10

- David's song (**Psalm 18** and **2 Samuel 22**)
- - - Others place Hannah's song from 1 Samuel 2 here
- **Psalm 30** at the dedication of the Temple
- The Song of Solomon
- - - Others place the Song of Jehoshaphat here, from **2 Chronicles 20:21-22**
- The tenth song is yet to be sung (the rabbis say). It will be sung "when we experience the Final Redemption with the arrival of Messiah."

See [https://www.chabad.org/library/article\\_cdo/aid/5875810/jewish/10-Songs-in-Jewish-History.htm](https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/5875810/jewish/10-Songs-in-Jewish-History.htm)

The tenth song is the Song of the Lamb, the New Song in **Revelation 15:3** - "And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, 'Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints.'"

And **Revelation 14:3** - ""And they sang as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth.'""

**2 Samuel 22:1-3** - "And David spake unto the LORD the words of this song in the day that the LORD had delivered him out of the hand of all his enemies, and out of the hand of Saul: And he said, The LORD is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; The God of my rock; in him will I trust: he is my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my high tower, and my refuge, my savior; thou savest me from violence."

### **David praises God with nine titles - 2 Samuel 22:2-3**

- **His rock**; which indicates a place of shelter, safety, and a secure standing.
- **His fortress**; a place of strength and safety.
- **His deliverer**; the one who made a way of escape for him.
- **His God**; "my strong God, not only the object of my adoration, but he who puts strength in my soul." (Clarke)
- **His shield** (*māḡēn*), who defends both his head and his heart.
- **His horn**, meaning his strength and defense.
- **His stronghold**, his high tower of refuge where he could see an enemy from a great distance and be protected from the adversary.
- **His Lamp** - verse 29

- **His strength** (*mā'ôz*) - verse 33 - but this uses a different Hebrew word than in **Psalm 18:1**. According to Clarke, the idea behind this word is "fountain, source, origin."

Compare this with Paul's equipment for spiritual warfare:

### **The Full Armor of God - Ephesians 6:10-18**

"Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints."

To "put on Christ" (**Romans 13:14**) is to put on the armor.

### **2 Samuel 22:4-7 - A picture of Christ on the cross, and descending to the depths of hell:**

"I will call on the LORD, who is worthy to be praised: so shall I be saved from mine enemies."

- David here looks forward to the Song of Jehoshaphat - when King Jehoshaphat and his men broke into song and praise even before the battle began, so sure were they that God would bring the victory.

"When the waves of death compassed me, the floods of ungodly men made me afraid;  
- "waves of death" - Targum: pangs of death, 'Like a woman who sits on the [birthing] chair.'

Interesting combination of imagery. Christ's death-pangs on the cross were also birth-pangs for us into new life, born from above.

The sorrows of hell compassed me about; the snares of death prevented me;  
- Rashi - "Bands of [those that shall inherit] the nether world have surrounded me..."

"In my distress I called upon the LORD, and cried to my God:  
and he did hear my voice out of his temple, and my cry did enter into his ears."

- **Matthew 27:46** - "And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, 'Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?' that is to say, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken

me?" (See **Psalm 22**)

Hindsight shows that God DID hear, and had not truly forsaken Christ. But to fully embody our human sinfulness, Jesus had to feel the biting pain of that abandonment.

This section also references Jonah's experience:

- **Matthew 12:40** - "For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."

- **Jonah 2:2-5** - "And said, I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the LORD, and he heard me; out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou heardest my voice. For thou hadst cast me into the deep, in the midst of the seas; and the floods compassed me about: all thy billows and thy waves passed over me. Then I said, I am cast out of thy sight; yet I will look again toward thy holy temple. The waters compassed me about, even to the soul: the depth closed me round about, the weeds were wrapped about my head."

In **Psalm 18**, David says God *will* hear me. Here at the end of his life David says "God heard" in the past tense, reflecting on all the times God had responded to his prayers.

"He did hear my voice out of his temple" - There was not yet a temple in Jerusalem. Yet David knew that God had a temple, a heavenly temple that was the model for the tabernacle and the later temple, and that God heard prayer from heaven.

### **Deliverance - 2 Samuel 22:8-20**

David conceives of his rescue by God in broad terms that encompass all of God's redemptive actions - The earthquake, fire, darkness, wind, dark waters, clouds, thunder and lightning - all points back to the Exodus and the giving of the Law at Mount Sinai and forward toward the resurrection of Christ and the outpouring at Pentecost.

8 "Then the earth shook and trembled; the foundations of heaven moved and shook, because he was wroth.

9 "There went up a smoke out of his nostrils, and fire out of his mouth devoured: coals were kindled by it.

10 "He bowed the heavens also, and came down; and darkness was under his feet.

11 "And he rode upon a cherub, and did fly: and he was seen upon the wings of the wind.

12 "And he made darkness pavilions round about him, dark waters, and thick clouds of the skies.

- **Exodus 14:19-20** - where the pillar of cloud was light to Israel but darkness and confusion to the Egyptians.

13 "Through the brightness before him were coals of fire kindled.

14 "The Lord thundered from heaven, and the most High uttered his voice.

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

16 "And the channels of the sea appeared, the foundations of the world were discovered, at the rebuking of the Lord, at the blast of the breath of his nostrils.

17 "He sent from above, he took me; he drew me out of many waters;

18 "He delivered me from my strong enemy, and from them that hated me: for they were too strong for me.

19 "They prevented me in the day of my calamity: but the Lord was my stay.

20 "He brought me forth also into a large place: he delivered me, because he delighted in me.

Darkness as a sign of judgment (**Exodus 10:21-22**), preceding the death of the firstborn (**Exodus 11:4-5**). There was darkness at the cross as our sins were being judged.

The description melds together the victory over the Egyptians with David's deliverance and with the events at the cross.

- **Matthew 27:51** - "And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent;"

- **Exodus 19:18** - "And mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly."

The earthquake at the crucifixion is linked to Sinai, signifying that the Law's demands had been met in Christ's sacrifice.

- **Exodus 19:20** - "And the Lord came down upon mount Sinai, on the top of the mount: and the Lord called Moses up to the top of the mount; and Moses went up."

Baptism, as a picture of the resurrection, reflects our death with Christ on the cross, and coming up out of the water as a new creation in resurrection, like Israel emerging on the far shore, with the Egyptians remaining drowned. Or Jonah spit up on the beach, dead but miraculously brought back to life.

### **David's Character a Reflection of Christ's Righteousness - 2 Samuel 22:21-30**

21 "The Lord rewarded me according to my righteousness: according to the cleanness of my hands hath he recompensed me.

22 "For I have kept the ways of the Lord, and have not wickedly departed from my God.

23 "For all his judgments were before me: and as for his statutes, I did not depart from them.

24 "I was also upright before him, and have kept myself from mine iniquity.

25 "Therefore the Lord hath recompensed me according to my righteousness; according to my cleanness in his eye sight.

*How could David say "I kept myself from my iniquity"?*

**2 Samuel 22:21** -"The Lord rewarded me according to my righteousness: according to the cleanness of my hands hath he recompensed me."

This could be understood as the righteousness of David's cause, and of his innocence with respect to the things he was charged with by his enemies, and his refusal to harm Saul (which he could have done twice).

Perhaps David remembered Nathan's words in **2 Samuel 12:13**: "The LORD also has put away your sin."

But ultimately it refers to *Christ's* own righteousness, because "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God" except the sinless Messiah..

- "But it is best of all to apply it to Christ, and understand it of his righteousness" - *Gill's Exposition*

David was a man after God's own heart. He not only sinned, but repented with his whole heart. That repentance means God sees only his Son, not us, and His righteousness is reckoned as ours.

- **Numbers 23:21** - "He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath he seen perverseness in Israel: the LORD his God is with him, and the shout of a king is among them." (This was Balaam's God-directed blessing over Israel, although they had certainly been rebellious).

26 "With the merciful thou wilt shew thyself merciful, and with the upright man thou wilt shew thyself upright.

27 "With the pure thou wilt shew thyself pure; and with the froward thou wilt shew thyself unsavoury.

[ - or, "with the devious You will show Yourself shrewd," and so outwit him]

28 "And the afflicted people thou wilt save: but thine eyes are upon the haughty, that thou mayest bring them down.

- See **Luke 1:46-55** - "God has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts. God has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly"

- **1 Peter 5:5** - "God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble."

29 "For thou art my lamp, O Lord: and the Lord will lighten my darkness.

30 "For by thee I have run through a troop: by my God have I leaped over a wall."

Jesus the "Son of David" was strong enough to run against a troop and be victorious; the enemies against us were strong and disciplined; yet Jesus confronted them and defeated them. Jesus was great enough to jump over a wall; the wall of God's holy law that separated us from Him. He didn't destroy the wall; instead with His holy life He jumped over it and fulfilled the law on our behalf. This wall separated us from God, and also from one another:

- **Ephesians 2:14-15** - "For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace;"

### **Spiritual Warfare - God's Empowerment of David**

See **Ephesians 6:10** above - "Be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might...."

**2 Samuel 22:31** - "As for God, his way is perfect: the word of the LORD is tried: he is a buckler to all those that trust in him."

The Hebrew word *ṣāraḇ* (in this verse translated "tried") means "to test, to purify and to refine," as a silversmith would refine his metal. When confronted with Torah, our lives are conformed to His Word, we ourselves are refined as human beings, and impurities are burned away. In the same way the word of the Lord is *also* tested and proved to be genuine and reliable.

**2 Samuel 22:32** - "For who is God, except the LORD?"

Jews recite daily the "*shema*" from **Deuteronomy 6:4** - "Hear, O Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is One."

"Vain were the idols of the ancient world, Baal and Jupiter; as vain are those of modern times - pleasure, honor and profit. They cannot bestow contentment, or make their votaries happy below; much less can they deliver from death, or open the everlasting doors above." - *Horne commentary*

## The High Places

**2 Samuel 22:34-35** - "He makes my feet like the feet of deer, And sets me (*`amad* - to make a stand) on my high places (*bāmâ*).. He teaches my hands to make war, so that a bow of steel (bronze) is broken by mine arms."

- Repeated in **Habakkuk 3:19** - "He will make my feet like hinds' feet, and he will make me to walk upon mine high places."  
i.e. He keeps us from losing our footing!

A double metaphor is depicted - the high places can represent dangerous precipices where sure footing is needed. It also refers to the hilltops (*bāmâ*) where worship of idols took place. This is hinted at in the previous question - "For who is God, except the LORD?"

When we "take a stand" against our own idolatry, confronting our own personal "high places," Paul tells us to "revenge the disobedience" we find there (**2 Corinthians 10:6**). He will empower us to take dominion over, stand and walk without fear on the very places we previously feared and ascribed power to, and which have controlled us.

- **Leviticus 26:30** - "I will destroy your high places (*bāmâ*) and cut down your incense altars; I will heap your carcasses on the carcasses of your idols. I will abhor you."

- **1 John 5:21** - "Little children, keep yourselves from idols."

## Affliction made David Great

**2 Samuel 22:36** - "Thou hast also given me the shield of thy salvation: and thy gentleness hath made me great."

"gentleness" = *ānâ*. Gentleness isn't a good translation. It really means the *affliction* that leads to humility. "*You instilled your humility in me*"

Rather than boast of his military victories, he understood they all came from God.

**2 Samuel 22:39** - "And I have consumed them, and wounded them, that they could not arise: yea, they are fallen under my feet."

i.e. my enemies are cast down to the ground, so that I may tread upon their necks, after the manner of conquerors. David's lineage would bring forth the Messiah, the Deliverer of **Genesis 3:15** who would crush the head of the serpent - "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."

"Satan and his principalities and powers, whose head is broken, whose works are destroyed; yea, he himself, which had the power of death, so as not to be able to rise more against Christ, who has led captivity captive: he has also finished and made an

end of sin, and overcome the world; nor did he turn back from this work he engaged in until he had made a complete conquest; and moreover he has likewise made his people more than conquerors, through him, over these same enemies; so that the words are also applicable to them." - *Gill's Exposition*

- **Psalm 91:13** - "Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder: the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet."

- **Luke 10:19-20** - 'Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you. Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.'

- **Romans 16:20** - "And the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly."

### **Messianic Prophecy of an Ingathering of the Gentiles**

**2 Samuel 22:44-46** - "Thou also hast delivered me from the strivings of my people, thou hast kept me to be head of the heathen: a people which I knew not shall serve me. Strangers shall submit themselves unto me: as soon as they hear, they shall be obedient unto me. Strangers shall fade away, and they shall be afraid out of their close places."

"The strivings of the people" refers to the persecution by Saul and then the rebellions of the tribes against him. As "head of the Gentiles" David sees his present subjection of the surrounding pagan nations but also the future ingathering of Gentiles into the Messiah's kingdom.

- **Zechariah 8:22-23** – "So many peoples and mighty nations will come to seek the Lord of hosts in Jerusalem and to entreat the favor of the Lord.' Thus says the Lord of hosts, 'In those days ten men from all the nations will grasp the garment of a Jew saying, 'Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.'"

- **Zechariah 14:16** - "And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles."

- **Isaiah 66:20-22** - "And they will bring all your brothers from all the nations as a gift to the LORD on horses and chariots and wagons, on mules and camels, to My holy mountain Jerusalem,' says the LORD, 'just as the Israelites bring an offering in a clean vessel to the house of the LORD. And I will select some of them as priests and Levites,' says the LORD. For just as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, will endure before Me,' declares the LORD, 'so your descendants and your name will endure...."

Yalkut Shimoni (Isaiah 503) wrote, "Jerusalem is destined to spread forth to the entire

Land of Israel, and the Land of Israel will spread forth to the entire world.”

### **Conclusion & Thanksgiving - 2 Samuel 22:47-51**

2 Samuel 22:47 - “The Lord liveth; and blessed be my rock; and exalted be the God of the rock of my salvation.

48 "It is God that avengeth me, and that bringeth down the people under me.

49 "And that bringeth me forth from mine enemies: thou also hast lifted me up on high above them that rose up against me: thou hast delivered me from the violent man.

50 "Therefore I will give thanks unto thee, O Lord, among the heathen, and I will sing praises unto thy name.

51 "He is the tower of salvation for his king: and sheweth mercy to his anointed, unto David, and to his seed for evermore.

**Psalm 18** says ‘*magdil*, “He magnifies the king’s salvations,” or “He increases deliverance” referring to a continual incremental process. Here David says ‘*migdol*, “He is the tower of salvation” referring to the end of the process and salvation in the coming of Messiah. - *Midrash Shocheh Tov*

“By his seed' is meant the Messiah, who was of his seed according to the flesh; or of the Messiah, whose name signifies Anointed; and who is often called David, (**Ezekiel 34:23, Hosea 3:5**); and so some of the Jewish doctors (Echa Rabbati, fol. 50. 2.) from this verse prove that the name of the Messiah is David: and by his seed are meant his spiritual seed; all the elect of God, who are given him as his children, to whom he stands in the relation of the everlasting Father: and as mercy is kept with him for evermore, **Psalm 89:28**; so it is shown to them in regeneration, in the forgiveness of their sins, and in their everlasting salvation.” - *Gill's Exposition*

The last verse of the song of David is the most well-known since it is recited towards the end of *birkat hamazon* – the grace after meals: “[God is] a tower (*Migdol*) of victory to His king (David) who deals graciously with His anointed with David and his offspring evermore” (2 Samuel 22:51).

“His seed” is Christ and thus those who are part of his body by faith. Christ’s victory was once and for all, ours ‘increases’ as it is seen little by little as we confront life’s trials in faith.

- **Galatians 3:16** - “Now to Abraham were the promises spoken, and to his seed. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.”

### **Summary: The Messiah in the Psalm**

- **2 Samuel 22:4-7** suggests Christ’s death (“the pangs of death encompassed me ...

the sorrows of Sheol surrounded me; the snares of death confronted me”).

- **2 Samuel 22:8-20** suggests His resurrection (“the earth shook and trembled; the foundations of the hills also quaked and were shaken ... He sent from above, He took me; He drew me out of many waters. He delivered me from my strong enemy”).

- **2 Samuel 22:21-29** suggests His exaltation (“I have kept the ways of the LORD ... I was also blameless before Him ... Therefore the LORD has recompensed me according to my righteousness”).

- **2 Samuel 22:30-43** suggests His victory (“For by thee I have run through a troop: by my God have I leaped over a wall. ... I have pursued my enemies and overtaken them”).

- **2 Samuel 22:44-51** suggests His kingdom (You have made me the head of the nations ... The foreigners submit to me ... You also lift me up above those who rise against me ... Therefore I will give thanks to You, O LORD, among the Gentiles).

(See David Guzik :: Study Guide for Psalm 18 - <http://buff.ly/2IBXTpF> )