

## 2 Samuel 22:10-18, 51

This chapter, called the Song of David, is also read on the seventh day of Passover.

The Song of David is found twice in the Tanach, in the book of Samuel and in Psalms 18, with minor variations between the two. 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). In Psalms, the beginning of the verse reads: “He brings (*Magdil*) great victories to His king.” (Psalm 18:51)

“In one place, it is written: ‘*migdol* – is the tower of victory’ while in another place, it is written: ‘*magdil* - literally: He increases deliverance’. Rabbi Yudan said: This comes to teach that deliverance does not come all at once, but rather, little by little. So what is the meaning of ‘*magdil*’? It means that the deliverance of Israel grows gradually. Now, since they are enveloped in great troubles, if redemption were to come all at once, they would be unable to suffer it because it brings with it great troubles. Therefore, it comes gradually. This is why redemption is compared to dawn since there is no greater darkness than before dawn. If the sun would rise suddenly when everyone is still sleeping, everyone would be blinded. Therefore, the pillar of light rises first and gives light to the world; after that, the sphere of the sun rises and gives light, so that no one is trapped by its light.” (adapted from Midrash Tehillim 18:36 Buber ed. p. 162) (See <http://www.uscj.org/commentaries/pesach-seventh-day-5772/>)

Why is this a haftarah for **Exodus 32-33**? 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."

### Death and Hell

**2 Samuel 22:5-6** - "When the waves of death compassed me, the floods of ungodly men made me afraid; The sorrows of hell compassed me about; the snares of death prevented me;"

"waves of death" - Targum: pangs of death, 'Like a woman who sits on the [birthing] chair.'

"the floods of ungodly men" - Rashi - Armies that overflow like a stream.

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

"the snares of death prevented me" - or "confronted me"

David here looks past his own tribulations to express Christ's experience of death on the cross. Especially moving is death described like the pangs of childbirth. For us to be "born from above" Christ had to reverse the process on the cross.

**2 Samuel 22:7** - "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.

### **Earthquake and Darkness**

**2 Samuel 22:8-16** - "Then the earth shook and trembled; the foundations of heaven moved and shook, because he was wroth. There went up a smoke out of his nostrils, and fire out of his mouth devoured: coals were kindled by it. He bowed the heavens also, and came down; and darkness was under his feet. And he rode upon a cherub, and did fly: and he was seen upon the wings of the wind. And he made darkness pavilions round about him, dark waters, and thick clouds of the skies. Through the brightness before him were coals of fire kindled. The LORD thundered from heaven, and the most High uttered his voice. And he sent out arrows, and scattered them; lightning, and discomfited them. 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."

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."

## Resurrection

**2 Samuel 22:18** - "He sent from above, he took me; he drew me out of many waters; He delivered me from my strong enemy, and from them that hated me: for they were too strong for me."

**2 Samuel 22:19-20** - "They prevented me in the day of my calamity: but the LORD was my stay. He brought me forth also into a large place: he delivered me, because he delighted in me."

**2 Samuel 22:21-24** - "The LORD rewarded me according to my righteousness: according to the cleanness of my hands hath he recompensed me. For I have kept the ways of the LORD, and have not wickedly departed from my God. For all his judgments were before me: and as for his statutes, I did not depart from them. I was also upright before him, and have kept myself from mine iniquity."

This can only be said of Christ, because "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God" except the sinless Messiah.

**2 Samuel 22:51** - "He gives great salvation to His king, and He performs kindness to His anointed; to David and to his seed, forevermore."

"kindness" = *cheched* - mercy, kindness, love, good, favor

(See the introductory comments at the top. "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)