
2 Samuel 22-23

Related Topics: David; Psalm 18; David's Mighty Men

We are now down to the final three chapters of 2 Samuel. Remember, these are most likely an epilogue to the book and appear to be out of the chronological flow of events in David's life.

In Chapter 23 we find a song of David. It is the same in substance, and almost the same in words, with Psalm 18.



1 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.

This gives us a time stamp back to the time in which David was being hunted by 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 (figurative expression for strength and power), 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.*

This song of deliverance reminds us of how David suffered horribly and incessantly at the hands of Saul despite the fact that David was absolutely innocent. Throughout all of it he maintained complete integrity.

Note, Character, integrity, and innocence do not make us immune from attack and suffering!

*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.
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.*

Waves of death encompassed me. I don't know how many of you grew up around the beach and large surf. To be caught in the impact zone is so frightening! Wave after wave just pounds you – you come up from one – amazed to have made it to the surface and another one is breaking 10 feet in front of you.

Life can feel like that. You can be so accomplished, so together, but there you are caught in the impact zone. Spiritual attack or relationship/marital train wreck or a financial fiasco.

7From his temple he heard my voice, and my cry came to his ears.

Isn't that awesome! Reminds me of Psalm 40

Psalm 40:1 I waited patiently for the Lord; he inclined to me and heard my cry.

Inclined means to bend or bow down, to turn aside as in turning to see who called you. It can also mean Go down.

WOW! It makes me think of the incarnation! God comes down from heaven to join us in our humanity and identify with us. He stands in our place to endure the wrath of God on behalf of fallen man. But by way of the incarnation He also becomes our great high priest who is acquainted with all of our infirmities!

Hebrews 4:15-16

For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. 16Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

In VERSES 8-17 David describes the Lord's intervention and deliverance by way of metaphor. He uses the metaphor of earthquake, smoke, fire, fiery coals, and ash clouds – all of which can be involved in a volcanic eruption. Earthquake imagery is often associated with the Lord (Ps. 77:18; Isa. 5:25; 24:18).

He also describes battles in terms of a storm which was common both in the Bible and in other ancient Near Eastern literature. David describes the Lord as a mighty warrior riding in a chariot drawn by the wind or a cherub.

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.

David contrasts his great peril with God's awesome deliverance. David knows that he was incapable of coming out victoriously, he knows He is saved by God's hand. The bottom line, why was David delivered? David says, "Because He delighted in me."

Would you please remember, even when you are suffering wrongly at the hands of man, God delights in you. He might not always delight in our actions or attitudes, but we are now in Jesus.

Eph. 1:6 KJV

6To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.

Remember, this is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased. Remember, this is my BELOVED Son, here Him!

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.

QUOTE:

Jamieson, Fausset, Brown – The statements of innocence, righteousness, refer to his personal and official conduct and his purposes, during all the trials to which he was subjected in Saul's persecutions.

QUOTE: Spurgeon, The Treasury of David, Vol.1 – David's early troubles arose from the wicked malice of envious Saul, who no doubt carried out his persecutions under cover of charges brought against the character of "the man after God's own heart." These charges David declares to have been utterly false, and asserts that he possessed a grace-given righteousness which the Lord had graciously rewarded in defiance of all his (accusers). Before God the man after God's own heart was a humble sinner, but before his slanderers he could with unblushing face speak of the "cleanness of his hands" and the righteousness of his life.... There is no self-righteousness in an honest man knowing that he is honest, nor even in his believing that God rewards him in providence because of his honesty.... but it would be self-righteousness indeed if we transferred such thoughts from (our standing before man) into (our standing before God), for there grace reigns not only supreme but (is the only cause) in the distribution of divine favours.

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.

David recognized the principle: with the merciful You will show Yourself merciful. We know from our study of 1 and 2 Samuel that mercy was the common practice of David.

Twice in his dealings with Saul (1 Sam 24 in Engedi, and 1 Sam 26 in Saul's Camp). Also his dealings with Shimei (2 Samuel 16:7-12)

28 You save a humble people, but your eyes are on the haughty to bring them down.

Hannah, the mother of Samuel sang of this at the beginning of Samuel (1 Sam. 2:7-8). This is a constant theme throughout Scripture. God controls human destiny, humbling the proud but raising the humble.

EXAMPLE: Daniel 5:18-30

18 O king, the Most High God gave Nebuchadnezzar your father kingship and greatness and glory and majesty. 19And because of the greatness that he gave him, all peoples, nations, and languages trembled and feared before him. Whom he would, he killed, and whom he would, he kept alive; whom he would, he raised up, and whom he would, he humbled. 20But when his heart was lifted up and his spirit was hardened so that he dealt proudly, he was brought down from his kingly throne, and his glory was taken from him. 21He was driven from among the children of mankind, and his mind was made like that of a beast, and his dwelling was with the wild donkeys. He was fed grass like an ox, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, until he knew that the Most High God rules the kingdom of mankind and sets over it whom he will. 22And you his son, Belshazzar, have not humbled your heart, though you knew all this, 23but you have lifted up yourself against the Lord of heaven. And the vessels of his house have been brought in before you, and you and your lords, your wives, and your concubines have drunk wine from them. And you have praised the gods of silver and gold, of bronze, iron, wood, and stone, which do not see or hear or know, but the God in whose hand is your breath, and whose are all your ways, you have not honored. 24"Then from his presence the hand was sent, and this writing was inscribed. 25And this is the writing that was inscribed: Mene, Mene,

Tekel, and Parsin. 26This is the interpretation of the matter: Mene, God has numbered the days of your kingdom and brought it to an end; 27Tekel, you have been weighed in the balances and found wanting; 28Peres, your kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians.” 30That very night Belshazzar the Chaldean king was killed. And Darius the Mede received the kingdom, being about sixty-two years old.

In verses 29-46, David declares his confidence in God and his anticipation of future victory. God’s past faithfulness to David has given him trust for the future. The life of the Christian is one that goes from faith to faith.

That is why every opportunity to trust the Lord is critical to our future confidence in the Lord. Your adversary the devil will fight tooth and nail to keep you from living by faith.

You see, he knows that one moment of faith leads to another moment of greater faith. For your adversary the devil there is no such thing as a little moment of faith. He knows that the whole of our relationship with God is predicated on grace and faith. Saved by grace through faith, and the just shall live by faith, this grace in which we stand. Legalism and self-confidence are his great strategies against us!

The Bible instructs us to trust in the Lord with all our hearts and lean not to our own understanding, but acknowledge Him in all of our ways! (Pr. 3:5-6) That is why your adversary the devil will try to train you to trust in someone or something else than God. To lean upon own wisdom or talent.

In every so-called “little matter”. Here’s his lie – “This is just a little thing. There is no need to trust the Lord in this little matter that is so mundane, so inconsequential. Of course in the big things of life you should trust in God, but this isn’t one of them.”

Listen, God so often proves Himself worthy of trust incrementally; preparing us to trust Him for things that are extraordinary and of great consequence!

QUOTE: Alexander MacLaren -

Faith has the right thus to argue from the past to the future, because it draws from God whose resources and patience are equally inexhaustible.

2 Cor 1:8-10

For we do not want you to be ignorant, brothers, of the affliction we experienced in Asia. For we were so utterly burdened beyond our strength that we despaired of life itself. 9Indeed, we felt that we had received the sentence of death. But that was to make us rely not on ourselves but on God who raises the dead. 10He delivered us from such a deadly peril, and he will deliver us. On him we have set our hope that he will deliver us again.

Hudson Taylor was living by faith long before he ever got to China. Meet God and live by faith at school!
Meet God and live by faith at the office.
Meet God and live by faith at the kitchen sink.

Have a consistent walk of faith with God today and you will be ready to trust God come what may tomorrow!

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

his offspring forever.”

CHAPTER 23

The last recorded words of David.

1 Now these are the last words of David: The oracle of David, the son of Jesse, the oracle of the man who was raised on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, the sweet psalmist of Israel: 2 “The Spirit of the Lord speaks by me; his word is on my tongue. 3 The God of Israel has spoken; the Rock of Israel has said to me: When one rules justly over men, ruling in the fear of God, 4 he dawns on them like the morning light, like the sun shining forth on a cloudless morning, like rain that makes grass to sprout from the earth.

The idea of the ideal king here is probably a twin reference to David’s kingdom and the perfect rule of the coming Messiah. From one perspective, David’s reign was a disaster; repeated family crisis, an attempted insurrection from his own son, another civil war, and three years of famine. In contrast, Solomon’s reign seems idyllic; great prosperity, prominence and glory.

Yet the Bible has nothing but praise for David and his reign (Psalm 89:20; Isaiah 55:3-4; Romans 1:3; Revelation 22:16). While Solomon is barely mentioned, and when he is, it is almost in a backhanded way (Matthew 12:42)

Why?

1. Because David’s passion in life was simply to be with God (Psalm 84:10), while Solomon’s passion was personal improvement (1 Kings 3:4-15).
2. Because David endured to the end, loving and serving God in the final chapters of his life (2 Samuel 23:1-7), while Solomon forsook God in his later years (1 Kings 11:4-8)

5 For does not my house stand so with God? For he has made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and secure. For will he not cause to prosper all my help and my desire? 6 But worthless men are all like thorns that are thrown away, for they cannot be taken with the hand; 7 but the man who touches them arms himself with iron and the shaft of a spear, and they are utterly consumed with fire.”

Here we see that David realized that his house was far from perfect, yet God dealt with him on the basis of His promises. That is so wonderfully true.

8 These are the names of the mighty men whom David had:

Remember that these men were not great in the beginning.

1 Samuel 22:2

And everyone who was in distress, and everyone who was in debt, and everyone who was bitter in soul, gathered to him. And he became captain over them.

These men would never be the same for their closeness to God’s anointed King! This was a group of broken

men who needed a leader who would direct them into God's best for their lives. These men came to David in distress, in debt, and in bitterness of soul, but they didn't stay that way. Because of their time near David and under David's leadership they would become:

1 Chronicles 12:8

Mighty men of valor, men trained for battle, who could handle the shield and spear, whose faces were like the faces of lions, and were as swift as gazelles on the mountains.

CRUCIAL INSIGHT: It is evident that David did not accomplish what he did all by himself; most of God's great works are not accomplished by one man, but by one with the support of many. Josheb-basshebeth a Tahchemonite; he was chief of the three. He wielded (KJV - lifted up) his spear against eight hundred whom he killed at one time.

There is a picture for us here as to one of the great pre-requisites of victory in the Christian life. We don't lift our hands with a spear in them. But we are told in 1 Timothy 2:8

I desire then that in every place the men should pray, lifting holy hands without anger or quarreling;

9And next to him among the three mighty men was Eleazar the son of Dodo, son of Ahohi. He was with David when they defied the Philistines who were gathered there for battle, and the men of Israel withdrew. 10He rose and struck down the Philistines until his hand was weary, and his hand clung to the sword. And the Lord brought about a great victory that day, and the men returned after him only to strip the slain.

Here is a second prerequisite for victorious Christian walk: you must be a man or woman whose hand cleaves to the sword. Eph. 6:17 The sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.
(Also Heb. 4:12)

Is your Bible in your hands? Are you wearing your Bibles out?

11And next to him was Shammah, the son of Agee the Hararite. The Philistines gathered together at Lehi, where there was a plot of ground full of lentils, and the men fled from the Philistines. 12But he took his stand in the midst of the plot and defended it and struck down the Philistines, and the Lord worked a great victory.

The third prerequisite is faithfulness in service. David said: Here's your job - Guard the beans. The Philistines attacked and everybody else split. But Shammah said "I have a job to do". Because he was faithful in service when everyone else bailed, he is recorded as a mighty man of God.

Maybe your job is to change the diapers in the nursery. What has the Lord given you to do? stand your ground even when everyone else bails until the Lord releases you.

13And three of the thirty chief men went down and came about harvest time to David at the cave of Adullam, when a band of Philistines was encamped in the Valley of Rephaim. 14David was then in the stronghold, and the garrison of the Philistines was then at Bethlehem. 15And David said longingly, "Oh, that someone would give me water to drink from the well of Bethlehem that is by the gate!"

David wanted water from a well in Bethlehem, but the Philistines surrounded the city. (Key Insight:

Bethlehem = House of Bread). The well, which would speak of the water of the Spirit, is in the house of bread.

John 6:63

It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh is of no avail. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life.

The house of bread is where you draw the water of the spirit. It is when you are in the Word of God; reading, studying, meditating; you are most refreshed. When I am studying the Word I am so blessed, and I pray that you too would be when we study it together. Its like a pitcher of cool water poured over you.

15And David said longingly, "Oh, that someone would give me water to drink from the well of Bethlehem that is by the gate!"

David was not giving an order. He was just thinking out loud. These mighty men heard what their king was thinking! Do you hear what your king is thinking.... What is on His mind?

It is one thing to obey the commands – it is another to hear the heart beat of the Lord... To sense His heart.

Why couldn't the water be easily gotten? Because the House of Bread was surrounded by the Philistines. This Book is surrounded by Philistines. They know that there is water in it. They do everything possible to keep you out of it.

THIS place is surrounded by Philistines. They know that the Word is poured out here. They want to keep you from it. They want to keep us from the vision of pouring it out as much and as often and as many ways.

16Then the three mighty men broke through the camp of the Philistines and drew water out of the well of Bethlehem that was by the gate and carried and brought it to David.

How did they do it? It Doesn't say. Because your breaking through the Philistines is something that can not be programmed. You have to seek the Lord and say – "Lord, how do I break through? You have to seek the Lord and say – "Show me my schedule and my priorities to know how to break through".

But he would not drink of it. He poured it out to the Lord 17and said, "Far be it from me, O Lord, that I should do this. Shall I drink the blood of the men who went at the risk of their lives?" Therefore he would not drink it. These things the three mighty men did.

David took the water and poured it out. It was precious water. His body yearned for it. His friends risked their lives for it. It was a spontaneous and creative act of worship. A sacrifice that only Jesus is worthy of. To pour it out before the Lord was a way of saying that he was not worthy of it, that only the Lord was worthy of it.

18Now Abishai, the brother of Joab, the son of Zeruiah, was chief of the thirty And he wielded his spear against three hundred men and killed them and won a name beside the three. 19He was the most renowned of the thirty and became their commander, but he did not attain to the three.

KEY OBSERVATION: Abishai is listed here, but Joab is not listed amongst these mighty men. Joab was famous in his own day but in God's perspective – in the light of eternity – he was disqualified. But Abishai

was recorded in eternity as a hero.

20And Benaiah the son of Jehoiada was a valiant man Kabzeel, a doer of great deeds. He struck down two ariels of Moab.

Ariels - the exact meaning of this word is unknown. It may mean “lion of God,” in which case it probably should be translated as “a champion” or “warrior”. KJV translates this phrase as “two lion-like men.” He also went down and struck down a lion in a pit on a day when snow had fallen.

1 Pet 5:8

Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.

What did he do? He went into a snowy old pit and faced the Lion. Here is the picture: Your adversary the devil doesn't back off just because you feel like your heart is growing cold, and your circumstances have you in the pits. He has no pity for you. You shouldn't have a pity party either. Get down and do battle. That is what Benaiah did.

21And he struck down an Egyptian, a handsome man. The Egyptian had a spear in his hand, but Benaiah went down to him with a staff and snatched the spear out of the Egyptian's hand and killed him with his own spear. 22These things did Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and won a name beside the three mighty men. 23He was renowned among the thirty, but he did not attain to the three.

He not only went down into the pit and killed a lion, he also killed an Egyptian. He wrestled the spear out of the hand of the Egyptian and killed him with his own spear. Benaiah's first battles dealt with lions. Lions which speak of Satan. His second battle was with an Egyptian which speaks of the world.

There is one subtle, but significant point. How did he overcome this Egyptian?

VERSE 21 - but he went down to him with a staff

The staff in the Bible speaks of being a pilgrim. How do we overcome this huge Egyptian that seeks to overcome us? By being a pilgrim. The world has no pull on you if you have your heart set on the things above... the things of eternity.

I blow it when I lose sight of eternity and get hung up on the temporal circumstances around me. When you recognize that the world is not your home, the world has no pull on you.

Here is an illustration: When I go out of town and go to the airport for my return flight, I do not think to myself: “I think I'll build a house here.” I realize that the airport terminal is only a point of departure for my home. This world is only a point of departure for our real home. This world is terminal. We take on the world by declaring: “I am a pilgrim”.

And David set him over his bodyguard.

Do you know why you faced lion like men today?
It is preparing you to do battle against the big one.

24Asahel the brother of Joab was one of the thirty; Elhanan the son of Dodo of Beth-lehem,

25Shammah of Harod, Elik of Harod, 26Helez the Paltite, Ira the son of Ikkesh of Tekoa, 27Abiezer of Anathoth, Mebunnai the Hushathite, 28Zalmon the Ahohite, Maharai of Netophah, 29Heleb the son of Baanah of Netophah, Ittai the son of Ribai of Gibeah of the people of Benjamin, 30Benaiah of Pirathon, Hiddai of the brooks of Gaash, 31Abi-albon the Arbathite, Azmaveth of Bahurim, 32Eliahba the Shaalbonite, the sons of Jashen, Jonathan, 33Shammah the Hararite, Ahiam the son of Sharar the Hararite, 34Eliphelet the son of Ahasbai of Maacah, Eliam the son of Ahithophel of Gilo, 35Hezro of Carmel, Paarai the Arbite, 36Igal the son of Nathan of Zobah, Bani the Gadite, 37Zelek the Ammonite, Naharai of Beeroth, the armor-bearer of Joab the son of Zeruah, 38Ira the Ithrite, Gareb the Ithrite, 39Uriah the Hittite: thirty-seven in all.