

STUDIES IN SAMUEL
A DIGEST OF CHAPTER 22

- Vv. 1-20 *The Lord's deliverance.* As David came to the close of his reign, he composed a grand song of deliverance. The text is the same as Psalm 18 almost in entirety. The first part of this great song is a description of how God had delivered David from his many adversaries.
- Vv. 21-32 *The Lord's rewards.* God had not only delivered David out of the hands of his enemies, but He had given to him many blessings. God had done more than he could ask or think.
- Vv. 33-51 *The Lord's victory.* Ultimate victory is promised to those that serve God. David had pursued his enemies and destroyed them. God had helped him literally to consume them. He had been given to be head over heathen people. Peoples that he knew not had come to serve him. Strangers had submitted themselves to his rule. The victory that God had given to David was complete.

LESSONS FOR LEARNING

1. "*He delivered me*" (vv. 1, 18, 20). Those faithful followers of the Lord Jesus Christ who take time to look back over their lives can find many instances where God has delivered them. His followers are taught to pray "deliver us from evil" (Matthew 6:13). God will deliver those who trust in Him.
2. "*The Lord rewarded me*" (v. 21). Many rewards are given to Christians in this life. They are taught that if they forsake houses, brethren, sisters, fathers, mothers, wives, children or lands for Christ's sake that they will receive a hundred fold (Matthew 19:29). Beyond all these things there is a crown of righteousness (II Timothy 4:8).

SECOND SAMUEL

3. "He is the tower of salvation" (v. 51). No gift is as precious as the gift of God's son. If a man gains the whole world and loses his soul, it has profited him nothing" (Matthew 16:26). God is the tower of our salvation. The free gift of God is eternal life (Romans 6:23 b).

3. David's Song, 22:1-51.

The Lord's Deliverance. 22:1-20

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:

2 And he said,

The Lord *is* my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer;

3 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 saviour; thou savest me from violence.

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

5 When the waves of death compassed me, the floods of ungodly men made me afraid;

6 the sorrows of hell compassed me about; the snares of death prevented me.

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.

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.
- 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.

1. *When was this song composed? 22:1*

The song was written, "in the day that the Lord had delivered him out of the hand of all of his enemies, and out of the hand of Saul." This title indicated that it was written when David's triumphs over his enemies at home and abroad were still fresh in his mind. Reference is made to the great covenant made with David in chapter seven (verse 51), and it is usually attributed to sometime after Nathan's visit to David when David proposed building the temple. A. F. Kirkpatrick writing in the *Cambridge Bible*

for Schools and Colleges attributed the psalm to the earlier years of David's reign, rather than the latter years on the account of the free and joyous tone and the bold expressions of conscious integrity which pointed to a time prior to the period when David's life was clouded by the fatal consequences of his sin. On the other hand, the psalm is a review of God's many mercies to David; therefore Matthew Henry in his commentary took the position in the introduction to chapter twenty-two that David penned the psalm when he was old, giving a general review of the mercies of his life and the many wonderful preservations God had blessed him with from first to last. He admitted in his comments that it could have been penned when David was young upon the occasion of some of his first deliverances and kept by his side for use afterwards upon every new deliverance, making it his practice to sing the song. The appeal of the song has been so great that it was a part of the "Haphtarah," or lessons from the prophets, appointed to be read in the synagogue of the Jews on the sabbath in conjunction with Deuteronomy 32, a passage from the Law. The Spanish Jews also read this song on the sabbath day of the Passover celebration. Since mention is made of David's deliverance out of the hand of Saul, the song must have been written early in David's life; and since his sin was forgiven, he did not mention it in the psalm.

2. *Which psalm resembles this song?* 22:2

This psalm is the same as Psalm 18 with only slight differences. The first line is omitted from Psalm 18, as it is recorded in this chapter of Samuel. Psalm 18 opens with a statement, "I will love thee, O Lord my strength" (Psalm 18:1). It is admitted by most students of the Scripture that this magnificent hymn is substantially identical with Psalm 18 and that both the eighteenth Psalm and this magnificent hymn came from the same author. The form found here is supposed to be the original form

and that is the Psalter must be a revision prepared by David himself, probably towards the close of his life, for public recitation. This fact throws some light on the authorship of the Psalter, inasmuch as this one Psalm is attributed to David very definitely. If Psalm 18 is by the hand of David, many of the other songs which breathe the same spirit could also be attributed to him by comparison of the vocabulary, style, and diction.

3. *What are the main sections of the psalm?*

David began with a full statement of his trust in the Lord (verses 2-4). He called God his rock, fortress, and deliverer (verse 2). He also called him his shield, horn, high tower, refuge, and saviour (verse 3). Since God was all these things, to David, he said that he would trust in Him (verse 3), and call on Him (verse 4). He said that God is worthy to be praised (verse 4) because God saved him from violence (verse 3). The reader wonders if David were referring to the time when he was kept back from violently destroying Nabal (I Samuel 25).

David moved on to recount the experiences of calamity and deliverances (verses 5-20). David had seen dark days. He said that the pangs of death had surrounded him and the sons of Belial had caused him to be afraid. The very horrors of hell had surrounded him and the traps of death had stood before him. Many instances in David's career fit such descriptions. He was trapped in a cave with Saul's men blocking the mouth. Worthless fellows such as the assassins of Ish-bosheth and the rebel Sheba disputed his rule. David had to fight for his life and fled for refuge to Philistia. On a number of occasions he must have been tempted to yield to unlawful means in order to advance his cause, but God had kept him back. At one of the lowest ebbs in David's life, his own men had talked of stoning him to death; and when he had no one else to help him, he "encouraged himself in the Lord his God" (I Samuel 30:6 b). David knew that God had

heard his prayer, and he pictured him as hearing his voice as he dwelt in His holy temple. Since the temple in Jerusalem had not been built, his reference must have been to the vaulted arches of heaven, God's true dwelling place.

David presented a very complete picture of God's activities as he said that the earth shook and trembled. This is poetic language, and it is not necessary to find a historical reference to the time when an earthquake aided David in his activities. David was simply saying that God had moved heaven and earth in order to bring about His good providences. David viewed God as becoming angry with the sins of men and breathing out smoke and fire, so that fires of vengeance were kindled. His vision of God was one of an omnipotent ruler who could bend the heavens and dwell even in the dark places of earth. He viewed Him as moving on the wings of angels and flying through the skies with the wings of the wind to bear him along (verse 11). David must have had in mind the clouds of the sky as he described darkness as being the tent which enshrouds his majesty. Lightning flashes which burst through the dense clouds were to David the rays of the unapproachable light in which God dwells. Thunder was the voice of God, and David called Him, "the most High" (verse 14). Lightning was like the arrows of God, and David attributed much of the scattering of his enemies to God's interference (verse 15). Even the depths of the sea were not beyond the reach of the power of God; the very foundations of the world were uncovered by Him as if they were blown bare by the breath of His nostrils (verse 16). David knew that God had answered his prayers and delivered him from the depths of many troublesome times. Without God's strength, he could not have done what he had done because he viewed his enemies as being too strong for him. He certainly must have felt this way as he faced the giant from Gath. His enemies outran him in the times of his calamity, but God had

STUDIES IN SAMUEL

strengthened him. David finally arrived at what he called, "a larger place," (verse 20); his prosperous kingdom was the result of God's blessing on his effects. David did not think he had done this all by himself, but he thought it had come to pass because God had delighted in him (verse 20).

The Lord's Rewards. 22:21-31

- 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 eyesight.
- 26 With the merciful thou wilt show thyself merciful,
and with the upright man thou wilt show thyself upright.
- 27 With the pure thou wilt show thyself pure;
and with the forward thou wilt show thyself unsavory.
- 28 And the afflicted people thou wilt save:
but thine eyes *are* upon the haughty, *that* thou mayest
bring *them* down.
- 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.
- 31 *As for* God, his way *is* perfect;
the word of the Lord *is* tried:
he *is* a buckler to all them that trust in him.

The third part of David's psalm was a lengthy affirmation of his righteousness. It is this particular section of the psalm which makes some of the critics believe it was written before he had sinned with Bathsheba. David knew his sin had been forgiven, however, and as far as he was concerned, it was forgotten. He did not need to make mention of the adverse circumstances of his life at a time when he was speaking of the blessings he had received. The song could have been written late in his life, even after his sin with Bathsheba. Over all, David had kept the ways of the Lord (verse 22). He had not wickedly departed from God in the same way in which Saul had openly disobeyed God to such an extent that finally God had abandoned him. David had followed God's judgments and statutes. He gave evidence of being acquainted with the Law, and such evidence pointed to the fact that the Pentateuch had been written before the days of David. When David was giving his final instructions to Solomon, he told him to walk in the commandments, statutes, and ordinances of God, as they were written in the "Law of Moses" (I Kings 2:3).

David was called a man after God's own heart (I Samuel 13:14; Acts 13:22), and David knew that it was because he had done his best to follow God that God had recompensed him according to his righteousness (verse 25). This was according to the very nature of God, a full description of which David gave as he considered his own life. God would be merciful to the merciful; He would be upright to the upright; He would be pure to the pure (verses 26, 27a). God would be against the unsavory and plead the cause of the afflicted people so that they might be saved from their enemies, watching the proud and haughty in order that He might trip them up and break them down to destruction (verses 27b, 28). David called God his candle or lamp; and in times of darkness or distress, God had been the light along his way (verse 29).

David never grew tired of singing the praises of God, and in the next section of his psalm he praised God as the source of his strength. It was by God's help that he had broken down many troops of armed resistance, even escaping, as it were, by leaping over walls. David knew that as long as he walked in God's way, he was going the right way; and it was the "word of the Lord" which he had proved in the very fires of adversity. David would rather have the Lord with him than to have the armor of men. He proved this when he gave Saul's armor back to him and went forth to meet Goliath, "in the name of the Lord of Hosts, the God of the armies of Israel" (I Samuel 17:45). David's feet had been made swift by the Lord (verse 34), and his hands had been nimble and strong because of the knowledge that God was with him. God had been his very armor (verse 36), and his girdle (verse 41). His faith was like that of the apostle Paul, who described the Christian's armor in great detail (Ephesians 6:13-18). Equipped with the spirit of the Lord, David had been able to enlarge his steps (verse 37), pursue his enemies (verse 38), consume his foes (verse 39), and "beat them as small as the dust of the earth" (verse 43). Even enemies from within his own kingdom had not brought David's downfall, and he had spread his dominion east and west and north and south.

The Lord's Victory. 22:32-51

- 32 For who *is* God, save the Lord?
and who *is* a rock, save our God?
- 33 God *is* my strength *and* power;
and he maketh my way perfect.
- 34 He maketh my feet like hinds' *feet*:
and setteth me upon my high places.
- 35 He teacheth my hands to war;
so that a bow of steel is broken by mine arms.

SECOND SAMUEL

- 36 Thou hast also given me the shield of thy salvation:
and thy gentleness hath made me great.
- 37 Thou hast enlarged my steps under me;
so that my feet did not slip.
- 38 I have pursued mine enemies, and destroyed them;
and turned not again until I had consumed them.
- 39 And I have consumed them, and wounded them, that
they could not arise:
yea, they are fallen under my feet.
- 40 For thou hast girded me with strength to battle:
them that rose up against me hast thou subdued under
me.
- 41 Thou hast also given me the necks of mine enemies,
that I might destroy them that hate me.
- 42 They looked, but *there was* none to save;
even unto the Lord, but he answered them not.
- 43 Then did I beat them as small as the dust of the earth:
I did stamp them as the mire of the street, *and* did
spread them abroad.
- 44 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.
- 45 Strangers shall submit themselves unto me:
as soon as they hear, they shall be obedient unto me.
- 46 Strangers shall fade away,
and they shall be afraid out of their close places.
- 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 showeth mercy to his anointed,
unto David, and to his seed for evermore.

David finally broke into a doxology of praise and thanksgiving. He returned to the theme with which he began the psalm, as he called God, "the rock of his salvation" (verses 2, 49). God had avenged David of his enemies and subdued people under his command. None of his enemies had been able to overcome him, and he had been exalted to a high place among the kings of the day. Violent men had not been able to destroy him, not even his own son, Absalom. David therefore, gave thanks to God that even the heathen might know of his mercies. David would sing praises to God who was his "tower of salvation" (verses 3, 51). David closed his song by referring to himself as God's anointed who had received God's mercy. God's mercy was not only given to David, but was promised to his seed after him, this latter reference being an allusion to a covenant made with him in II Samuel 7.

4. *What five songs are recorded in Samuel?*

The following songs are all found in the books of Samuel and furnish typical samples of Israel's poetry:

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| 1. Hannah's song of Thanksgiving | I Samuel | 2: 1-10 |
| 2. David's Lament | II Samuel | 1:19-27 |
| 3. David's Dirge | II Samuel | 3:33, 34 |
| 4. David's Song of Thanksgiving | II Samuel | 22: 1- 5 |
| 5. David's Last Words | II Samuel | 23: 1- 7 |

SECOND SAMUEL
CHAPTER 22 IN REVIEW

1. With what Psalm did this song compare? _____
2. By what figures did David describe God? _____

3. With what weapon of war did David compare lightning? _____
4. With what adjective did David describe God's way? _____
5. With what did he say God had girded him? _____
6. Whom did David say had avenged him? _____
7. To whom did David give thanks? _____
8. To whom did David sing praises? _____
9. With what structure did David compare God? _____
10. Who was God's anointed? _____