

TRUTH B-P CHURCH
Adults Sunday School

PSALM 18 – PRAISING GOD WHO DELIVERS! (Part 4)

I. ACKNOWLEDGING THE SOURCE OF DELIVERANCE

In order not to take deliverance for granted, we must acknowledge the source. The source of our deliverance is none other than God Himself. As the psalmist continues to walk close with God in times of difficulties, he knew that he cannot take God for granted that deliverance will come automatically. He needs to spend the effort to look up to God and learn to trust in Him even in the simplest things. This is probably the weakness for many of us. Many a time, we begin to trust God only when we face with problems we cannot solve. How about problems that can be solved easily? Do we also trust God to overcome them? Even though there are problems which can be solved easily, do we acknowledge that God is the One who enabled us with wisdom and strength to do it easily? Truly without Him, we can do nothing. Let us learn how the psalmist acknowledged God as the source of deliverance.

Verse 28, “For thou wilt light my candle: the LORD my God will enlighten my darkness.”

The candle shows the path that leads to deliverance. And God will be the One who will light up this candle of deliverance. In other words, God will show the psalmist the way of escape. We are easily lost in darkness. Nothing can be seen in pitch darkness. Yet God promises that He will give a light that the way to go can be seen clearly. Without the light, there is no way out.

Verse 29, “For by thee I have run through a troop; and by my God have I leaped over a wall.”

It seems impossible to run through a troop. Saul's elite soldiers were numbered at least 3,000 of them who pursued after David (1 Samuel 24:2;26:2). Yet none of them succeed in subduing him. How can this be possible? The psalmist was also said to leap over a wall. The wall here does not refer to a low wall, but a high wall which is beyond any man's capability to climb over it. The wall is built high enough to prevent any intruder or wild beasts to pass through. That was the main purpose why the wall was built in the first place. Both the troop and the wall serve as a barrier. Yet God is the One who empowers us to overcome any barrier so that we may escape and reach our destination safely.

Verse 30, “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.”

God's way is always perfect. There are times we think our way is better than God's way. We run ahead of God, deciding when to do it, how to do it, and why we do it. It was when we failed miserably in the end that we realize how wrong and foolish we have been for not going God' way. Is that not our experience many a time? We thought we can delay our project to the last minute since we are full of ourselves and believe we are competent enough to complete the task in a short time. At the last minute, something cropped up unexpectedly and in the end, we miss the deadline and we lost the deal. We only have ourselves to be blamed. If only we look to God and be responsible as He wants us to be.

The word of the LORD is tried means that when we follow His instruction, we will know that whatever God said is proven true. If we obey faithfully, we will receive the blessing. But if we reject His Word and choose to go our own way, we will fail and reap the consequences.

A buckler is a shield that surrounds and covers us that serves as protection. God being our buckler means that He will keep us safe and secure when we choose to trust in Him no matter what happens. Nothing will cause our life to be messed up and confused when God is our buckler.

Verse 31, “For who *is* God save the LORD? or who *is* a rock save our God?”

The psalmist used two rhetorical questions as part of his confession that there is no God but the LORD. He is the One living and true God, and there is none like Him. He is the LORD, which emphasizes on the covenantal relationship God had with His people. The basis in which the LORD gives protection and provides deliverance is because of the relationship that He had with His people. Being a rock means He is unmoveable, firm and strong. No one is more powerful than God. God is our Rock which stands tall and unmoveable, which is why we must trust in Him always.

II. GOD’S EMPOWERMENT LEADS TO DELIVERANCE (I)

While God is in total control, He did not take over us, and render us useless as if we are dummy. Instead God empowers us by His perfect strength to fight and overcome the difficulties we face. While acknowledging that it is God who is behind the deliverance, even the rescue effort all come from him, it pleased God to provide empowerment upon us that leads to deliverance.'

Verse 32, “*It is God that girdeth me with strength, and maketh my way perfect.*”

The psalmist is filled with God's strength. As a result, he does not feel weak anymore. He is full of strength to brave through the difficulties before him all the way to the end. The way continues to be tough and difficult, yet with God's strength that empowered the psalmist makes the whole world of difference. It makes his way perfect. In other words, the psalmist knew he is not fighting a losing battle but a victorious one as he testified how he is so much empowered by God to go through the difficult pathway. The word perfect means to be made complete. Only God can lead us to success, fruition and completion.

Verse 33, “*He maketh my feet like hinds' feet, and setteth me upon my high places.*”

God did not make the psalmist just scrape through and barely make it. No, not at all! It is a full victory. And God's power in him was described as the hinds' feet which were very powerful. If you happen to stand behind a deer or a horse, and if it felt threatened, its back legs will send you a kick that will likely break your bones immediately. That's how powerful the hinds' feet were. The deer used its hind feet to jump farther while running away from the predator.

God also set the psalmist on high places. The word set means to establish. It is God who will deliver the psalmist to be established in high places where no one can reach and harm him. God truly protects him from all his enemies.

Verse 34, “*He teacheth my hands to war, so that a bow of steel is broken by mine arms.*”

The bow of steel refers to a strong military might. As the psalmist followed God's instruction faithfully, the enemies were defeated easily. Even a strong and mighty military power is no match for the psalmist who was backed up by God Himself. Who can fight against God and win? Absolutely no one! The secret of every Christian warfare is not to build a strong army and gather powerful weapons against the enemies. The sure way to spiritual success is to be found on the Lord's side and be faithful to Him in whatever it takes.

Verse 35, “Thou hast also given me the shield of thy salvation: and thy right hand hath holden me up, and thy gentleness hath made me great.”

Not only God has protected the psalmist spiritually, He also became his shield of his salvation and that is his physical life. In other words, God saved his life. Truly David on his own will be no match before his many, and powerful enemies. The shield is a tool for protection and serves as a tool of defence, not attack. If not for God to shield him from all dangers, the psalmist would have perished in the enemies' hands long ago.

It is the hands of God that upheld the psalmist. The divine support that the psalmist received from God ensure that he will not fall and hurt himself easily. God's gentleness also made the psalmist great. Gentleness means 'meekness' or 'humility.' It is God's humility that made the psalmist great. How do we understand by this statement? Surely God deserves all the glory for enabling the psalmist to obtain victory. It is even a greater call for glory if God has done everything without the psalmist. Yet it pleased Him to use the psalmist to defeat the enemies. Isn't this the humility of God? And in so doing, the psalmist received great victory and he was deemed as successful. Indeed the gentleness of God has made him great.

Verse 36, “Thou hast enlarged my steps under me, that my feet did not slip.”

Compared to a small surface area of the step, certainly it is more stable to walk on a bigger surface. The psalmist recognized that it was God who caused his steps to be more stable and firm than before. The reason is that a fall will be prevented. The falling into sin can come when temptation attacks at a time when one is not walking close with God. So long as the psalmist keeps close to God in obedience and trust, the steps that he is walking upon will be big enough for him to walk steadily.

Verse 37, “I have pursued mine enemies, and overtaken them: neither did I turn again till they were consumed.”

It is both remarkable to be able to pursue and overtake the enemies. God enabled the psalmist to do that and keep on doing until they were destroyed. As a king, to ensure victory over the enemy is important. Only then will his subjects be protected, secured and guaranteed peace in their life under his kingship.

Verse 38, “I have wounded them that they were not able to rise: they are fallen under my feet.”

The destruction is total and complete. This is done in order that the enemies were not be able to gather themselves to fight back again. When God gives the victory, it is always complete. It is never half done. There are many enemies in our life that we have to fight and overcome. Let us press on and trust in the Lord's enablement.

Verse 39, “For thou hast girded me with strength unto the battle: thou hast subdued under me those that rose up against me.”

If not for the Lord to help the psalmist, there would be no victory. Indeed all glory be to God who is the One who enabled him to win over his enemies. It is more than deliverance from the snare of the enemy, it is a resound defeat brought to the enemies that there is no way for them to rise again and take revenge. The psalmist's victory is complete and God ensures it. May God help us. Amen.

(To be continued)