

The Summer of Psalms

By Doug Hamilton

2) Protection with God

- Psalm 18:1 “I love You, O LORD, my strength.” / song 239 “In Moments Like These”

David consistently calls upon the LORD his strength. Time and time again, David makes an appeal for the strength of God to undergird him against the enemy.

- Ps 28:8 The Lord is their strength, And He is a saving defense to His anointed.
- Ps 18:39 For You have girded me with strength for battle; You have subdued under me those who rose up against me.
- Ps 59:16 “But as for me, I shall sing of Your strength...”

God was always the source of strength for him.

- God was his strength when taking on Goliath, for he said to the giant in *1 Samuel 17:47* “...all this assembly may know that the Lord does not deliver by sword or by spear; for the battle is the Lord’s and He will give you into our hands.”
- Just before he launched the stone into the forehead of Goliath, David trusted that the Lord would give him the strength to overcome. *1Sam 17:45* Then said David to the Philistine, Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied.

There are many times that we are weak in our personal struggles of life. We must remember that we have protection with God and that He will get us through whatever we are facing. He is our strength.

- Ephesians 3:16 says that we can be “...strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man...”
- Paul reminds us in *Philippians 4:13* that we “...can do all things through Him who strengthens...” us.
- It is through Christ that we are *Col 1:11* “...strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience...”

When we view God as our protector, we view Him as the One in whom we derive all our strength. Trust the Psalmist to teach us the strength of the LORD.

- Psalm 18:2 The LORD is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, My God, my rock, in whom I take refuge; My shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.” / Song 10 “A Mighty Fortress”

David calls the LORD his “rock”, meaning the solidity of the protection of God. Like a rock foundation, we can be confident that the LORD will keep us standing firm in the midst of the crisis. *Ps 40:2* *He brought me up out of the pit of destruction, out of the miry clay, And He set my feet upon a rock making my footsteps firm.* Twenty-five times the LORD is referred to as the “ROCK” in Book of Psalms.

- Ps 18:46 “The Lord lives, and blessed be my rock; And exalted be the God of my salvation.”

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- Ps 31:2 Incline Your ear to me, rescue me quickly; Be to me a rock of strength, A stronghold to save me.
- Ps 61:2 From the end of the earth I call to You when my heart is faint; Lead me to the rock that is higher than I.
- Ps 71:3 Be to me a rock of habitation to which I may continually come; You have given commandment to save me, For You are my rock and my fortress.

The Psalmist was trying to communicate the message that the LORD was the firm foundation that provided strength, direction and salvation in the midst of turmoil. The Christian has the same in the teachings of Jesus for they are the Rock upon which we stand.

- Matthew 7:24-25 “Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine and acts on them, may be compared to a wise man who built his house on the rock.”²⁵ “And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and yet it did not fall, for it had been founded on the rock.
 - Rock of Ages, cleft for me, let me hide myself in thee; let the water and the blood, from thy wounded side which flowed, be of sin the double cure; save from wrath and make me pure.
- Psalm 18:3 I call upon the LORD, who is worthy to be praised, And I am saved from my enemies. / Song 63 “I will call upon the Lord”

We sang these very same words in song prior to the start of this lesson. This is because when God is our Protector, we will be saved from our enemies. It is from our enemies that we are delivered from. The Psalmist knows that God has a brilliant track record of delivering us from the enemies around us.

- Following the *War of the Kings*, It was to Abraham that Melchizedek proclaimed in Genesis 14:20 “And blessed be God Most High, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand.”
- Gideon was told before the Battle of the Midianites in Judges 6:12 “*The LORD is with you, O valiant warrior.*” He placed courage in the heart of a doubting Gideon. *Judges 6:14 The LORD looked at him and said, “Go in this your strength and deliver Israel from the hand of Midian. Have I not sent you?”*
- It was God that saved the people of Israel from the wrath of the Egyptians. *Psalm 106:7-12 Our fathers in Egypt did not understand Your wonders; They did not remember Your abundant kindnesses, But rebelled by the sea, at the Red Sea.*⁸ *Nevertheless He saved them for the sake of His name, That He might make His power known.*⁹ *Thus He rebuked the Red Sea and it dried up, And He led them through the deeps, as through the wilderness.*¹⁰ *So He saved them from the hand of the one who hated them, And redeemed them from the hand of the enemy.*¹¹ *The waters covered their adversaries; Not one of them was left.*¹² *Then they believed His words; They sang His praise.*
- Before taking the Promised Land, Joshua confirmed in 1:9 “*Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous! Do not tremble or be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.*”

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- It was God that the credit was given to in the defeat of the Assyrians. *2 Kings 19:34-35 'For I will defend this city to save it for My own sake and for My servant David's sake.'* ” ³⁵ *Then it happened that night that the angel of the LORD went out and struck 185,000 in the camp of the Assyrians; and when men rose early in the morning, behold, all of them were dead.*

It was to God that the battle belonged, not the Israelites. They had to learn the lesson that God was their protector. We as Christians

The Battle Belongs to the LORD

In heavenly armour we'll enter the land

The battle belongs to the Lord

No weapon that's fashioned against us shall stand

The battle belongs to the Lord

We sing glory and honor

Power and strength to the Lord

- Psalm 31:1-5 In You, O LORD, I have taken refuge; Let me never be ashamed; In Your righteousness deliver me. ² Incline Your ear to me, rescue me quickly; Be to me a rock of strength, A stronghold to save me. ³ For You are my rock and my fortress; For Your name's sake You will lead me and guide me. ⁴ You will pull me out of the net which they have secretly laid for me, For You are my strength. ⁵ Into Your hand I commit my spirit; You have ransomed me, O LORD, God of truth. / Song 454 “Rock of Ages”

Focus on God; He will take care of the Rest.

There was a well-known song leader in the post Civil War days named Ira Sankey. On Christmas Eve 1875, while traveling on a Delaware River steamboat, that one of the passengers recognized him. They asked him to sing one of his own hymns, but Sankey demurred, saying that he preferred to sing William B. Bradbury's hymn, "Savior Like a Shepherd Lead Us." As he sang, one of the stanzas began, "We are Thine; do Thou befriend us. Be the Guardian of our way." When he finished, a man stepped from the shadows and asked, "Did you ever serve in the Union Army?"

"Yes," Mr. Sankey answered, "in the spring of 1860."

"Can you remember if you were doing picket duty on a bright, moonlit night in 1862?"

"Yes," Mr. Sankey answered, very much surprised.

"So did I, but I was serving in the Confederate army. When I saw you standing at your post, I thought to myself, 'That fellow will never get away alive.' I raised my musket and took aim. I was standing in the shadow, completely concealed, while the full light of the moon was falling upon you. At that instant, just as a moment ago, you raised your eyes to heaven and began to sing... 'Let him sing his song to the end,' I said to myself, 'I can shot him afterwards. He's my victim at all events, and my bullet cannot miss him.' But the song you sang then was the song you sang just now. I heard the words perfectly: 'We are Thine; do Thou befriend us. Be the

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Guardian of our way.' Those words stirred up many memories. I began to think of my childhood and my God-fearing mother. She had many times sung that song to me. When you had finished your song, it was impossible for me to take aim again. I thought, 'The Lord who is able to save that man from certain death must surely be great and mighty.' And my arm of its own accord dropped limp at my side."

- Psalm 138:7 Though I walk in the midst of trouble, You will revive me; You will stretch forth Your hand against the wrath of my enemies, And Your right hand will save me. / Song 601 "My God and I"
 - Once again we are re-enforced through a Psalm and the accompanying song "My God and I" that God is our Protector! He is going to be there for His people.
 - When God delivered the Israelites out of the land of Egypt and through the Red Sea, it was a glorious moment. Shortly after the Egyptians were drowned in the sea and the people caught a deeper glimpse of their salvation from the oppressive nation, they were singing a new song. This song, which has no name, could easily be titled "God is Our Protector".
 - Exodus 15:1-19 Then Moses and the sons of Israel sang this song to the LORD, and said, "I will sing to the LORD, for He is highly exalted; The horse and its rider He has hurled into the sea. ² "The LORD is my strength and song, And He has become my salvation; This is my God, and I will praise Him; My father's God, and I will extol Him. ³ "The LORD is a warrior; The LORD is His name. ⁴ "Pharaoh's chariots and his army He has cast into the sea; And the choicest of his officers are drowned in the Red Sea. ⁵ "The deeps cover them; They went down into the depths like a stone. ⁶ "Your right hand, O LORD, is majestic in power, Your right hand, O LORD, shatters the enemy. ⁷ "And in the greatness of Your excellence You overthrow those who rise up against You; You send forth Your burning anger, and it consumes them as chaff. ⁸ "At the blast of Your nostrils the waters were piled up, The flowing waters stood up like a heap; The deeps were congealed in the heart of the sea. ⁹ "The enemy said, 'I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil; My desire shall be gratified against them; I will draw out my sword, my hand will destroy them.' ¹⁰ "You blew with Your wind, the sea covered them; They sank like lead in the mighty waters. ¹¹ "Who is like You among the gods, O LORD? Who is like You, majestic in holiness, Awesome in praises, working wonders? ¹² "You stretched out Your right hand, The earth swallowed them. ¹³ "In Your lovingkindness You have led the people whom You have redeemed; In Your strength You have guided them to Your holy habitation. ¹⁴ "The peoples have heard, they tremble; Anguish has gripped the inhabitants of Philistia. ¹⁵ "Then the chiefs of Edom were dismayed; The leaders of Moab, trembling grips them; All the inhabitants of Canaan have melted away. ¹⁶ "Terror and dread fall upon them; By the greatness of Your arm they are motionless as stone; Until Your people pass over, O LORD, Until the people pass over whom You have purchased. ¹⁷ "You will bring them and plant them in the mountain of Your inheritance, The place, O LORD, which You have made for Your dwelling, The sanctuary, O Lord, which Your hands have established. ¹⁸ "The LORD shall reign forever and ever." ¹⁹ For the horses of Pharaoh with his chariots and his

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horsemen went into the sea, and the LORD brought back the waters of the sea on them, but the sons of Israel walked on dry land through the midst of the sea.

- This was the longest and likely greatest victory song ever written, yet the glory and honor is given to God. He is the protector of people and it has been so since the very beginning.
- Psalm 119:151 You are near, O LORD, And all Your commandments are truth. / Song 478 “Nearer, Still Nearer”

Sometimes when dealing with the trials of life, we forget that God did not leave us nor forsake us. He did not run away from us in our hour of trial nor will He. One of God’s names is actually Jehovah-Immeku , meaning the “*Lord Is With You*”. God could not and would not be a protector if He did not have this capability.

- Psalm 34:18 The LORD is near to the brokenhearted And saves those who are crushed in spirit.
- Psalm 145:18 The LORD is near to all who call upon Him, To all who call upon Him in truth.

Paul communicated a similar point to the Christians concerning when we are being thrown off the road to the peace of God.

- *Philippians 4:5-7 Let your gentle spirit be known to all men. The Lord is near. ⁶ Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*
- When we know the LORD, our Protector and Defender is right there with us for the struggle, then we can have the peace that He desires in our life. Don’t ever forget that He is near!

Story: I was Being Watched Over?

The early American Indians in the western US had a unique practice of training young braves to be brave. On the night of a boy's thirteenth birthday, after years of lessons on hunting, scouting and fishing, it was time to take a final test. The men would blind-fold the young brave, escort him to a remote island and place him in a dense forest to spend the entire night alone. He would have no idea where he was and it would be the first time for the young man ever being away. The young brave would be in a place he did not know, covered with thick brush and all alone. He was TERRIFIED! As the occasional sounds of crackling twigs, animal calls and other strange noises of the night echoed through the darkness, the young brave would reason that an animal might soon attack. After what seemed like an eternity, dawn broke and the first rays of sunlight entered the interior of the forest. Looking around, the boy saw flowers, trees, and the outline of the path. Then, to his utter astonishment, he beheld the figure of a man standing just a few feet away, armed with a bow and arrow. It was his father. He had been there all night long. Only then he would learn the real point of the lesson, in that his father would always be looking out for him.

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Conclusion

We have to understand that God our Father is looking out over us in the dark moments of our life. We hear scary things, like medical reports, economic conditions, enemies, joblessness, sorrow and pain, persecution, government chaos and a thousand other things that whittle away at our faith. When we are at our greatest point of fear, we must never forget that God our Father and Protector is right there with us. That is the theme that focused on in the lesson from the Psalms and we must never forget it.

Service 2: Protection with God

63 – I Will Call upon the Lord

239 – In Moment's Like These

76 – How Great Thou Art

Prayer

560 – Living by Faith

Lord's Supper

454 – Rock of Ages

Sermon

508 – A Wonderful Savior