

Rock

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[0:00] I want to talk about three occasions where the psalmist cries out to the rock.

! The scriptures in the book of Psalms tells us of a rock. He is changeless and constant. He is that constant one. He is that rock that we can cry out to. Psalm 89 verse 26, we see firstly where the psalmist says, His promise to you, he that believeth on me shall be saved. It is a promise. Sometimes we use, sometimes glibly, I have made a commitment to Christ. I have made a commitment to Christ.

And we should and must. But really, isn't it more true? He says, I made a commitment to you. I made a commitment to you. I made a promise to you.

[1:49] His promises are yea and amen. His salvation is free and full. And he is faithful to deliver what he has promised. And you can have a sure reliance upon this promise of his salvation, of his free gift, of his extending it to you, to me, to receive it.

And your salvation is as sure and certain as sure can be. It is Christ who is your rock. We see the symbol explained that Christ is the rock.

He is the one. And we see it referred to as the psalmist elsewhere talks of how that he took me out of the miry clay and put my feet upon the rock.

Who has ever walked in quagmire and mud, get covered in it? And I am sure Neil would have found, as a council worker, walking in muddy fields with boots that get heavier each step, as the mud clogs them up and as you start to sink in to that mud.

What a picture of sin. It sticks, it cleans, it drags, it thimes, it weights you down. He wants you to be lifted out of that miry clay.

[3:07] And he wants to set your feet on the rock, Christ Jesus. You can be sure of that. Christ who is your rock. And absolute certainty of the faithfulness of his word to you, of his salvation gift to you.

It's as sure as Christ's person, as sure as Christ's promise, as sure as Christ's power, his salvation power. If you have been purchased by his blood, then you are his.

You are his sister. You are his brother. By his mercy and grace, you're purchased. You can have that full assurance. You have his word on it. And he cannot lie.

You have his word on it. Believer, your salvation is as certain as the salvation of the saints who are already in his presence. He is your salvation.

He is your rock. The rock of my salvation. Now that said, could it be possible that you will lose your crown?

[4:13] I think there's some. They'll get to glory, but they won't have a crown there. It's possible. Some say, as by fire.

Just by the skin of their teeth. They just sneak in while the door is ajar. You know, they just make it. Now, of course, really, we only all just make it because it's no working of our own.

But I think there'll be that certain loss of rewards. There'll be that loss of, with a pile of ashes, of wood, hay and stubble, as we are judged for our works, as it were, in terms of our rewards, as it were, not of our salvation.

Brothers and sisters, let me make that clear. But, friends, today, I think that some will be in danger of losing their crown. Why? What is there to show for a life lived?

Friends, be faithful. Be diligent. Do not trifle. Do not mess up. Do not slacken. There's no time for that. Time is short. Time is short.

[5:21] Invest every moment you can, wisely. Redeem the time because the days are evil. Let's not be careless.

Let's not be negligent. Yet, you can be assured of this. And I'm not meaning to load you up with feelings of doubt or uncertainty, but rather the opposite. And if His indelible grace has marked you, you are His.

You are God's property. So, let's live like it. Let's live like it. And you can cry, as the Psalmist David, Thou art my Father, my God and the rock of my salvation.

Let that be assurance for you today. Let that be an assurance. If you are saved, you are saved. You have His word.

You need not doubt the son that lives in constant doubt and fear and uncertainty.

[6:26] Friends, if He saved you, His blood has purchased you. He's made you His. You are in His ownership. And He is your master.

And so, you can be encouraged by that. But do not slacken. Do not trifle with your salvation. Let it be that that just urges you onward in that race to ever onward, ever more of being His and of doing His will.

So, firstly, the rock of my salvation. Is He your Saviour? If so, He is your rock. He is your salvation. The rock, Christ Jesus. Secondly, Psalm 62. Another occasion where the Psalmist speaks of my rock. Psalm 62.

There's many, really, that we could read, but these are just some. And secondly, we're seeing the rock of my stream. The rock of my stream. From verse 5 of Psalm 62.

[7:30] Psalm 62. Psalm 62. Psalm 62. Psalm 62. Psalm 62. My soul, wait thou only upon God, for my expectation is from Him. He only is my rock and my salvation.

He is my defence. He is my defence, it says. I shall not be moved. I shall not be moved. In God is my salvation and my glory.

The rock of my strength and my refuge is in God. The rock of my strength and my refuge is in God. Verse 8. Trust in Him at all times, ye people.

Pour out your heart before Him. God is a refuge for us. Friends, it says there, the psalmist says, He is the rock of my strength.

Our strength is in Him. As we read earlier, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.

[8:40] It's Christ in you. Your strength. When bachelors come, when trials and testings come, our strength is in Him. Hudson Taylor wrote, God uses men who are weak and feeble enough to lean on Him.

Hudson Taylor trekked to the nation of China when it was an unknown place to take the gospel to those who hadn't heard. God uses men who are weak and feeble enough to lean on Him.

Are you such a one? Weak and feeble enough to lean on Him? God is the rock of my strength. The rock Christ is our stronghold.

He gives to us His assurance, His power, His resilience to go and keep on going. Verse 2. David writes, He only is my rock and my salvation.

He is my defence. I shall not be moved. That's Psalm 62 verse 2. And Psalm 61 verse 2, it says, From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed, lead me to the rock that is higher than I.

[10:07] Claim that. Sister, brother, claim that. When my heart is overwhelmed, lead me to the rock that is higher than I.

Let that be your cry when your heart is overwhelmed. The darker the night, the brighter the dawn. As someone has said, when it is dark enough, men, see the stars.

Maybe you are going through a dark, dark valley. See the stars. The dawn will be brighter for you. Friends today, lead me to the rock that is higher than I am.

The rock of my strength. A writer once described an eagle flying high among the mountain crags. Suddenly a quick storm descended. And for a moment the fury seemed to want to dash the eagle to death against the cliffs.

But the eagle faced the storm. It tilted its wings as a proper angle. And slowly the fury that might have crushed him instead began to drive him upward.

[11:16] And at last he rose above the storm. The very power that would have crushed and destroyed him was the power that lifted him to that new place of power, of peace.

Maybe that can be true for you too. When your heart is overwhelmed, lead me to the rock. Lead me to the rock that is higher than I. Our faith in God is like that angle of our wings that helps us glide and overwhelm the storm.

Overcome the storm. And rise above the storm to rise upward. An old writer, William Penn said, No pain, no palm.

Speaking of the welcoming of the Saviour to Jerusalem. The palms of welcome, of jubilation. No thorns.

No throne. No gall or bitterness. No glory. No cross. No crown.

[12:29] No crown. It's true, isn't it? His strength is made perfect in weakness. His strength comes in times of weakness.

Maybe you think you're pretty powerful. You're pretty strong. You might be like this fellow in the Guinness Book of Records. He's probably not the one listed now, but there's a man in the Guinness Book of Records.

He set the record for the most records in the Guinness Book of Records. His name is Asrita Furman. He's the first person to hold 100 world records at the same time.

His records include a mass poetry reading of a certain poem in 111 languages.

There's all kinds of things here. One of his records is eating 38 M&Ms; with chopsticks in one minute. So see if you can beat that when you get home.

[13:33] Furman has held 234 total records, but many have been broken. He's quoted as saying, I believe we all have an inner strength that we rarely use. I just love the challenge of trying to be the best in the world in something.

And we might question with this fellow whether his investment of time and energy and dedication is really such a worthwhile thing.

But be the best you can be as a Christian. In the weakness that you feel, and we all feel, we all have, do what you can do.

Do what you're able. Do, as God gives you the strength, do and live. As it says in 1 Chronicles 28 verse 20, And David said to Solomon his son, Be strong and of good courage and do it.

Now you could say, they beat the Nike slogan there. Be strong in the Lord. Be strong and of good courage and do it.

[14:47] Fear not, nor be dismayed. For the Lord God, even my God, will be with thee. He will not fail thee, nor forsake thee. Until thou hast finished all the work for the service of the house of the Lord.

Be strong and do. Be strong and be active. Be activated. Be strong and do. To the troubled heart he speaks peace. Be still.

He speaks strength to the weak. He calms the troubled brow. He assures the troubled heart. He brings to our heart that strong confidence. As it says in Proverbs 14 verse 26, In the fear of the Lord is strong confidence.

And his children shall have a place of refuge. In the fear of the Lord is strong confidence. You can have that strong confidence.

Brother, sister, we all feel weak, inadequate, lacking in confidence, in strength, in preparation, in our own capacity and capability.

[15:52] Whether it be for all manner of reasons. We could all think of some reason why not. But be strong, have courage and do it. Lead me to the rock that is higher than I.

We see the rock of my salvation. The rock of my strength. And thirdly, Psalm 94. Another occasion is Psalm 94 verse 22. Another occasion of the rock.

You could say Christ Jesus. The rock of my salvation. My Saviour. The rock of my strength. The one who gives me strength. To be, to do, to live.

To walk with him by faith. Psalm 94 verse 22. The rock of my refuge. We read there. Verse 22 of Psalm 94. But the Lord is my defence.

And my God is the rock of my refuge. Friends, he is the shelter in your storm. When you face storm, come under his wings.

[16:51] Come under his shelter. Come into that refuge. Believe that you can be at peace. When you feel lacking in peace. You feel overwhelmed.

Friends, there is refuge for you.

He is your place of refuge. We know in the Old Testament times, there were cities of refuge. Places you could flee to be safe.

To be protected from harm. And Christ is that one you can flee to. You can run to him. You can find safety in him. And Deuteronomy 33 verse 27 says, The eternal God is thy refuge.

The eternal, eternal. Catch that. The eternal God is thy refuge. And underneath are the everlasting arms.

The eternal God, the everlasting arms. What more can you need? Can you want? To be assured of this peace, this refuge, this place of safety.

[17:55] Underneath are the everlasting arms. His arms are under you. The faithfulness of God overshadows you. Your refuge. Your dwelling place. As the same Hebrew word is translated in our KJV in Psalm 76 too.

Our refuge. Our dwelling place. Where we reside. Where we are at home. Is in him. The place in which we dwell. Our refuge. Our shelter.

Our dwelling place. Our dwelling place. And his arms are stretched out. Still stretched out.

Stretched out. Still beckoning. Inviting. Saving. His arm is not shortened that it cannot save.

As it says in Deuteronomy 5 verse 15 in part. The Lord thy God brought thee out from thence of Egypt, the world, through a mighty hand by a stretched out arm.

God brings us out of darkness into his marvelous light. He translates us. He transfers us. He relocates us into his kingdom out of the kingdom of darkness.

[19:01] And you can say this morning with David, he is the rock of my salvation. You can say that today. He is the rock of my salvation.

You can say, he is the rock of my strength. You can say, he is the rock of my refuge.

Psalm 9.9 says, the Lord also will be a refuge for the oppressed. A refuge in times of trouble. And when you need a place of safety, he is with you.

He is your rock. He will be a wall around you. He will be a shelter over you. He will be a sanctuary for you to shelter in. A haven, a place of safety. My defense.

He will defend you. Maybe you need defending. He will defend you. He will speak for you. Hebrews 6.18 speaks of the assurance we have of God's promise of his unchanging character.

[20:02] And we can have that assurance of him who, it says that we who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us, we can flee for refuge.

Hebrews 6.18. And then it goes on, which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil.

You could understand that to mean of beyond this earthly time into the veil, into the heaven beyond, the life beyond. So the anchor we have, the anchor of the soul, is that assurance, that faith that's anchored by the rock.

It's anchored in Christ. It's anchored in that assurance of faith, the anchor of the soul, the hope that we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, that it goes beyond this earthly time.

It will hold us till heaven. It will hold us till we reach the other shore. And a writer has said, in adversity, we usually want God to do a removing job when he wants to do an improving job.

[21:15] We want God to remove the thorn, to remove whatever it is that's giving us heartache and grief. We usually want God to do a removing job, but he wants to do an improving job.

And to realize the worth of the anchor, we need to feel the storm. It's when the storm times come that the anchor can be that anchor of the soul, that hope beyond this earthly time.

And he anchors us, it says, sure and steadfast until we essentially cross beyond that veil, until we then see him face to face, until we rest in that heavenly rest forever.

And serve him there. And serve him there. Friends, there's a peace that you can know. A peace that passeth all understanding. What peace, what rest? What comfort? The rock of my salvation.

Do you know him? I'm speaking to believers today. Perhaps you're almost a Christian, as it says someone was. But yet, he didn't quite, as we understand, he never quite got there.

[22:27] He was so close and yet so far, far away. Would it be a tragedy for you to come and hear of Christ, of his sacrifice, of his blood, of his salvation, of his gift extended and yet not received?

Friends, claim him as the rock of my salvation. Make it personal today. The rock of my salvation. And then, believer, you can know him as the rock of my strength. In all your weakness, in all your frailty, in all your inadequacy, he can be your strength. His power can be made perfect in your weakness. And he can help you live and walk and be faithful in Christ. And when you face overwhelming adversity and trial, tribulation, he can be that rock of my refuge. There's a refuge for you. I know some of you have seen wartime. I can't say that I've seen anything like that. But I could imagine a bomb shelter or a place of refuge.

[23:37] Christ can be that to you today. Let us pray.