

AM Psalm 18 God's Perfect Way

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[0 : 00] God's Word, as we're going to read from this 18th Psalm, or at least part of the 18th Psalm. Oh, in the Bible, the pure Bible, it will be page 545.

545, 18th Psalm, we shall be reading from the first verse to the verse 30. Psalm 18, hear the Word of God.

I love you, O Lord, my strength. 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.

I call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised, and I am saved from my enemies. The cords of death encompass me. The torrents of destruction assail me.

The cords of shield entangle me. The snares of death confronted me. In distress, I call upon the Lord. To my God, I cried for help.

[1 : 17] From his temple, he heard my voice, and my cry to him reached his ears. Then the earth reeled and rocked. The foundations, O so, of the mountains trembled and quaked, because he was angry.

Smoke went up from his nostrils and devouring fire from his mouth. Glowing coals flamed forth from him. He bowed the heavens and came down. Thick darkness was under his feet.

He rode on a cherub and flew. He came swiftly on the wings of the wind. He made darkness his covering, his canopy around him. Thick clouds, dark with water.

Out of the brightness before him, hailstones and coals of fire broke through his clouds. The Lord also thundered in the heavens, and the Most High uttered his voice, hailstones and coals of fire. He sent out his arrows and scattered them. He flashed forth lightnings and routed them. Then the channels of the sea were seen, and the foundations of the world were laid bare.

[2 : 30] At your rebuke, O Lord, at the blast of the breath of your nostrils. He sent from on high. He took me. He drew me out of many waters.

He rescued me from my strong enemy, and from those who hated me. For they were too mighty for me. They confronted me in the day of my calamity.

But the Lord was my support. He brought me out into a broad place. He rescued me because he delighted in me. The Lord dealt with me according to my righteousness.

According to the cleanness of my hands, he rewarded me. For I have kept the ways of the Lord, and have not wickedly departed from my God. For all his rules were before me, and his statutes I did not put away from me.

I was blameless before him, and I kept myself from my guilt. So the Lord rewarded me according to my righteousness, according to the cleanness of my hands in his sight.

[3 : 31] With the merciful, you show yourself merciful. With the blameless man, you show yourself blameless. With the purified, you show yourself pure. And with the crooked, you make yourself seem torturous.

For you save a humble people, but the haughty eyes you bring down. For it is you who light my lamp.

The Lord my God lightens my darkness. For by you I can run against a troop. And by my God I can leap over a wall. This God, his way is perfect.

The word of the Lord proves true. He is a shield for all those who take refuge in him. Amen, and may the Lord have his blessing to the public reading of his holy and inspired word.

Turn me once again to the psalm we read earlier in Psalm 18. Psalm 18, this morning we will be looking at specifically at verse 30.

[4 : 38] The word of God says, And as for God, his way is perfect. Oh, I should read from this. This God, his way is perfect. The word of the Lord proves true.

He is a shield for all those who take refuge in him. This God, his way is perfect. And this morning we will be looking at this verse in a somewhat devotional way to consider in what way is God's way perfect.

Now this psalm itself is almost taken verbatim from 2 Samuel chapter 22, which you can read in your own time.

It's literally, practically the same. Apart from one or two word difference in the 50th verse, or 51st verse in 2 Samuel chapter 22.

It is David's song of praise, which he sang unto the Lord. These words, when the Lord delivered him from all the various enemies that he faced, starting from Saul, even his own son Absalom.

[5 : 56] And if you read 2 Samuel chapter 21, you see that he had to face several enemies in his time before he wrote this, or before he sang this psalm.

So, it's quite an interesting psalm to read. I trust that you read it in your own time.

But David, in this particular psalm, after he had faced all these various troubles, from the enemies of Saul, like I said, and at the end, which is the Philistine giants that he had to face, and to kill the Philistine giants, I think there were four of them.

He not only faced all these various troubles in his time, but even during that period, he had to bury Saul and also Jonathan, his good friend. So, with all these pressures that he faced, and all these troubles that he faced, of not only fighting against the Philistines, burying his good friend, he could still sing this wonderful psalm.

And so, when you read Psalm 18 and verse 30, as for God, his way is perfect, you realize that it didn't just come in a vacuum.

[7 : 26] He didn't just throw out these words, just for the sake of writing a lovely psalm. He penned these words, and he sung this psalm, in the context of troubles, in the context of enemies around him, troubles from outside, and burdens on the inside, as he buried his good friend.

So, there will be a lot that we can think about this psalm itself. And so, we will think about this psalm in a few ways. Well, the first thing that we can think of is, God's way is perfect, through his word.

For God, his way is perfect. As for God, his way is perfect. God's way is perfect, through his word.

The Bible that we have before us, is perfect. It's consistent. There's no defects. There's no incomplete bits, in the Bible.

The Bible, the word of God, is perfect. And God's way is perfect, through his word. But he has to go through, a means, of speaking to us. And his way of doing that, is through his word.

[8 : 43] Now, there may be verses in the Bible, that we may not understand. That is pretty obvious. But, the fact that we don't understand it, doesn't mean that the word of God is untrue.

That is solely, is because of our own sinful minds. There is a, very quaint saying from, allegedly from Mark Twain, who said, it's not the things, which I do not understand in the Bible, which trouble me.

But the things, which I do understand. Yeah, it's not the things, which I do not understand in the Bible, which trouble me. But the things, which I do understand. So, yes, the Bible does contain things, which we may struggle to understand.

But, the things, which we actually do understand, perhaps we need to pay a bit more attention, to these things. And, to acknowledge that, our own sinful minds, may darken our understanding, to the parts of the Bible, that are, hard to, understand.

God's way is perfect, through his word. You know, the, we have in the past, and even to today, we have those who are liberals, who, who seek to reject, the miracles of God.

[10 : 01] And, who's, who, not only reject the miracles of God, but they say, well, we can reject, the miracles of God, but we can keep, the ethics, of the Bible.

Well, nowadays, they're trying to reject, even the ethics of the Bible. But, in those days, there was, there was a time, where the liberals, would try and reject, the miracles of God, and keep the, ethics of the Bible.

Well, that's not good enough, is it? That's not how, God's way is perfect. If we believe that, if we believe this verse, as for God, his way is perfect. He has to be perfect, through his word.

Miracles and everything. And, we can't, say that God's way is perfect, through his word, and then come along to say that, well, we need somebody to infallibly interpret, the scriptures for us.

That's what the Roman Catholic Church, has sought to, to do. That it's only through, their cardinals, and their authorities, that we can understand, what the word of God is saying.

[11 : 07] Well, that is rejecting, the authority of the Bible. that is cherry picking, the things that they like, to interpret. But, that's not the way, God's way is perfect, is it not?

And again, we live in a day and age, where, there are those who say, that we can, all we need, is just a Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit, working in our lives, that is separate, and not only separated, but, in contradiction, to the word of God.

Well, we can't have that. God's way is perfect, through his word, by his spirit. It's a Holy Spirit, that illuminates our mind, but illuminates our, but the Holy Spirit, illuminates our mind, through, the word of God.

So, there are, there are so many, ways, in this day and age, that we live in, that God's way, is not viewed as perfect, but the Psalmist, is very clear, David is very clear, as for God, his way is perfect. His way is perfect. God's way is perfect, through, his word. For, those of us, who call ourselves Christians, we know that the Bible, is not just some holy book, but it's a book, with instructions, for faith and practice.

[12 : 34] is a book, with constructions, for, us as individuals, and for families, and for, our churches. So, whether you are in Dumfries, or, in Dumblane, or anywhere, if you go to a church, where the Bible is, preached, and believed upon, then you can say that, well, God's way is perfect, in this place.

where we believe, that God's way is perfect, through his word, that's where the church, will be found. And those of us, who are Christians, we know, that we have been saved, by reading, the word of God, we've been saved, from our sins, by listening to the word, preached.

Perhaps, some of us, have been saved, through the singing, of the Psalms, or perhaps, through listening to a, a word, saturated hymn.

Well, we know that, instinctively, we know that, God's way is perfect, through his word. The very means, that God has saved us, through his word, by his spirit.

This same God, will still, will still work in our hearts, as Christians, and sanctify us, through his word, keep us on that, straight and narrow, again, through his word.

[14 : 01] God's way is perfect. God's way is perfect, through his word. You know, there's, there are times, where you may hear, somebody, ask that question, I want to know, what is God's will, for my life?

I'm sure you've heard that before. Perhaps, you've said that before. I know I've said that. I want to know, what is God's will, for my life? Well, the simple thing, that you can, ask yourself, if you are asking that, that question, is, are we reading, and are we obeying, God's word?

Do we say, as, as Joshua said, this book of the law, shall not depart, out of thy mouth, but, you would meditate, therein, day and night, that you may obey, that you may observe, to do, according to, all that is written, therein, Joshua, who, was, just about to enter, into the promised land, or lead the people, of God, into the promised land, God told him, that, even though, you may be the leader, of the Israelites, into this, promised land, yet, this book of the law, will not depart, out of your mouth, but you would meditate, therein, day and night, and do, and observe, to do, everything according, to all that is written, therein, even Joshua, had to, read, and obey, God's word, we are not like, Joshua, but we still, still, we still need to know, God's will for our life, how do we know, God's will for our life, through the word of God, through, the reading of God's word, because, we know that God, this God, his way is perfect, if we want to know, God's will for our life, then, first of all, we need to read, and obey God's word, if not, if we don't read, God's word, then how are we ever, going to know, that we are walking, in the way of the Lord, how are we ever, going to know, that we are, made perfect, through his word, we must read his word, we must read, God's word, in order to, walk in the way, of the Lord, because, for God, his way is perfect, and, we know, that God's way is perfect, through, his word, God, if we are, not a believer, this morning, well,

God's way is perfect, he has made, a way, that we can be right, with him, he has made, his way clear, about salvation, how we can be saved, from our sins, how we can be right, with our God, he has revealed, to us, Jesus Christ, it's all written, in this book, he has revealed, to us, Jesus Christ, and him crucified, and resurrected, and he has revealed, to us, again, through his word, that it is, because of Jesus Christ, death and resurrection, that he can, clothe us, in his perfect righteousness, he has fulfilled, the law, the broken law, that we have broken, he has fulfilled, that law, and when we believe, in him, his righteousness, is our righteousness, and when we repent, of our sins, and we believe in him, God's way is perfect, he will show us, the way back to God, from the dark paths, of sin, through the Lord,

[17:49] Jesus Christ, so God's way, is perfect, through his word, but, something else, that we can, we can think of, God's way is perfect, in adversity, or, in afflictions, remember, I said earlier, that David sang, to the Lord, these words, this, in this psalm, when the Lord, delivered him, from all his enemies, starting from Saul, his own son, sadly, and then the, the Philistine giants, and then along the way, shortly before, his battle, against the Philistine giants, he had to bury, his good friend, Jonathan, in all that afflictions, in all that adversity, God's way is shown, to be perfect, because God's way is perfect, consistent, with no defects, complete, we can hold on, to that promise, that God will shield, all those who take refuge, in him, in that same psalm, in that same verse, he's a shield, for all those, who take refuge in him, if God's way, is not perfect, if God's word, is not perfect, then how can we ever, trust, that he is a shield, for all those, who take refuge in him, how can we trust, in that particular promise, that he's a shield, for all those, who take refuge in him, the only way, we can believe, in that promise, is we believe, that first part, of that verse, that God's way, is perfect, and not only that, but, we read that,

God's, the word of the Lord, is, proves true, in the authorised version, is the word of the Lord, is tried, or in some translations, is flawless, and the picture here, is that of silver, in a furnace, that has been heated up, to such a high temperature, that the, the dross, and the impurities, are all, separated, and cleared away, and all that he left, is that, that wonderful, silver, or sometimes gold, or whatever, precious metals, we're considering, the word of the Lord, is tried, the word of the Lord, proves true, true, now, it doesn't mean that, the way of the Lord, is imperfect, and he needs something, to be made perfect, that's not what, this verse means, what it means is, as we read, in God's word, and as we believe, that God's way, is perfect, other Christians, along the way, in time past, have found out, that that to be true, and how did they find out, they found out, through, the, fires of affliction, they found out, through, the times of doubt, and in times of unbelief, they found out, that,

God's way is perfect, and these doubts, and unbelief, the so called, impurities, are burnt away, in the case of David, after all the various, afflictions that he faced, after, his own son, going against him, after Saul, King Saul, who hated him, and he had to be, he had to be chased, all over the country, after facing the, the Philistines, and all the struggles, along the way, he is now, he can now say that, yes, I've seen, that God's way is perfect, I can see that, that this, this word of the Lord, is, is, is proof true, God has, put him through, that, that furnace, to burn away, all the unbelief, and all the doubts, and all the questions, that he has in his mind, is all made clear, that's the way, the Lord deals with us,

God's way is perfect, in adversity, and in afflictions, we will declare, we will declare, that God is going to be, true, faithful, constant, and good, because his way, is perfect, it may be painful, yes, it may be painful, as we, as we discover, time and time again, that God's way, is perfect, it may be painful, in our discovery, but it is, going to be, a perfect discovery, that God's way, is perfect, remember, elsewhere in the Bible, we read in, in times of, betrayal, even in times of, betrayal, I mentioned, Absalom, even in the times of, Jesus himself, he had to, he had to, he had to, he had to come face to face, with Judas, and we see a prophetic, passage in, in Psalm 55, I'll just read a few verses, for it was not an enemy, that reproached me, then I could have borne it, neither was it, he that hated me, that did, that did, magnify himself, against me, then I would have, hid myself from him, but it was you, a man, my equal, my guide, and my friend, my acquaintance, we took sweet counsel, together, and walked, unto the house of God, in company, this is a, it's a, it's a prophecy of,

Judas, in Psalm 55, can you imagine how, Jesus felt, how David felt, when he was, betrayed by Absalom, or, Paul, being let down, by Demas, we read in 2 Timothy 4, verse 10, for Demas, hath forsaken me, having loved, this present world, and is departed, to Thessalonica, Demas, a fellow laborer, with Christ, of labor in Christ, with Paul, decided that, nope, I much prefer, the, the things in this world, and I'm going to, Thessalonica, thank you very much, I'll see you around, imagine how, Paul felt, imagine how, Paul felt, and perhaps, we can think about, unanswered prayer, and we know this as well, perhaps we, we have been praying, for the salvation, of our children, or we've been praying, for the salvation, of our own spouses, perhaps we know, that, they may be coming, to church, they may be regular, attendees of the church, but deep down, we know that, there's something missing, in their lives, children, grandchildren, spouse, husband, wives, who are, perhaps church goers, but, we know that, they're missing, that one little, aspect in their lives, salvation, they're missing,

[24 : 58] Jesus Christ, in their lives, and we pray, we pray earnestly, daily, I'm sure we've done this, and I hope we're doing, this, and we pray, earnestly, and we think that, God is not hearing, our prayers, well God's way, is perfect, even in adversity, even in troubles, even in burdens, burden times, perhaps even in death, when Absalom, son of David, died, or what about, the unnamed, son of David, who died, in infancy, think about, how he felt, and you think, of the New Testament, when John the Baptist, was, was beheaded, or Stephen, who was stoned, how those Christians felt, if God's way, is not perfect, if we are not, if the word of God, is not tried, by the people of God, not tested, through the people of God, then how in the world, can he be, a shield, for all those, who take refuge in him, we must believe, that God's way, is perfect, he knows, he knows best, he knows what he's doing, and we can still praise God, in our own times, of adversity, our own times, of affliction, painful as it may be, we need, to believe, that God's way, is perfect, despite, the times, that we live in, the troubles, that we face, the burdens, that we have to bear, the Lord knows, the Lord knows, these things, the problem, with us, in the modern day, that we live in, is we are not prepared, so many of us, are not prepared, to face adversities, there was, there was a time, when I,

I used to read, I don't know, some of you may read, Our Daily Bread, from, Radio, Bible, RBC, I can't remember, what the C stands for, but, you know, Our Daily Bread, I used to read, a lot of, Our Daily Bread, and I remember, one, the late, James Greer, late, theologian, in America, he was speaking, in the Mat Tap, in the, Mat Tap, in London, and he was, saying that, Our Daily Bread, should be called, Our Daily Croutons, because there's so little, in it, that, that Christians, are trying to survive on, and I can't, make me think, and, you know, it made me think again, about, how much, are we actually ready, for, difficult times, you know, we come to, a service, and I'm not saying, of those, you know, of those of us, who cannot go to, two services, for good reasons, but we come to, just one service, on a Sunday, if we don't come, if we don't come along, to the prayer meetings, and, you know, with no good reasons, and then, when we face adversities, we crumble, well, to put it bluntly,

I mean, should we be surprised, by that? I know, if I don't read, the Bible, and I face, difficult times, I know my wife, would know that, the first thing, my wife would ask me, is have you read, your Bible recently?

Yeah, she knows, people can see, that you know, if you're not walking, with the Lord, you're not reading, the word of God, daily, and then when trouble comes, you crumble, into a heap, people will realize, have you read, your Bible recently?

There's a Chinese idiom, and this is just a Chinese idiom, from way back when, never burn incense, when all is well, but clasp Buddha's feet, when in distress, there's a Chinese saying, that I knew, when I was young, so those people, don't burn incense, you know, to pray to the God, you know, to pray to Buddha, and all that, but then when, difficult times come, you hug, the leg of Buddha, you know, help, help, help, in one sense, sometimes we do that, if we don't read, God's word, daily, deeply, and then when we face, difficult times, we flounder, we flounder, we get all distressed, we don't know what to do, God's way is perfect, God's way is perfect, even in times of adversity, we need to prepare ourselves, to face difficult times, that's what we need to do, finally,

[29 : 49] God's way is perfect, and suitable, for his blood-bought children, because the word, because the Bible is perfect, consistent, no defects, and God has revealed himself, through the word of God, and his way is perfect, we can, we can say that this is, a tried and tested path, his word is a lamp to our feet, and the light to our path, in Psalm 119, this is a path that God, God knows best, he has set forth this path, for us to walk therein, and when we face difficult times, as Christians, we are struggling with sin, for example, we know that there is no temptation, that has taken you, but such as is common to man, but God is faithful, who will not suffer you, to be tempted above, that you are able, but with the temptation, also make a way to escape, that you may be able to bear it, if we are struggling with sin, chances are, we are not alone, other Christians, have gone down that same road, tonight we will consider, the life of Phoebe, and the example that she sets, for the church of Jesus Christ, and the fact that she is, part of her fellowship, of believers, she is named amongst, the believers of Christ, in that particular church, and that is the importance, of fellowship,

God has seen it fit, that Christians, are going to be walking, in his way, and, Christians are not going to be, lone ranger Christians, you have met some of those, who believe to be, an island to themselves, it is an unbiblical concept, to be a lone ranger Christian, to be a lone ranger Christian, I have certainly met them, those Christians, who feel that, there is no church good enough, and those, they are on their own, it is a very dangerous position, to be in, God's way is perfect, for his

blood bought children, he has put a path, for us, yes there may be differences, between denominations, and so on, but, there is a very clear path, for us to walk, and we are not walking, on our own, there are other Christians, around us, and we can look at this, in a more positive way, just think about the land, think of this country, not just Scotland, but the UK, think about the number of revivals, that took place in this land,

I have been reading recently, about the 1904, Welsh revival, you know there was a place, in Anglesey, where all the pubs, all the pubs, but one, were closed down, and alcoholism, according to, some statistics, done during that, during that time, alcoholism went down 50%, crime went down, I read somewhere, that it was, it was so good, that crime went down, that even the judges, and the policemen, had nothing to do, amazing, can you imagine that, there's one time, that we actually say, yep, there's a good thing, that police and the judges, have no jobs, nothing to do, pubs were closed, prayer meetings were full, prayer meetings were full, there were conversions, large number of people, were turning away, from the, the Anglicanism, or the kind of ritualism, of the Anglican church, and they're going back, to the simplicity, of worship, amongst those, who are non-conformist, and in fact,

I read about, the 1904, Welsh revival, that there was actually, a royal commission, put in place, set up, in 1906, to see, there was going to be, a case of, disestablishing, the Anglican church, because people, were leaving, the Anglican church, going to non-conformist, churches, for the simplicity, of worship, God's way is perfect, for his blood-bought children, in revival, in the Bible, as we read, masses, numerous Christians, come together, and walk, in the ways of the Lord, that's why God's way, through the word of God, through his word, fits so well, with God's people, when we are bought, by the blood of Christ, when we put our faith, and trust, in Jesus Christ, as our risen saviour, risen, and glorified, and all glorious saviour, when we put our faith, and trust in him, we are put on that, on that way,

God's way, God's trust, and we have, we have other Christians, around us, and we can say, that truly, truly, God's way, is perfect, God's way, is perfect, the word of the Lord, is tried, he is a buckler, to all those, that trust in him, some thoughts, about this, this verse, in this psalm, and we trust, that the Lord, will guide us, in the days ahead, through his word, we shall conclude, thank God's way.

[35 : 43] Thank you.