

# The Song Of Salvation

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[ 0 : 00 ] To the choir master, a psalm of David, the servant of the Lord, who addressed the words of this song to the Lord on the day when the Lord delivered him from the hand of all his enemies and from the hand of Saul.

He said, 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 encompassed me.

The torrents of destruction assailed me. The cords of Sheol entangled me. The snares of death confronted me. And in my distress, I called upon the Lord.

To my God, I cried for help. From his temple, he heard my voice and my cry to him reached his ears. Then the earth reeled and rocked.

[ 1 : 02 ] The foundations also of the mountains trembled, quaked because he was angry. Smoke went up from his nostrils, 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, hellstones and coals of fire broke through his clouds.

The Lord also thundered in the heavens. The Most High uttered his voice, hellstones and coals of fire. And he sent out his arrows and scattered them.

He flashed forth lightnings and routed them. Then the channels of the sea were seen. The foundations of the world were laid bare. At your rebuke, O Lord, at the blast of the breath of your nostrils.

[ 2 : 08 ] 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. His statutes I did not put away from me. I was blameless before him.

And I kept myself from guilt. So the Lord has rewarded me according to my righteousness.

According to the cleanness of my hands in his sight. The merciful, you show yourself merciful.

[ 3 : 10 ] 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 who take refuge in him.

For who is God but the Lord? And who is a rock except our God? The God who equipped me with strength and made my way blameless. He made my feet like the feet of a deer.

And he set me secure on the heights. He trains my hands for war so that my arms can bend a bow of bronze. You have given me the shield of your salvation.

[ 4 : 13 ] And your right hand supported me. And your gentleness made me great. You gave a wide place for my steps under me. And my feet did not slip. I pursued my enemies and overtook them. And did not turn back till they were consumed. I thrust them through so that they were not able to rise. They fell under my feet. For you equipped me with strength for the battle. You made those who rise against me seek under me. You made my enemies turn their backs to me. And those who hated me I destroyed. They cried for help. But there was none to save. They cried to the Lord. But he did not answer them. I beat them fine as dust before the wind. I cast them out like the mire of the streets. You delivered me from strife with the people. You made me the head of the nations. People whom I had not known served me.

[ 5 : 12 ] As soon as they heard of me they obeyed me. Foreigners came cringing to me. Foreigners lost heart and came trembling out of their fortresses. The Lord lives and blessed be my rock.

And exalted be the God of my salvation. The God who gave me vengeance and subdued peoples under me. Who rescued me from my enemies. Yes you exalted me above those who rose against me.

You delivered me from the man of violence. And for this I praise you. Oh Lord among the nations. And sing to your name. Great salvation.

He brings to his king. And shows steadfast love to his anointed. To David and his offspring forever. Amen.

There's an old proverb I remember hearing so often when I was growing up. I'm sure you're familiar with it. It goes like this. It's a simple one. Beauty is only skin deep.

[ 6 : 14 ] Right? Beauty is only skin deep. And what's that all about? Young ones. It basically just means there's more to a person than his or her outward appearance.

There's more to a person than the way that they look. Great care should go into developing and discerning character. Rather than fixating on physical attractiveness.

And of course most of us want to have the best of both worlds. Don't we? We want beauty on the outside. And we want depth of character on the inside. Well if we were to apply that thought to the Psalms.

When we get to Psalm 18. We might say that this one is the whole package. It's got it all. As a literary piece.

It's one of the most beautiful text in all the scriptures. But it's depth of meaning is actually far richer than we could possibly ascertain. In a single setting.

[ 7 : 11 ] In a single setting. It's beauty is glorious. It's meaning even more glorious. As we dig in. Salvation is its theme.

And in just 50 verses it beautifully illustrates God's plan of redemption that spans the entire Bible. It's amazing in that way. It takes the picture of salvation that all of the scriptures teach.

And it gives it to us in just this relatively short section of text. And does so in an amazingly imaginative and illustrative way.

The particular focus is on how God saved his anointed king. And thereby saved his people. David is the author.

And he writes not only as an individual who has experienced God's kindness in salvation. But he writes as a king. Through whom the Lord rescues all of his people.

[ 8 : 19 ] Israel in particular for David. And throughout the song what we find he's doing is he's pointing the worshiper to Jesus. A greater king.

Who wins a greater salvation. And establishes and reigns over a greater kingdom. For all who will trust in him.

It's nearly verbatim to 2 Samuel 22. And in 2 Samuel 22 is where we can really begin to grasp the immediate context that is alluded to in the superscription of the psalm.

In 2 Samuel the narrator of the book he positions it strategically after decades of war with Saul and Absalom.

And many many wars with the Philistines. After all of that has come to an end for David. That's when the author puts in David's words. It was his personal song of salvation.

[ 9 : 20 ] Expressed in praise to God toward the end of his life. And eventually it was adapted for corporate worship.

And included here in the book of Psalms as Psalm 18. Which means that David's personal experience of salvation in 2 Samuel 22.

And all the things that he rehearses in his own life. In the context of his own life. Is not meant to be merely about him. It's about something bigger than him. And something greater than him.

It's something we can sing. It's a prayer we can pray. It's a praise we can give. Just as all Israel did. When Israel sang the hymn they praised God for saving his king.

Knowing that their salvation came through David's salvation. Do you see that? If the king is destroyed. The nation is destroyed.

[10:17] But if God raises up the king. If God strengthens the king. If God saves the king. The people are saved along with him. So Israel comes to Psalm 18.

They sing the hymn to the Lord as a hymn of praise to God. Because they see God has saved his king. Which means he has saved them as well. And that's how we need to understand the psalm. It's a song of worship and thanksgiving to God. For what he has done for us. In Jesus. In Jesus the greater David.

We can also claim. This song is a song of salvation for ourselves. Now I want you to have an idea of the structure here. Because it's a long one isn't it? It's 50 verses.

It's not quite easy to keep all the structure together. So I want to help you with that as we think about it. We talked about chiasms before. And this psalm has a chiasmic structure. I don't want to explain what all that is.

[11:13] I want you to think about the psalm as if we're going to climb a mountain together. We're at the base of the mountain right now. We're going to start our climb. And we're going to start with David's love. And as we start this climb up the mountain.

We're going to get to David's rescue. And then we're going to summit the mountain at the top. And we're going to find that righteousness is at the heart of this salvation. David's righteousness.

Along with God's righteousness. And then we're going to start making our way back down the mountain. It's going to mirror the first thing. As we go up we're going to find that mirrored on the other side. We're going to see David's conquest on the back end of the mountain.

And then we're going to settle in God's love. Right? So that's how I want you to think about it. We're going to climb. We're going to have to do some work to get there. And we're going to rest for a little while on the summit.

Thinking about righteousness. And righteousness for salvation. The righteousness of God and salvation. And then we're going to start to make our way back down. In thinking about the kingdom.

[12:13] The first thing I want you to see here. Is the king's love for his God. The king's love for his God. This is verses 1 to 3.

I love you O Lord my strength. The Lord's my rock. He's my fortress. 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. For he is worthy to be praised. And I am saved from my enemies.

The king's love for his God. David's opening declaration of love for the Lord. What it does is it sets the tone for the whole song. We find immediately what this song is about.

This is not a song of lament. This is not a dirge that we might put sad music with. Right? No. This is a song of praise.

[13:09] It's a song of excitement. It's an expression of love. It sets the tone for the whole thing. At the core of the psalm is pure affection. David loves his God.

And he wants the world to know why. As he looks back on his life. After the wars have come to an end. This is what he says. This is how he recalls his life and God's work in it.

And the first thing he leads off with is his affection for God. I love the Lord. I love him. And everything that follows in this opening line is an explanation of David's love.

He loves God because he has come to know God's love for him. And so it is with all who truly love the Lord.

John helps us with in 1 John 4. We love because he first loved us. David leads with his love. But he only does it upon reflection of God's love for him.

[14:14] But what does this love actually look like? We get a hint of that in verse 3. Love, though undeniably containing a vital emotional component, is described here in terms of action.

He says, I call upon the Lord. Showing his ongoing trust and devotion to God and his ways. What does that actually mean?

What does it mean to call on the Lord? Well, he helps us. He explains. To call upon the Lord is first an act of worship. For David says, The Lord alone is worthy to be praised.

He calls upon him in worship and in praise, recognizing the exclusivity of God. I call upon the Lord and him alone I call on.

I call on no one else. No other God is before me. Only him. Only Yahweh I call to. He will not worship God alongside other gods.

[ 15 : 17 ] He will not worship God alongside lesser gods. He will worship the Lord alone. But to call upon the Lord here, it's not only an act of worship. It's first an act of worship.

But then it's a cry of faith, isn't it? Trusting in the Lord alone for salvation from the enemy. Isn't that what he says in verse 3? I call upon the Lord.

He's worthy to be praised. And I am saved. I'm saved from my enemies. Which indicates that there's been many times in David's life where he's had to call on the Lord for salvation.

Help me God. Save me God. And he says, the Lord has always heard my prayer. It's no surprise then that later prophets and apostles would use this same exact phrase to describe repentance and faith unto salvation.

Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved, we're told. Romans 10.13. What is that an expression of?

[ 16 : 21 ] Faith and repentance demonstrating love for God. So we see the king's love. That's where we begin. And now we have to start our climb, don't we?

And next we see the king's rescue. The king's rescue. And we find this in verses 4 to 19. Now there's so many stories David could have told about God's deliverance.

But he doesn't do that here. And there's a reason. He speaks here in reflection on his life as a whole. The rescue that he writes about, it's bigger than any one moment.

All of the ways that God saved him were signs of a greater concept of salvation for David. God had set his covenant love on David.

That's what David has in mind at the end. And he's only looking at all these other battles as evidences of that love. He's speaking of something bigger here. So rather than saying, God delivered me one day in the valley of Elah against a giant named Goliath.

[ 17 : 27 ] He doesn't say that. Instead, he writes in poetic, imaginative, illustrative language. Showing that his understanding of God's deliverance was much bigger than one moment.

There's three movements to his rescue here. I just want to march through them. The first thing is deadly peril. Deadly peril. This is verses four and five.

The cords of death encompassed me. The torrents of destruction assailed me. The cords of Sheol entangled me. The snares of death confronted me.

It's dramatic, isn't it? Death here is personified as David's great enemy. It's pictured as a hunter who has caught the king in his snare.

He's wrapped him in his cords. He's pulling him under into the depths of Sheol, the realm of the dead, where there is no escape. That's the picture.

[ 18 : 33 ] Now what is this? It's not merely David's experience in Elah. It's not merely David's experience running from Saul.

It's not merely David's experience on the run from Absalom or any other battle. This is the human condition he speaks of. We're all caught in death's trap.

Powerless to free ourselves from its hold. Needing someone who is greater than death to deliver us. That's our only hope. And in the midst of this, David cries out to his God.

He knows only God can deliver. Of course, there's one notable exception to the human condition. Jesus was not hopelessly bound by death in the way that David was, in the way that you and I are. No, Jesus willingly subjects himself to death. Why? So that those of us who are bound by it might be freed.

[ 19 : 45 ] For three days, it appears as if Jesus was no different than the rest of us. Incapable of even saving himself, much less anyone else. But on the third day, it all changes.

God raises him. Showing that he is indeed greater than our enemy. Peter says it this way in Acts 2.24.

God raised him up, loosing the pangs of death. Pangs of death being David's reference here to the cords of death. The entanglement of Sheol.

Peter says God raised Jesus up, loosing the pangs of death because it was not possible for him to be bound by it. No, he subjects himself to it in order that he might free us from it.

Deadly peril. Then we find as we continue up the mountain here, we see divine action. Divine action. This is 6 to 15. Just look at verse 6.

[ 20 : 43 ] In my distress, I called upon the Lord. To my God, I cried for help. From his temple, he heard my voice. And my cry to him reached his ears.

Few words can bring the kind of hope and comfort that comes to us in this verse. In my distress, I called upon the Lord, entangled in death.

And my cry reached his ears. Do you remember the lady who had the issue of blood in the New Testament? And Jesus comes by.

And there's a mob of people around him. She's just doing everything that she can to get to him. If I can just get to him and just touch the hem of his garment, I'll be healed. Or the blind men who cried out to Jesus in the midst of the crowds and said, Son of David, help!

That's the picture David gives here. He cries to the Lord. And what was the experience of the woman with the issue of the blood? What was the experience of the men who were blind? Jesus heard them.

[ 21 : 49 ] And he turns to them. And he heals them. And David gives us the same picture here. He cries to the Lord. And God hears him. Wow.

All at once, we see the majesty of God on his heavenly throne, so far above his creatures, so much higher, so much holier, so much more wonderful than we are.

And then also we see his nearness in his loving care and concern for his people. He hears their cry. And he comes to their aid.

And what follows in verses 7 to 15 is the creator of the universe, acting in the fullness of his earth-shaking power to answer the cry of his king.

Pictured as God's cosmic power in action against the enemy that has provoked his divine wrath. He should cause us to tremble.

[ 22 : 56 ] Smoke pours out of his nostrils. He's like a dragon. He's surrounded by darkness. There is fear associated with his power and with his glory. He bends the heavens in order that he might come to where his king is to deliver him.

He rains forth hell stones and fire from his clouds. He thunders with his voice. It's terrifying. He's saying, this is our God.

There is no God like this. Verse 15 is of particular interest here. Then the channels of the sea were seen.

The foundations of the world were laid bare at your rebuke, O Lord, at the blast of the breath of your nostrils. David here intends to turn our minds back to Exodus 14, the parting of the Red Sea.

Another instance of the creator's cosmic power at work to save his people and to display his glory. And what is David doing?

[ 24 : 07 ] He understands himself to occupy a unique space in God's plan of redemption. He's essentially linking himself to Moses. He's saying what God did for them through Moses, he has done now for Israel through me.

And he won't be the last to make the connection. The gospels speak of a greater, ultimate exodus through Jesus Christ. All of it speaks of God's power at work to save his king in order that through his king he might save his people.

Divine action. We must take another step forward up the mountain. And we find here in verses 16 to 19, divine deliverance. There's deadly peril.

Now God comes in terrifying form. And what does he do? He delivers. Verse 16. He sent from on high. He took me. He drew me out of many waters.

He rescued me from my strong enemy, 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.

[ 25 : 20 ] He brought me out into a broad place. He rescued me because he delighted in me. Earlier, David describes his peril as the, quote, torrents of destruction.

Here, he pictures his deliverance as God plucking him out of those many waters. Literally saved from death.

We might say a resurrection has taken place here. David's weakness and inability to overcome the enemy on his own is highlighted here in these verses.

Any salvation must be divinely supplied. We're powerless on our own. And divine deliverance is exactly what David receives.

For David, as it is for us in Christ, this is pure grace. God delivers him. Why? Because he delights in him.

[ 26 : 27 ] He loves his king. What did David do to deserve that? Nothing. God has set his love on his king. And he redeems his king.

He saves his king out of his own love. Just as he saves us. Not because we're worthy of it. Not because there's something in us that is worthy of being loved, but because simply, he delights in us. He loves his people. Well, we're making our way to the summit here, and we find that at the top of this mountain, at the heart of the issue, is the matter of righteousness.

And we see it in verses 20 to 30, but there's two pieces of it here, isn't there? There's, in verses 20 to 24, we have first the righteousness of the king, which we need to understand appropriately, and we'll get to it in just a second.

But then there is the righteousness of God that comes in verses 25 to 30. Now, here's the thing I want you to understand up front. Both are absolutely essential to salvation.

[ 27 : 38 ] Both God's righteousness and the king's. God, in his holiness, must grant salvation righteously, which means that the king must be perfectly righteous to receive that salvation.

If there's any unrighteousness in the king, God's righteousness can only be revealed in judgment. He must judge sin.

And he's holy, he's the thrice holy God, as we read at the beginning of the service. Holy, holy, holy is he. And he pours out his wrath against what?

Against sin. Against those who are in rebellion against them. If there's any rebellion in the king, if there's any failure in the king, if there's any unrighteousness at all in the king, God must deal with him as he deals with all sinners.

He must judge him, else God himself is not righteous. Which confronts us with a serious problem here in this text, doesn't it? Because David claims blamelessness, and we know he did not possess righteousness in an absolute sense.

[ 28 : 50 ] That is not who David was. He wasn't a sinless person. How are we to understand this? How are we to think about salvation as a reward for righteousness in David's case?

There's a few things we have to get in order first. First, David, for him, righteousness, cleanness, blamelessness did not equal sinlessness.

He's not intending to communicate that on his own part here. And we know that because he was well aware of his own sin. He would have never made that kind of claim. What David means by righteousness in his own sake, what he means by righteousness is his devotion to God.

That he is a righteous one and that he belongs to God. That is his standing as God's king and God's son. And verse 21 clarifies that for us.

He says, I have not wickedly departed from my God. Meaning that even in moments of failure, I have been faithful to him. To follow God's rules and God's statutes as is explained in verse 22, includes following God's provisions for forgiveness of sins.

[ 30 : 12 ] David isn't saying here that he's sinless. He's saying that even in his sin, he has obeyed God. He has offered the offerings that he needed to offer. He has not abandoned God to follow some other God or to follow himself.

No, he has come to the Lord in contrition and humility and in that way, he has remained righteous. He has remained faithful to God. Now that's what David means when he's thinking of himself here. Like Abraham before him, David was counted righteous by faith. He was righteous because he believed God and was devoted to serving the Lord alone.

But is God righteous to save someone who's truly guilty? Yes, but only if one thing is true.

God can only be righteous to save David and to count him as righteous if someone who is truly innocent makes an atonement on David's behalf.

[ 31 : 24 ] Every time David followed the rules and statutes of the Lord, every time he took the one-year-old lamb without blemish and without spot to the tabernacle in order that he might be sacrificed as an atonement for David's own sin, every time he did it, it pointed to a greater atonement that his future son, the promised son that God had given in his covenant with David,

what he would do once and for all.

Jesus was the sinless one who fulfilled all righteousness in a way that David never could. David is counted righteous by faith in this psalm, but the greater David who this psalm pictures is truly righteous.

He's perfectly righteous. He's sinless. He's blameless in every regard. And that son of David, Jesus Christ, has laid down his life for us.

He himself is the Passover lamb. And on the cross, he gives himself for sinners who will believe. He demonstrated that faith, David did, by then obeying God's word and trusting in God's promise. He is righteous then by faith and his righteousness by faith is prefiguring a true righteousness, an absolute righteousness in the greater David, Jesus.

[ 33 : 02 ] Listen to how Paul writes about this in Romans 3. By the works of the law, no human being will be justified in God's sight. For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

That includes David. And they're justified not by their works of the law, but they're justified by God's grace as a gift.

How? Paul says, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation, a satisfaction, a payment by his blood to be received by faith, he says.

And this is what's interesting is just after this, he's explaining this wonderful gospel truth that we're all guilty, including David, except for Jesus. Jesus is the sinless son of God. And yet, Jesus is put forward as a payment for our sin.

And then Paul concludes it this way. It's amazing. He says this, this whole ordeal with Jesus, this was to show God's righteousness so that God might be just in that he deals with sin, 100% of it.

[ 34 : 25 ] No sin will go unpaid for. He deals with sin. And then Paul says, but he's also the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus. In other words, all who come to him in faith, who are counted righteous by faith, their sin is credited to the sinless son of God.

And in return, the sinless son of God, his righteousness is then credited to those who come to him in faith. That's why the king is righteous.

That's why David's righteous. It's not because he never sinned. His righteousness is anticipatory. It's anticipating by faith that God will fulfill his covenant, that his son will come and will deal with his sin once and for all.

But then we see God's righteousness in 25 to 30. With the merciful, you show yourself merciful. With the blameless, you show yourself blameless.

With the purified, you show yourself pure. With the crooked, you make yourself seem tortuous. For you save a humble people, but the haughty eyes you bring down.

[ 35 : 35 ] 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, it's perfect.

It's righteous. The word of the Lord always proves to be true. It never fails. He is a shield for all who do their best and try their hardest.

No. He is a shield for all who take refuge in him. Now that's what David's doing. He's taking refuge in God.

And God is counting that faith as righteousness in anticipation of what Christ will do on David's behalf. This is God's righteous response toward those who fit the category of righteousness in verses 20 to 24.

A righteousness that is won ultimately by Jesus, but credited to those who believe and serve the Lord. These statements, they sound a lot like the Beatitudes in Jesus' sermon on the mount, don't they?

[ 36 : 45 ] The righteous are merciful because they know they need mercy. They're blameless because they love God's law and seek to live faithfully to it.

They are purified through God's atoning provisions in worship and his standards for worship. They humble themselves before God in repentance and faith. And he responds in perfect mercy.

But to the prideful who set themselves against God, the Lord displays his righteous anger and his judgment.

To them, they see God to only be torturous. God's point is that God is perfectly righteous to save the faithful and judge the wicked.

And his conclusion after thinking this through is expressed in the praise of verse 30. This God, he's perfect. Everything he does is perfect. It's right. His word is true and he is indeed a shield for all who

take refuge in him by faith.

[ 37 : 54 ] All right, we've spent a lot of time on the summit here. We've got this vast view of righteousness. The righteousness of the king, not absolute in David, but prefiguring the absolute righteousness in the greater David, in Jesus.

We have the righteousness of God who because Jesus has paid for our sins will not judge us again according to them. Amazing, right? We're going to start making our way down the mountain, right? We're going to be here all day.

Next step, as we make our way down, this is the king's conquest. It's the king's conquest. Now this mirrors the king's rescue earlier in the psalm and I'll make mention of that as we go.

We find this in verses 31 to 38 altogether. And just as there's three movements to his rescue, we find that there's three movements here to the conquest.

The king, after having been delivered from all his enemies, is empowered by God now to turn around and conquer them. God has saved his king and now he gives him a kingdom.

[ 39 : 01 ] Again, prefiguring the work of Jesus, the true savior and king. Now here's the three movements. The first one is this. We see divine strength or divine strengthening or divine empowerment.

31 to 36, for who is God but the Lord? Who is a rock except our God? The God who equipped me with strength and made my way blameless.

And he goes on to describe all the ways that God has done that. In verses 16 to 19, which is the part that mirrors this section, David is seen as weak, unable to stand against the might of the strong enemy in need of divine rescue.

Here, he is seen with strength the strength of God. God equips him to go on the offensive now against those enemies. His way is secure.

His hands are strong. His weapons effective. And the salvation of God shields him. The king cannot be defeated now because he possesses the very power of God.

[ 40 : 10 ] Paul says it this way in reference to Jesus in Romans 6. We know that Christ being raised from the dead rescued from death, being raised from the dead will never die again.

Death no longer has dominion over him. For the death he died, he died to sin once and for all. But the life he lives, he lives to God.

Divine strength. Then we get to the second movement. Divine judgment now. Divine judgment. Now it's not hard to see how this mirrors the earlier section. What is it that we see following David's cry for help?

We see the holiness of God, the terror of God coming against David's enemy to rescue him, don't we? Now we see the flip side of that. We see the judgment of God, that terror being applied through the king to conquer his enemies.

What is it that God strengthens his king to do? Carry out his divine wrath against the wicked who forsake his way. Look at it, verse 37.

[ 41 : 17 ] I pursued my enemies. I overtook them. I did not turn back till they were consumed. Every last one defeated.

And then it gets graphic, doesn't it? You boys will like this. I thrust them through so that they were not able to rise. They fell under my feet. There's no hope for them.

For you equipped me with strength for the battle. You made those who rise against me sink under me. You made my enemies turn their backs to me and those who hated me I destroyed.

He says. He is God's instrument of judgment. The same cosmic power that delivered the king is now at work against the enemies to destroy them.

David's earlier allusion to Moses and the parting of the Red Sea is now an allusion to Joshua and the conquest of Canaan. All pointing forward to a final judgment when Jesus the true king will conquer and destroy all who remain impenitent and align themselves with the wicked one by continuing in their rebellion against God.

[ 42 : 37 ] God but what are we to do with verses 41 and 42 they cried for help but there was no one to save them they cried to the Lord he did not answer them so I beat them fine as dust before the wind I cast them out like the mire of the streets what are we to do with this what are we to do with the fact that these people do finally cry to God for salvation in the end but they don't receive it does that not contradict the fundamental premise of these Psalms that God is a refuge for all who seek him for it but is that what they're doing are they turning to God Christopher Ash quoting John Calvin

said it this way these are they who want God to rescue them but are not willing to forsake their wickedness this verse reminds us that whosoever look for release out of their trouble and that not through

Christ shall have no release at all what is this this is a cry for rescue from a circumstance without a heart of repentance and faith toward God that's what this is it's a sober reminder that now is the day of salvation it's God's call to seek the Lord while he may be found because there will come a day where you will find no refuge in him it's the warning that today if you hear his voice do not harden your heart in this psalm you can either be saved by faith in the king or you can be conquered by the judgment of the king and if you wait until the judgment comes it will be too late but now is the time now is the accepted time writes

Paul to the Corinthians now is the day of salvation and God will save all who come to him in repentance and faith all who call on the name of the Lord as David did in verse 3 all who decide exclusively I will worship him alone I will follow him alone all that cry out to him and trust that his king king Jesus truly is the savior and the king I will trust in him for salvation everybody who does that now gets saved that's the wonderful truth of the word but everyone who waits everyone who delays till the day of judgment will find no salvation at all you will cry to him and he will not answer just as those who mocked and ridiculed Noah all the years that he built the boat and then clamor to get in for safety after God had shut the door so will it be in the judgment all who mock and rebel and turn from him now on that day they will cry out for mercy and there will be no mercy for them to find it will only be judgment and who will be the instrument of the judgment in this case

David is the instrument of judgment the king is and he is prefiguring! God's instrument of judgment he will judge the world but then we have the third movement in the conquest we have decisive victory decisive victory this is 43 to 48 you delivered me from strife with the people in other words he means you gave me victory you made me the head of the nations and ruled the world people whom I had not known served me his kingdom is vast as soon as they heard of me they obeyed me foreigners came cringing to me foreigners lost heart lost heart in their own efforts that is in order that they might come to the king for mercy and they came trembling out of their fortresses their fortresses built on sand and they come to the rock whom

David praises in verse 46 again the Lord lives and blessed be my rock exalted be the God of my salvation the God who gave me vengeance and subdued peoples under me who rescued me from my enemies yes you exalted me above those who rose against me you delivered me from the man of violence this is the king speaking in contrast to his earlier peril this is mirroring verses 4 and 5 David is given a decisive victory and the kingdom language here is it's unmistakably messianic David's kingdom did not look the way that he's describing here yeah he was a great king and there were a lot of people in subjection to him he did not rule the world in the way that this king rules the world and will rule the world people from every nation upon hearing of the salvation and might of God's king will come to serve him with joy and exalt his name forever for God has given him a name that is above every name so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow in heaven and on earth and under the earth and every tongue confess that

[ 48 : 35 ] Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father that's what David is pointing us to here this gospel of salvation through God's king it spreads through the world making a spiritual and eschatological kingdom that is unrivaled and will last for eternity and he does this for his king because he delights in his king and that gets us to the very last part we've made our way back down the mountain we're down at the base again except it changes now it's not a description of the king's love for his God now in verses 49 and 50 it's a description of God's love for his king for this I will praise you oh lord among the nations and sing to your name great salvation he brings to his king and show steadfast love to his anointed to David and to his offspring forever now that language is very important to this text

David is resting on the covenant he's trusting in what God will do whereas we look back and we trust in what God has done faith is at the heart no matter what and it's all motivated and supplied by God's love love is what bookends the story of salvation for David for Jesus for you and me love and David views his life story as a glorious display of God's covenant love but for David this covenant love will be displayed supremely in his offspring the promised son Jesus the anointed Messiah king who fulfilled the psalm truly and completely and again

John the apostle helps us here 1 John 4 9 and 10 in this the love of God was made manifest among us the love of God is displayed to us that God sent his only son into the world so that we might live

through him in this is love not that we have loved God but that he loved us and showed it by sending his son to be the propitiation for our sins that's the love that David sees which takes us back to verse 1 so that we might understand the love that David expresses why would we gather Sunday by Sunday in an elementary school gym and do what we're doing right now if your answer to that is well

I'm trying to live here on the summit of righteousness and I know that if I just get it right if I get it right God will reward me you've missed it you'll never get it right enough no why do we come why do we do this because like David we've seen the love of God in the person of Christ and because we've seen the love of God in the person of Christ what else would we do except gather with others who have seen his love and say I love the Lord my strength I call upon him and I'm saved from my enemies because he has saved the king he has saved me what does that mean for us what does Psalm 18 mean for us that's it isn't it I told you at the beginning Israel seeing Psalm 18 they're not putting themselves in the place of the king in the psalm we gotta be careful about that here you are not

David Jesus is David Israel sings this Psalm about David knowing that because God has done this work through David they received the benefit of salvation we do the same thing we don't try to put ourselves in David's place no we step back and we see what God has done through Jesus knowing that because he's done it we are saved and we are safe and praise God