

THE LORD'S POWER AND PROTECTION

In our two previous articles, we have looked at the beginning verses of Psalm 18. My hope for these articles is that you will not just read them (for they are so limited and poor compared to the fullness and richness of the holy scriptures themselves), but that they may simply provide a basic framework to help us begin to construct our own thoughtful understanding of these ancient songs and poems.

Along with this, I hope that you are spending as much time as possible with the psalms - reading and re-reading and meditating upon them. As with really good modern poetry, the simple message of the arranged words are just the beginning, the surface. Only after time, thoughtful consideration, intellectual, and even emotional digging, do we begin to peel away the layers and see the deeper meanings underlying the mere words.

Now, continuing on into Psalm 18, I would like to focus on verses 6-19. There is not enough space here to put the text so please refer back to the first two paragraphs. In this section, we see the LORD's power and protection. Throughout history, I imagine, people have wondered if anyone hears their cries of distress. "Is there anybody listening," has been a question humans have asked at various times and in many different cultures. Then, one might ponder, if anyone hears, what can they do about it?

The basic framework (aka outline) that I see in this section is: (6) the LORD does hear and (7-19) when he takes action, there is nothing or no one that can compare to him. This second subsection describes in vivid poetic imagery that: (7-9) if the earth itself trembles, how do the enemies of God stand a chance; (10-15) the LORD is more swift and powerful than any army or nation, and nothing can withstand him; and (16-19) there will be things that are too strong for me to deal with on my own, and there will be enemies that I cannot overcome without help, but God is able to deliver me when I turn to him.

What are some take-aways? We should pray all the time and not just when we are in trouble, but on the flip side of that, we should pray especially when we are distressed. God will hear our cry. We should remember that nothing in the world can stop God's will from being accomplished. He delights in his faithful children.

So I should ask myself, do I delight in him? Have I put my trust in him? Does he have my undivided allegiance? Why would I put any hope in anyone or anything other than the Almighty?

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