

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Psalms: Living By Faith In God

XVIII. Psalm 18: Glorifying God For His Rescues

C. Handling A Sense Of Powerlessness In Today's World (Psalm 18:32-50)

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

Contrary to good mental health, it is easy for one to feel powerlessly vulnerable to harm in today's world:

(1) We face it on the international scene: "The Russian siege of Mariupol is shocking not because it is unprecedented, but because it is so traditional . . . Human nature means remorseless and power-hungry men always will be with us, no matter how advanced we believe we have become." (Rich Lowry, "The fragility of world order," Republican-American, March 23, 2022, p. 8A)

(2) We face it in the mainstream media: "The New York Times has grudgingly acknowledged the legitimacy of documents found on Hunter Biden's abandoned laptop indicating he leveraged his status as the son of a major politician to enrich himself with foreign money. The New York Post broke the story in October 2020 . . . but an alliance . . . of social-media corporations, journalists and entrenched bureaucrats ensured the story was buried or otherwise derided as fake news in the run-up to the 2020 election." (Laptop story block expires," Ibid., March 29, 2022, p. 8A) Stunningly, "more than 50 former intelligence officials signed a letter in 2020 accusing the Post of spreading Russian disinformation – an accusation echoed by CNN commentator Jen Psaki, now President Biden's press secretary – and Twitter suspended the Post's account while demanding the newspaper remove its tweet linking to the story . . . This ordeal is illustrative of the media's obvious double standards." (Ibid.)

(3) We face it in our state: " . . . (P)olitics led Gov. Ned Lamont to grant Connecticut's state-employee unions an overly sweet compensation deal . . . [that] provides for rises – wage and step increases – and bonuses amid fiscal uncertainty. This arrangement defies common sense." ("Sweet deal for state workers," Ibid., March 26, 2022, p. 8A)

As a result, "Connecticut is . . . the most indebted state in the United States on a per-capita basis, with each resident's share" being "\$62,500." (Chris Powell, "State debt grows to buy elections," Ibid., March 23, 2022, p. 9A)

(4) We face it in many homes in our state: "(A) third or more of the state's children . . . grow up without fathers in their homes." (Chris Powell, "Something for Lamont, DCF to celebrate," Ibid., March 25, 2022, p. 6A)

(5) We face it in our public schools: "There has been tremendous dismay with educational content – from Critical Race Theory to sex education to what books are occupying school library shelves. There has been frustration with poor academic results. And there has been exasperation with masking and quarantining policies that have kept healthy kids out of school for weeks, demoralized staff and caused immeasurable harm to students." (Cynthia M. Allen, "Scholastic silver linings," Ibid., March 23, 2022, p. 8A)

Need: *So, we ask, "How can we handle a sense of powerless vulnerability to harm that we face in today's world?!"*

- I. Since David became God's servant when God had him anointed to be Israel's king (1 Samuel 16:1, 13), and a servant was responsible to fight to protect or further his master's interests, David's vulnerability to failure was countered by the fact that Almighty God as his Master protected David when he served his Master's interests. (Introductory notes to Psalm 18; Zond. Pict. Ency. of the Bib., Vol. Five, p. 359)**
- II. To be sure he gained God's protection in fighting to protect or further God's interests, David heeded Deuteronomy 17:18-20 and read from Scripture each day, what led him consistently to obey the Lord, resulting in God's consistent protection. (Psalm 18:22-24 as presented in the last sermon in this series)**
- III. God's protection partly came in His giving David the ability and power to excel in combat, Psa. 18:32-45:**
 - A. David testified that God had clothed him with strength and made his way blameless for blessing, Psalm 18:32.
 - B. God had given David great skill and power in the use of his feet, ankles, and hands in combat with the result that God's great condescension to David's level to help him had made him great before others, Psalm 18:33-36.
 - C. Consequently, David overcame his enemies in battle, he put them to flight, and he destroyed them while David was conversely highly elevated before the nations, Psalm 18:37-43. Even foreigners cringed before David and came trembling out of their strongholds looking for mercy from him, Psalm 18:44-45 NIV.
- IV. In the end, David praised the Lord as his "Look-out Rock" (*sur*, B. D. B., A Heb. and Eng. Lex. of the O. T., p. 849), His Creator God (*Elohim*) and Savior, Psalm 18:46.**
- V. For God's many, consistent, great deliverances of David from defeat before his enemies (Psalm 18:47-48), David claimed he would praise the Lord among the nations as God's anointed king, Psalm 18:48-50.**

Lesson: Due to the Master-servant relationship between God and David begun at God's anointing David to be Israel's king, when David daily exposed himself to Scripture, he consistently obeyed God so that the Lord protected David in his battles for God's interests and gave him great ability and power to achieve great exploits in combat.

Application: (1) May we trust in Christ Who died as our Atoning Sacrifice for sin that we might receive God's gift of eternal life, John 3:16; 1 Corinthians 15:1-11. (2) Since every believer in Christ at salvation becomes God's servant who is responsible to use his God-given spiritual enabling to serve the Lord, if the believer daily exposes himself to Scripture resulting in consistent obedience to the Lord, God will not only give him success in the use of his spiritual gift for service but provide ability and power to achieve great things in his calling from the Lord.

Conclusion: (To illustrate the message . . .)

We apply this message to issues noted in our sermon introduction (as follows):

(1) First, we must realize that (a) the supernatural gifting we each received from God to serve Him does **NOT** equip us to do **all** that needs to be done to solve **all** the **world's** problems! Indeed, Romans 12:3-8 NIV calls us not to think of ourselves more highly than we ought, but to think with "sober judgment" so as to use our gift in the local realm God assigns us. As we do this, God equips us to achieve great exploits! (b) To discern what gift we have, we list the gifts **for today** as follows: evangelist, [shepherd]-teacher, [shepherd], teacher (all teacher gifts have the word of wisdom or the word of knowledge), faith, leadership, administration, service, encouragement, giving, showing mercy, helps, discernment of spirits. (Romans 12:6-8; 1 Corinthians 12:8-10, 28-30; Ephesians 4:11; 1 Peter 5:2)

(2) Second, since **my** spiritual gift is that of [shepherd]-teacher (with the word of knowledge), I must use it to address each issue of concern in our sermon introduction to clarify how God wants us to respond to each issue:

(a) On Vladimir Putin's power-hungry, brutal invasion of Ukraine, in the current "Mini-Great Tribulation" predicted in Revelation 3:21 with 7:17, we should expect such evil to exist. We need to trust the God of "hosts" or "armies" (*seba'ot*, Ibid., B. D. B., p. 838-839) to be sovereign over what occurs and keep focused on our callings.

(b) On the biased mainstream media, we have often noted that 2 Timothy 3:13 NIV warned that in the latter days of Church History, "evil men and impostors" would go from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived. Paul's antidote for us is to (i) continue in what we have learned and become convinced was true from godly teachers and to (ii) heed Scripture for the equipping we need to perform every good work until the Lord returns (2 Timothy 3:14-17). (iii) To appreciate the power of Scripture, we note that 2 Timothy 3:16 KJV claims that all Scripture is "given by inspiration of God," a better translation being that it is "God-breathed" (*theopneustos*), a verbal adjective formed by the *-tos* ending that carries the force of the perfect passive participle. (Bruce M. Metzger, *Lexical Aids for Students of N. T. Grk.*, 2nd ed., 1969, p. 44) The perfect passive participle signals an entity was acted upon in the past with the result that it carries the force of that action on into the infinite future. Thus, all Scripture bears the force of Almighty God's authority as if He were still speaking it when one reads it today! We must thus not rely on the mainstream media that has proven itself to be biased and often presenting what is false but rely on God's powerful Scripture truth.

(c) On the state's finances, since those in positions of influence regarding the state's finances are notoriously irresponsible and/or incompetent, for our own protection, we must care for our own welfare at the individual family level. Applying the principle of Proverbs 24:30-34, we should learn from the problems created by mismanagement by state officials on how to do the opposite of that they wrongly do for our own benefit at our local family level.

(d) On fatherless children in Connecticut, a major driver of social problems not only in our state, but also nationwide, we are humanly unable personally to address every fatherless child case in the state or the nation! However, God **does** hold us responsible to address the need of our **neighbor**, and Jesus taught us that our neighbor is anyone we personally encounter whom we can help, the lesson of the Luke 10:29-37 Parable of the Good Samaritan.

(e) On the troubled state of public schools, (i) Christian parents are the ones responsible before the Lord to rear their children, Ephesians 6:1-4. We parents should watch over all that our children are being taught in the public school, and if there need to be corrections, we should correct them for our children. If the school lacks in teaching basic skills like reading, writing, math, etc. due to ideological influences in administrators, we parents should take up the slack and educate our children. (ii) As for demoralizations of teachers and students by the pandemic shutdowns, Biblical discipling is the answer! Adults and children both need to be born again by faith in Christ and then to rely on the indwelling Holy Spirit of God and heed Scripture for good mental health! (Galatians 5:16-23 with Psalm 1:1-6)

May we trust in Christ Who died as our Atoning Sacrifice for sin that we might receive God's gift of eternal life. May we then focus on using the supernatural gift for spiritual service God gave us at salvation to serve our Master and Lord, seeing Him equip us to achieve exploits that greatly impact others for God's glory.