

Psalms 18-11-29a

This is Thursday, the 29th of November, 2018. We continue our study in the book of Psalms. And when I say continue, we're going to actually be discontinuous for the first time, because we are moving from Psalm 16 to Psalm 18.

I want to do Psalm 18 for reasons that are scrutable only to myself. And so we're going to skip Psalm 17, not that it isn't a wonderful psalm, but I don't have ambitions of covering all 150. So we are going to begin to look at psalms still in order, but ones that provide something unique and pertinent for us.

This psalm and the psalm that follows are very pertinent. This is somewhat of a lengthy psalm. It has some historical background as we will see, and it is a fitting one in anticipation of David's greater son, the Messiah, as many of these psalms are.

So we will be picking up tonight in Psalm 18. Let's take a moment as we begin to ask God's blessing on our fellowship and on our study, and we will get started. Father, we're always encouraged and comforted by Your grace and the watch care that You exercise over us, the provision that You make, the mercy and the forgiveness that You extend to us.

We are so often fallible and fall short, but You restore us, You renew us, You give us more grace. We're grateful for the Lord Jesus who has entered us into this place of privilege and opportunity. We thank You for His example, His faithfulness, His ongoing mission of intercession and mediation on our behalf.

We look forward to the day when You send Him to come and get us, and we hope to be ready. We hope that our study tonight and the application that we make of it in the days ahead will be part of that preparation, so that our lives will reflect the glory of the Lord Jesus and will be pleasing in Your sight. We ask that Your Holy Spirit will minister this portion of Your Word to each heart, and may each of us find in it something useful and meaningful, motivating and challenging, so that we can grow in grace and knowledge of the Savior and redeem the time that remains to us in this life.

We pray these things in Jesus' name, Amen. Well, Psalm 18 is one of those that is particularly interesting because this isn't the only place we have it. It occurs in another place in the Scripture, and so we've got some context, and we've got a slightly different version of it, and we'll need to figure out why are some lines different.

We saw this in our previous Psalm. This is one of the points of continuity, Psalm 16, as it's quoted in the New Testament. You notice that there were a few changes, and we addressed those.

The principle being, and this comes immediately to mind if you're ever involved in translation of the Word of God into other languages than ours, and ours itself for that matter, but to what

extent is a translation the Word of God? Is it only the Word of God if you've got the Hebrew? Is it only the Word of God if the New Testament Greek is before your eyes? If you have translated it, you have subtly changed it. There's not an exact equivalence between words. The New Testament versions of Psalm 16 that we read, or those portions of that Psalm, are twice removed because it is a Greek rendition of the Hebrew that has then been rendered into English for us, so it's a double hop.

How many hops can the verses of Scripture make before they are no longer Scripture? Well, this gets into your beliefs about verbal plenary inspiration and infallibility and inerrancy and so on, but in a nutshell, I'll tell you my view. The Word of God is not the words on the page. The words on the page are the vessels that convey the Word of God.

The Word of God is living and powerful, kind of like you are living and powerful. Now, you can get in my F-250 Ford pickup and go to town, or in days past you could have gotten into my little 1977 Volkswagen bus and gone to town. Either way, you get to town.

The conveyance may be substantially different, but as long as you end up in town, that's what counts. I've actually ridden a bicycle from here to town and beyond with my brother. We rode there and back, and that's a longer way to get there, but the end result is the same.

The Word of God, the meaning, the principles, the promises, the doctrines, the truths transcend the words that convey them. As long as the words do not distort them or obscure them or otherwise consciously monkey with what God is saying, which does happen, the essence is going to survive. God the Holy Spirit is going to lead us to the truth.

So, any reasonably accurate rendition, which Bible should you use? Are some of them demon-inspired and some of them spirit-inspired? Any reasonably good effort can be helpful. We want to be cautious. If you hear a discordant note, if you begin to get ideas from a text that seem counter to other things that we've learned in Scripture, maybe time to check another translation.

But think about people in China. I'm dealing with Chinese translations right now, and the Chinese translations come from the English, which in turn come from the Latin, which comes from the Greek, which comes from the Hebrew. In many cases, there are several hops, but the Chinese is good.

If it tells them that God loved the world and sent His Son so that whoever believes in Him doesn't perish but has everlasting life, how do you say everlasting in Chinese? I don't know, but I think they've got a pretty good idea of things that last a long time. They're probably the most ancient, continuous civilization on the planet at this point. So, we don't get too wrapped around the axle if we find, even within Scripture itself, two different versions of a story.

We've seen two and even three when we were doing Kings and Prophets, and we saw a record in Kings, a record in Chronicles, and another one over in Isaiah. We're not shocked. We're not

bumfoozled.

We don't begin to question inspiration or infallibility when we find that God has allowed variations. In some cases, they illuminate. In some cases, they help us understand that more than one thing is being conveyed with a single element here, a poem or a story or a truth from God.

So, we look at these as opportunities, not as something alarming or dismaying. We have that here. Let's just look at the first 19 verses.

This is a lengthy psalm. This thing's got 50 verses. We're just going to look at about 40% of it right now.

I hope I did that math right in my head. Anyway, we'll look at the first 19 verses here. I will love you, O Lord, my strength.

The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer. See, already aren't you asking yourself a question? What's the difference in a rock and a fortress? Why both? My God, my strength in whom I will trust, my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold. We had a fortress up above.

We've got a stronghold now. I will call upon the Lord who is worthy to be praised. So shall I be saved from my enemies.

The pangs of death surrounded me and the floods of ungodliness made me afraid. The sorrows of Sheol surrounded me. The snares of death confronted me.

In my distress, I called upon the Lord and cried out to my God. He heard my voice from his temple and my cry came before him, even to his ears. Then the earth shook and trembled.

The foundations of the hills also quaked and were shaken because he was angry. Smoke went up from his nostrils and devouring fire from his mouth. Coals were kindled by it.

He bowed the heavens also and came down with darkness under his feet. And he rode upon a cherub and flew. He flew upon the wings of the wind.

He made darkness his secret place. His canopy around him was dark waters and thick clouds of the skies. From the brightness before him, his thick clouds passed with hailstones and coals of fire." That's three mentions of coals of fire there, right? The Lord thundered from heaven and the Most High uttered his voice, hailstones and coals of fire.

He sent out his arrows and scattered the foe, lightnings in abundance, and he vanquished them. Then the channels of the sea were seen. The foundations of the world were uncovered at your rebuke, O Lord, at the blast of the breath of your nostrils.

He sent from above. He took me. He drew me out of many waters.

He delivered me from my strong enemy, from those who hated me, for they were too strong for me. They confronted me in the day of my calamity, but the Lord was my support. He also brought me out into a broad place.

He delivered me because he delighted in me. Well, this obviously refers to events in the life of David, but there is a manifest transcendent element. There's a lot of metaphor.

I can't think of a narrative passage in Samuel where an earthquake delivered David or the Lord appeared as a theophany with lightning and hailstorms and thunder and clouds and brightness and the foundations of the sea being revealed. So what exactly is he talking about here? Is this elliptical? Is it hyperbolic? Is it exaggeration? Is it just metaphor for the sake of metaphor? What is going on here? And is there a single event that he is referring to? Is it a summary of maybe his lifetime of challenge and warfare and facing enemies and risking death? It's one thing to think about him standing before Goliath, but this language seems to speak of higher and greater and grander things, doesn't it? So we're going to be interested to find out what this poetic expression means, what it meant to David, what it meant to Israel when he delivered it to them, and what it means to us. Why is it in our Bible? Well, for some context, as I say, this is not the only place that it occurs.

I don't know if you have a text note here in your Bible or not, but you can turn to 1 Samuel chapter 22. 1 Samuel. Once you've done that, you can go to 2 Samuel chapter 22.

Just so you know how many chapters are in each one. 2 Samuel chapter 22. 2 Sam 22. If you look at chapter 21, just the section headings there in your Bible, you see that there has been a summary of David's reign.

There's the rebellion of Sheba in chapter 20. There is a listing of David's government officers at the end of that chapter. Chapter 21, David avenges the Gibeonites.

Saul's sons are hanged on the wall. Philistine giants are destroyed in the latter part of chapter 21. Ishbi-Banab is there.

And you've got Sapph, one of the sons of the giant. And you've got that somewhat cryptic passage in verse 19, talking about the brother of Goliath, the Gittite. And then you've got old Sixfinger in verse 20.

And these are the other giants that coexisted in the Philistine empire along with Goliath. This is some years later, and these guys are still roaming around, and so they are slain. These four, verse 22, were born to the giant in Gath, and fell by the hand of David and by the hand of his servants.

Now chapter 22. Then David spoke to the Lord the words of this song. Now when it says, this is our old friend, the conjunction *wow*, it can mean *and*, then, it just connects.

It doesn't necessarily mean that it is at this time. It could just be *and*. And David spoke to the

Lord the words of this song, on the day when the Lord had delivered him from the hand of all his enemies and from the hand of Saul.

You get the idea that David may have composed this when he was finally free of the persecution of Saul and those of Saul's household, and has brought it back and is singing it again, presenting it again later in his reign when God has given him rest from all of his enemies. And so this is a pertinent song when God has granted victory and surcease from battle strife. And if you compare this first verse of chapter 22 to the superscription in Psalm 18, you find that it is virtually identical.

If you leave off to the chief musician, you have this song, on the day the Lord delivered him from the hand of all his enemies and from the hand of Saul. And here is what he says in 2 Samuel 22. If you scan down through that, you can see, the Lord is my rock, my fortress, my deliverer, the God of my strength in whom I will trust, my shield, the horn of my salvation, my stronghold and refuge, my Savior, you save me from violence.

And if you notice that phrase and compare back and forth, my Savior who saves me from violence in verse 3, it doesn't have a parallel in Psalm 18. So that's one of the slight variations. But if you scan down through 22 there, the first 20 verses, you will see that it matches the 19 that we just read pretty closely.

The Lord thundering from heaven, lightning bolts vanquishing the channels of the sea, the foundations of the world uncovered at the rebuke of the Lord and the blast of his nostrils in verse 16. He drew me out of many waters in verse 17, delivered me from my strong enemy, those who hated me, who were too strong for me in verse 18. They confronted me in the day of my calamity, but the Lord was my support.

He brought me out, verse 20, into a broad place. He delivered me because he delighted in me. And the rest of this is going to track very closely with what we have.

So we've got two copies of the same song. Now, what is the purpose of repetition? It's emphasis, right? If you repeat something, it's important. If Linda Ronset says, you're no good, I'm going to say it again, you're no good.

She really means it. It's emphatic. And she says it over and over again.

The refrain of that song, you're no good, you're no good, you're no good. Emphasis, repetition. Anytime we have something repeated in scripture, two different takes, it's important.

Now, why it is important will become clear as we go through the content. It is a lengthy psalm, so one of the first things we can do is to notice that it has a structure. And this is not unique to me.

I have this wonderful commentary here. And by the way, this was the only commentary to point out the structure in a meaningful way. So let me give you the chiastic structure that the

Expositors Bible Commentary points out.

This is going to be five parts to get to the center. So my suggestion is do what I did and just take a writing utensil and in the margin of your Bible, just put a little bracket for each of these sections, and you can just label them. So the first bracket is going to be verses one through three.

So Psalm 18, one through three, just put a little bracket out beside that and label that A. And this is Yahweh. This is Yahweh, the Rock of Israel. This is the Lord, the Tetragrammaton.

Y-H-W-H, Yahweh, the Rock of Israel. The second section is verses four through six. So another little bracket there.

You can label that B, verses four through six. And that is simply David detailing his affliction. Affliction.

The third section is a bit longer. This is verses seven through fifteen. And seven through fifteen is, in my words, God arises to help.

God arises to help. God is going to respond. God is going to do something.

This is seven through fifteen. God arises to help. The fourth section is verses sixteen through nineteen.

You've got to kind of divide this thing up into pieces. Divide and conquer, since it's so long. So verses sixteen through nineteen.

This is D. This is the Lord's deliverance. D is deliverance. The Lord's deliverance.

And finally, we're going to come to the center. I always like to find the center of a chiasm. The center of this Psalm is verses twenty through twenty-nine.

And so you can label that E or the center, or X, whatever you want. X marks the spot there. That is the center.

This is what counts. God is faithful to the faithful. God's faithfulness to the faithful.

Verses twenty through twenty-nine. Now, having found the center, you know how a chiasm works. We're going to work our way back out.

And so this next bracket is going to correspond to D. It's going to be D prime. D with a little apostrophe after it. This is verses thirty through thirty-six.

This is God's perfections. Corresponds to God's deliverance. The divine perfections.

Verses thirty through thirty-six. That's D prime. Hang with me.

Just three more sections to go here. The next one is verses thirty-seven through forty-two. Thirty-seven through forty-two.

And this is victory. The king's victory over his enemies. Thirty-seven through forty-two.

That's C prime. The Lord came to help. In section C. Now the king is victorious over his enemies.

In C prime. Thirty-seven through forty-two. Second to the last section here is verses forty-three to forty-five.

This is going to be your B prime. Your B apostrophe here. Glorious deliverance.

You start out in section B with affliction. You end up with deliverance from affliction in B prime. Forty-three to forty-five.

Final section, A prime, is verses forty-six through fifty. And it's the same as the beginning. The Lord, the Rock of Israel.

Yahweh, the Rock of Israel. Okay? So you've got four introductory sections, four outgoing sections, and right in the middle you have God's faithfulness to those who are faithful. God is faithful to the faithful.

He meets our faith with His faithfulness. Okay. You can see now why I read the first nineteen verses, because that's our first four sections.

That's our road in, getting to the center, the big picture here, right? So what we're going to be looking for here, we don't want to get lost in seven times seven plus one verses here. So we're going to concentrate on these larger sections. I'm not going to do a whole lot of translation, a whole lot of vocabulary.

We're looking for the ideas, right? We introduced our class tonight talking about the fact that it's the ideas that count. The words are helpful in making sure we are getting at the real ideas. But it is what David says that counts.

And I will tell you at the outset that we've looked at it being duplicated and that that signifies importance. But when you're in the Psalms and you find something important, I will offer you this as, you know, Sam's rule number three for interpreting the Psalms. It will be messianic.

It will have import for the Lord Jesus. This will be something I think the Lord Jesus will have referred back to. When he finds this song from his great-grandfather repeated twice in scripture, he is going to take that as meaningful in his humanity, something God the Father wants him to know, something that is going to give him strength for his task.

Now think about some of that language. Think about the earthquake language. Think about the darkness language.

Think about Sheol and the threat of death and being overwhelmed and needing God's deliverance. Do you not think that this would resonate with the Lord Jesus beyond the moment for David? You can't help but see the application for the Lord Jesus himself. He is our example.

What he relied on in meeting his challenges and passing his tests and being faithful and obedient to the Father is what you and I are supposed to rely on. If he can do it with the greatest test that any human being has ever faced, we ought to be able to take those same resources and meet our challenges, right? So what are these resources? What is it that David gives to his greater son, the Lord Jesus? Ten centuries in the future, David is giving a gift to the Lord Jesus, a gift of strength, a gift of encouragement, a gift of truth from God's Word, and presciently and prophetically he is transmitting this wonderful truth that the Lord Jesus is going to cycle through his soul as he undergoes the arrest and the trial and the imprisonment and the beatings and the abuse and ultimately the crucifixion and most ultimately bearing the on the cross for us. This is part of what sustains him.

So how does it work? Well, let's begin at the beginning here. David starts out in, we'll go back and look at it in Psalm 18. I will love you, O Lord, my strength.

This is the only place in the Old Testament where this form of this word is used to express love for God. This is the word *rakam*. I said I wouldn't give you a whole lot of vocabulary, but this is, in its form and its usage, it's a hapax.

Nowhere else, nowhere else in the Psalms, nowhere else do you have someone expressing love for God, so much so that some commentators have tried to re-point this and make it be a different word. I will praise you. But this is a very intense word for love.

It's from *rakam*. And it is intensive. It is a word that is used for intimacy.

So what is David saying here? I dearly love you. I regard you as most precious, O Lord, my strength. That's how it starts.

And it's a good reminder that, and it embodies, actually, it summarizes a lot of what is in this Psalm. Why is God his strength? How is God his strength? Because he loves God. Now, if you truly love someone, that love finds expression.

It may be verbal expression. It may be actions. It may be a combination of the two.

It finds various forms. But if you love someone, that person should know it because it is communicated in some way. David claims God as his strength because he loves God and he knows that God is with those who love him.

Now, what do we know about people who love God? My mom quoted a verse to me yesterday or the day before about this. How does Jesus describe loving him? Over in John, the one who has my words and keeps them. Remember that? The one who has my words and keeps them.

He it is that loves me. He has my words and he keeps them. He's the one that loves me.

You can say you love God. We love you, Lord. You can sing the choruses.

You can do all kinds of things. You can wear a hair shirt. You can deny yourself.

But having God's word and keeping it, that is love. That's what Jesus said. And what does he go on to say in that passage? The one who has my words and keeps them.

He it is that loves me and I and my father will come to him and make our abode with him, make our home with him. This is fellowship. David sums that up in his first phrase.

I dearly love you, O God, my strength. Can't beat it. O Lord.

This is the Tetragrammaton. This is God's personal name. I love you dearly, O Lord, my strength.

Says a huge amount in one phrase. So he initially addresses himself. Watch the pronouns here.

It's second person, right? He's talking to the Lord. He says, I love you, O Lord, my strength. Now look at the next phrase in verse two.

The Lord is my rock, my fortress, and my deliverer. You get the idea that David dedicates this psalm to the Lord with the first phrase. I love you, O Lord, my strength.

Then he turns to the audience and he says, that Lord that I was just talking to, the one I love, that is my strength. He is my rock, my fortress, and my deliverer. Now, what does it mean to be your rock? We talk about the wise man built his house upon the rock.

Foolish man built his house on the sand. Rains came, floods came. One on the sand washes away, the one on the rock.

But this is not that kind of rock. And this is another case where it's helpful to look at the word. There's many different kinds of rocks in Hebrew.

This one is a crag. This is an outcropping. This is a jutting cliff point.

It is a place to stand and observe and be unassailable. You can't be reached. You're up on this crag.

You're like a mountain goat. You're out of reach. You're in a place of safety and isolation.

The Lord is my crag. I can rest in Him and view what's going on without fear. I am in an unassailable observation point.

He is my crag. He is my fortress. Fortress is generally defensive, right? You don't win battles by building fortresses.

You win battles by leaving the fortress and killing everybody in sight, right? Fortresses are defensive. It is for protection. It is for preservation against an onslaught.

So being the crag, this is where you stand and observe from a position of safety. You can see what's going on. You gain intelligence.

You gain the facts. You see what's going on. This is why generals like to be up on the high ground or have somebody on the high ground telling them what's going on.

He is my fortress. He is my protection. He is my wall of safety and my deliverer.

Now, do you notice anything changing there in that list? Rock, fortress, and deliverer. This is almost like a word puzzle. What's different? Rock, that's a figure of speech, God's not literally a stone.

God's not literally a fort, but he is literally a deliverer, right? So the first two are metaphors. And David says, he sets me in a safe place and helps me understand what's going on. He protects me against whatever onslaught is coming.

I can retreat to the fortress after I have looked at the advancing Mongol hordes and he is my deliverer. And David leaves the metaphor and says, whatever is coming, this is the reality. His sandals are on the ground here.

God is my deliverer, my savior. It almost literally means savior. My God is my rock in whom I take refuge.

My rock in whom I take refuge. Now, the first time we had the word rock, we talked about it being a crag. This is a salah.

This time, he says, it literally means shield. This is a shield. Magain.

Have you ever heard of the, well, I don't know, maybe I shouldn't use that example, but when I was a little boy in California, the first wine I ever heard of on a TV commercial or something was Mogan David. Well, Mogan David is Magan David. It's shield of David.

And Magain is literally a shield, a battle shield. He is my God, my strength in whom I trust, my shield and the horn of my salvation. Now, horn is a symbol of power.

There were horns on the altar, horns on an ox. It speaks of power. So, not only is he defensive and protective, but he is the horn of deliverance.

So, when the time comes for there to be action taken, a goring action, a projection of power, God is going to do it. He is the horn of deliverance. Now, the first time we had a fortress, it was Mitsuda.

This time, the stronghold is a little bit different word. It's a misgavi or misgav. And this is more

of a tower, a tower fortress.

So, one of them is more of a walled enclosure, a place to dwell. This is a tower, my strong tower. I will call upon the Lord, verse three.

And you notice who is worthy is in italics there. And to be praised is from Hallel, hallelujah, praise the Lord. But this is, I will call upon the praiseworthy Lord.

There might be a lot of lords. There might be a lot of places that you could go for assistance, for deliverance. But which one has earned praise? Have you ever been looking for somebody to do a job and so you go to Angie's List or you go online and look for stars? How many stars does this have? I want an appliance.

People have bought it and used it and some liked it and some didn't. So, you want to find how praiseworthy is this contractor or how praiseworthy is this appliance or how praiseworthy is this particular item that you want to buy? Well, you look to see how highly is it praised? Well, David says, I go to the only praiseworthy Lord. And this, once again, is the Tetragrammaton, Yahweh.

I will call upon God by His personal covenant name, Yahweh, the praiseworthy Yahweh. He's got a track record for deliverance, for faithfulness, for consistency. We so often want to turn to something new, something innovative.

There's a new thing in Christianity. There's a new trend. There's a new book.

There's a new study. There's a new something that is going to be the answer. There is one praiseworthy Lord, and David says, I will call upon Him.

Goes straight to the top, straight to the source, bypassing all intermediaries. He's the one that has earned the reputation for deliverance from enemies. Now, this is where you can really begin to see the messianic overtones.

Verse 4, the pangs of death surrounded me, and the floods of ungodliness caused me to fear. Caused me to fear. This means to be terrified.

It's translated affrighted or troubled. You can be startled, dismayed, but it means to be overwhelmed by fear, to be terrified. I was completely knocked off my feet by this.

The pangs of death and the floods of ungodliness. And ungodliness here is actually Belial. These are the floods of Belial.

This is satanic attack. It's personified. The floods of Belial terrified me.

Now, it is not a sin to be terrified. It might be sinful to remain terrified, but it's okay to be made afraid. Sometimes we double our angst because we find ourselves in fear and then we feel like we've failed because we're fearful.

Or we're sorrowful and then we feel like we've failed because we can't shake the sorrow. Look at what David says here. Pangs of death surrounded me and the floods of Belial terrified me.

He's a godly man. He loves the Lord. He turns to him for deliverance, but he's terrified.

That's one of the reasons he's turning for deliverance and calling upon God as he is terrified. It's okay to be sobered, to be alarmed, to be afraid of the potential disaster that is coming. It's all right.

Look at the next verse. The sorrows of Sheol. This, of course, Sheol is metaphorical of death, of departing this life without return.

The sorrows of Sheol surrounded me. The snares of death confronted me. Nobody wants to be snared.

You don't want to be held, waiting for death. So what does he do? In my distress, this is sort of an amplification of verse 3, I call upon the praiseworthy Lord and I will be delivered from my enemies. Pangs of death, sorrows of Sheol, snares of death, floods of Belial.

In my distress, understandably so, I called upon the Lord. Once again, the Tetragrammaton, Yahweh, God's personal covenant name. This is David appealing to his, essentially, the heavenly Father.

This is a relationship name. This is a close, personal name. I called upon the Lord and I cried out to my God.

He is both Lord and God. He heard my voice from his temple. Now, there are people who say that David couldn't have written this because the temple wasn't standing in 1 Samuel 22, right? Even at the end of David's reign, there's no standing temple.

How could God hear him from the temple? Oh, gotcha, David didn't write this. Look at what it says. Where did God hear his voice from? His temple, not Solomon's temple, not the earthly temple.

Does God have a temple in heaven? Moses was instructed to make the tabernacle and all of its implements according to the pattern that was revealed to him. They were shadows of heavenly things. The temple on earth was just a glorious upgrade of the tabernacle, the tent.

It echoed its organization and its structure and in some cases its symmetry and its articles of furniture and so on. But this is all an earthly shadow of a heavenly perfection. And if you go to the prophets, go to Revelation, there is a voice that comes from the temple and speaks, and this is the Lord God in the temple in heaven.

David knows about this temple. He heard my voice from his temple and my cry came before him even to his ears. Does God hear prayer? Does God hear our pleas even when we are sorrowful, even when we are fearful, even when we are terrified and we are distressed? Well, it

depends.

Maybe he hears and maybe he doesn't. Why would he not hear? Can you think of a reference or two? The Lord's arm is not shortened that it cannot save, nor is his ear heavy that it cannot hear. What happened? Your iniquities have separated between you and your God and your sins have hit his face from you so that he will not hear.

What does David say? I love you, Lord. I am obedient. He is going to go on to talk about his righteousness later in this psalm as he did, by the way, in the previous psalm, Psalm 17.

If you peruse that one, you will see he claims righteousness. David, righteous? This is another one where commentators have said, David couldn't have written this. He was far too sinful.

He made all kinds of mistakes. He was an adulterer and a murderer. He let spit run down his beard in Philistia.

He did all kinds of nefarious things. This can't be David because he is going to stand on his righteousness. He heard my voice from his temple, and my cry came before him, even to his ears.

How can David have this confidence? Because he has hardly ever sinned or because his sins are forgiven. Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean. Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

Against thee and thee only have I sinned. David knows what confession does and what God does on the basis of confessed sin. He cleanses, he restores, he renews, he makes whole, and it is supernatural.

If you are stained black, you don't use blood to turn you white and clean, do you? You do if you're God, because it is a metaphorical besmirching. It is a metaphorical stain, and it is the application of the work of the Lord Jesus Christ, either in prospect or in retrospect, that allows for the cleansing of sin, and David knows this. He can come before God and claim his integrity as we've seen in previous Psalms because he is not a perfect man.

He is a forgiven man. He is a cleansed man, and he has confidence to come before God and claim his grace and claim his forgiveness. And so he says, he hears my voice in his heavenly temple.

My cry comes before him right to his ears. I'm his child. He's my father.

I am his son. He is my Lord. And at that point in verse 7, there is a response.

Well, what do we take away from this as we go to break? The critical necessity in claiming the promises of God is to be qualified to claim them. David can cry out and know that he is heard because he is obedient. He knows the word of God, and he keeps it.

The one who has my words and keeps them, he is the one who loves me. And David opens this

Psalm, I love you, Lord, and he's not just saying the words. It is an expression of what he has done.

He knows the word of God. He practices it. He follows it in his life, and that gives him confidence to claim these privileges and these promises, and that's what he does.

Well, we're going to see the result of that beginning in verse 7 when we come back.