

Psalm 18

Introduction

- As we read more in the psalms we will see several recurring themes.
 - We see the psalmist calling the people to remember the great things that the Lord has done in the past. For example, in this psalm there seems to be a reference to God's presence on Mount Sinai, when the people were literally scared. Exodus 19:16-19 and 20:18-21. There also seems to be a reference to the parting of the Red Sea in verse 15 of this psalm.
 - Ps 44. God gave victory in conquering the people's of Canaan.
 - Ps 68. God's provision for His people in the desert.
 - Ps 77:11. The people are called to remember the deeds and miracles of long ago. The parting of the Red Sea is referenced.
 - Ps 78. God's guidance and provision in the desert.
 - In studying the Bible it is especially important to note when something is repeated over and over. There is a message here for us today.
 - We should remember God's works from long ago: the Exodus, defeat of Israel's enemies, Gideon, Sampson, Ruth and Naomi, Elijah, etc.
 - We should remember God's more recent works and miracles of the present day: His provision in my own life and the life of my family, friends and church.
 - Why should we remember?
 - We stop worrying and focusing on our problems.
 - Our anxiety is decreased as we remember God's power and provision and love for us.
 - We remember God's answers to prayer.
 - We remember how God overcame what seemed like impossible problems.
 - God's immanence and direct involvement in the world, especially nature
 - In this psalm we see God thundering and sending lightning.
 - Ps 19. The heavens declaring the glory of God.
 - Ps 29. God is present in the storm
 - Ps 65. God forming the mountains.
 - Ps 89. God rules over the surging seas.
 - The apex of this line of thought is Job 38-40.
 - Why is this theme important?
 - We should not think of God as being far away in heaven on His throne, like a distant ruler.
 - Realizing God's immanence, closeness, active involvement, and interest can soothe our anxious thoughts and stress. Nothing can happen to us that does not first pass through His loving hands.
 - This is the fourth longest psalm. This song celebrates David's victories over all his enemies rather than one specific triumph.

David's Rejoicing. 18:1-3

- V.1. David used a word for love that emphasizes the strong favor and tender intimacy of his heart toward God. David, the man who killed the giant, admits that

God is his strength. Do I look to God for strength or do I try to do things in my own strength?

- V.2. Rock, remember that David and his men often fled to the rocky hills for safety from his enemies. A rock is solid, unmovable, a defense. Fortress, a safe place from enemies. A place to flee to. Deliverer, one who delivers or rescues one from enemies or difficult situations. Refuge, a safe place. Shield, in battle a shield protected a soldier from the blows of the enemy. Horn, here symbolizes strength. Stronghold, similar to a fortress. David and his men would flee to the safety of a rocky stronghold.
 - V.3. David calls out to God. God is worthy of praise. This is what we express in the hymn “Worthy of Worship” #3 in hymnal.
 - V.4-6. David’s distress.
 - V. 7-15. David declares that God has heard him. He uses poetic language to describe God’s power in rescuing him from his enemies. As we go through vs. 7-15 try to think of where these things have happened elsewhere in the Bible.
 - Earthquake. God caused Mount Sinai to quake when He met with Moses.
 - Smoke from his nostrils. In the ancient world the “snorting” of the breath through the nostrils would have meant anger. Fire typically denotes wrath
 - We have the picture of a powerful storm, unleashed on David’s enemies.
 - V.16-19. God rescues David, because He delighted in him. Did you know that God delights in you? What a wonderful verse to meditate on!
 - V. 20-24. David declares his cleanness, his obedience to the law, he has kept himself from sin. An important point here is that if we want God’s favor and want Him to rescue us, we need to be obedient.
 - V. 25-36. An expansion of the theme that God rewards us according to our character, our obedience.
 - V.37-42. A description of the defeat of David’s enemies.
 - V.43-45. David is made a head of nations, signifying political and military power.
 - V.46-50. Again, David praises God.
- Summary
 - For me two themes stand out: God’s faithfulness in protecting us, and the importance of praise in response to His protection.