Psalm 18

Setting your heart free to Sing to God

I. Slide1 Announce:
   B. Slide5a Nate’s men’s Tues night study taking a break.
   C. Slide5b * Next Sun Night - prayer at 6:30pm.
   D. Prayer: Don’t come with a thimble when God has nothing less to give you than the ocean of Himself. B.Manning, The Relentless Tenderness of Jesus, pg.208

II. Slide6 Intro: Setting your heart free to Sing to God
   A. Slide7a In 1977 Barry Manilow sang, I’ve been alive forever, And I wrote the very first song, I put the words and the melodies together, I am music and I write the songs. I write the songs that make the whole world sing. I write the songs of love and special things. I write the songs that make the young girls cry. I write the songs, I write the songs.
      1. What I found was humorous is that he didn’t write that song...Bruce Johnston did.
         a) Slide7b Bruce Johnson was a member of the Beach Boys filling in for Brian Wilson.
         b) Johnston stated that, for him, the "I" in the song is God, and that songs come from the spirit of creativity in all of us.
   B. Slide8a Songs are an important part of our lives.
      1. They are key for expression (we express heart & life through them).
      2. They are key for instruction (they impact us deeply).
         a) Songs help us say what we wanted to say.
         b) We put words to the things of our heart. Or, they help us to guide our heart into what we should be expressing (i.e. worship).
   C. Here is David’s Song of Victory.
      1. But keep in mind that he often sang to God in the midst of his trials.
         a) It’s easier to sing after the victory. It takes faith to sing during battle.
   D. This song is repeated, with slight variations in 2 Sam.22.
      1. 2 Sam.22 was intended to reveal David’s heart as he recalls God’s Faithfulness.
      2. Ps.18 seems to have been modified later for use as an aid in public worship.
a) It’s like, if I shared one of my poems on a blog & then used it later in a sermon in a different context.

3. This is the longest quote attributed to David in the whole bible.

4. We learn a lot about watching his life, but here, the sweet psalmist of Israel shares his very soul.

E. Slide8b Outline: David’s Delight, Distress, & Deliverance. Then David The Warrior & Worshiper

III. Slide9 DAVID’S DELIGHT (1-3)

A. (Intro/Superscription) Saul was not listed as an enemy but was in a different category. What grace

B. (2a) David did not take credit for any of his victories; he gave the glory to God.

C. (1,2) My - occurs 9 x’s in 2 vs.
   1. May all of our prayers start off with praise, adoration, admiration, exaltation.
      a) It’s simply setting your heart free to sing to God.
      b) How multifaceted our God is. We can pile 1 expression upon another, but they are all inadequate in trying to explain Him.

D. Rock - strength & stability, think El Capitan. eg. River swift current in Burma; I remember getting to the other side & holding onto rock side w/finger tips.
   Fortress - stronghold, matsada.
   Shield - magen (small shield, to block blows & other forms of attack). Stronghold.
   1. Each are speaking of God’s security.
   2. In every storm, David found a shelter in the Lord.

E. Are you trudging through rough storms/tough times? Comfort your heart w/David’s images of God.
   1. What images would you use today to describe your God? [just getting back from a few days up in Mammoth I would say...snow top majestic mountains, huge pines standing strong, abundant water from snow melt, etc]

IV. Slide10 DAVID’S DISTRESS (4-6)

A. (4-6) David now begins with the depth into which he sunk.
   1. Mark R noticed the most Psalms were in the Lament category (59).
2. Yet, David could cry & God would hear. (6)
   a) There is no distress so deep, no flood so high, but our cry may rise like a balloon right to the ear of God.
   
   b) God was no distant deity, preoccupied w/other galaxies or concerned w/the changing of the seasons. His God heard his voice.

3. What do you do when you’re drowning in a flood of opposition? (vs.6 call/cry)

B. Ex: In my old salt water fish tank there were 3 options for protection:

1. Slide11a Protect yourself. Some carried their protection around with them. However doesn’t always work. [lil hermit crabs were dying off. Finally I caught a bigger crab I bought, w/its claw down the shell of a hermit crab eating him like ice cream from a bowl]

2. Slide11b Find the protection in others. Symbiotic relationship (clown fish/Nemo & anemone) which is great, till my anemone died.

3. Slide11c Find your protection from above. (in my salt water tank world that was me, from up above) This other-worldly help, that sometimes steps in, yet always watching, & removes mean crabs, & deals w/green algae, before it takes over their world.
   a) This 3rd option is the best option. It seems foolish at 1st because it is trusting in what you cannot see. So faith is involved. Its what activates this protection. It is divine.
   b) And as you begin to place your faith in a Protection you cannot see, you begin to experience your faith. Your faith is proven out in experience.
   c) What we are talking about is faith in the Living God.

V. Slide12 GOD’S DELIVERANCE (7-27) David’s Theophany (descriptions sound Ex.19-ish)

A. THE LORD ARRIVES (7-15) The Lord Assists

B. David describes God’s intervention as an earthquake, followed by His arrows of lightening, fire, smoke, darkness, thick clouds, His voice like thunder, winds like the angry breath of His nostrils. God was angry.

C. Doesn’t this make you look at storms in your life a little different? When you find out...dark thick black clouds...He likes to ride on as His chariot.
D. **What’s God doing?** He is **responding** to those cries. He’s **bringing rain** (2 Sm.21:1 cuz a 3yr famine) He’s **answering** the call for help in the drought & the famine.

1. Can you picture Him coming in the same way to answer **your cries**? (powerful!!!)

E. **Slide13 Eg. Icebergs:** In the frigid waters around **Greenland** are countless **icebergs,** some little and some gigantic. If you’d observe them carefully, you’d notice that sometimes the **small ice floes** move in **one direction** while their **massive counterparts** flow in **another.** The explanation is simple. **Surface winds** drive the little ones, whereas the huge masses of ice are carried along by **deep ocean currents.**

1. **When we face trials** and **tragedies,** it’s helpful to see our lives as being subject to two forces - **surface winds** and **ocean currents.**

2. The winds represent everything **changeable, unpredictable, & distressing.** But operating **simultaneously** with these gusts & gales is **another force** that’s even more powerful. It is the **sure movement** of God’s wise & sovereign purposes, the deep flow of His unchanging love.

F. **Slide14 THE LORD ASSISTS** (16-27)

G. **With His Provisions** (16-24)

H. (16) God not only **came down** (9) he **reached down** & plucked David out of dangerous waters

I. (19a) He also brought me out into a **broad place** - PTL, no longer **tight places.**

1. **Ps.46:1** *God is our refuge and strength, A very present help in trouble...or, an abundantly available help in tight places.*

J. **Slide15 Madame Guyon** (17th cent. French mystic) And what is this "**large place**"? What can it be but **God Himself,** that **infinite Being** in whom all other beings and all other streams of life terminate? God is a **large place** indeed. And it was **through humiliation, through abasement, through nothingness** that David was brought into it.

K. **Slide16** (19b) He **delivered** me because **He delighted in me** [That's the whole message of **Grace**]

1. **Delivered** = rescued. To save from ruin, destruction, or harm.

2. **Slide17 He delighted in me...**Can you say that? Do you even think that? Oh, not that you were so lovable in **yourself.** NO, because **He choose to love you.**

   a) **Ex:** We all have a friend who choose the **ugliest dog.** You don’t see anything lovely at all in that dog. But **they** really love him. **They’re even part of their family now.**
3. Moses told the Israelites, The Lord did not set his heart on you and choose you because you were more numerous than other nations, for you were the smallest of all nations! 8 Rather, it was simply that the Lord loves you. Dt.7:7,8a

L. Hang on that truth in the midst of your calamity.

1. Caring for you, He feels your ache. Delighting in you, He will be your security.¹
2. Believe it! He delights in you saints. Believe it.
3. The battle endures & exhausts you. But remember, He rescues you because He delights in you. [if you don’t hear anything else...hear this!]

M. I remember reading back in 10/31/2011 when the population of earth hit 7 billion.

1. Slide18a I saw a web site (world population cock) that celebrated this event w/a tee-shirt that read Oct.31st,2011 6,999,999,999 + ME [7.5 bill now]

N. Slide18b (20-23) The theological center of the poem is found here, as David revealed the reason for his deliverance. It is because David was careful to follow the law of the Lord.²

1. These verses are not a declaration of sinless perfection...for David was a sinner like any man. These describe David’s integrity of heart.

O. With His Perfect Justice (25-27)

P. (27) You will save the humble people - (lit.) the grievously afflicted. (Dict. of Biblical Languages) the oppressed, poor, i.e., pertaining to being a lowly, needy state, as a class of persons of low status in a society, usually of persons in fiscal poverty, implying a lack of resource.

1. So we at CM have reached out w/finances & resources & traveling to help the Rohingya's, the Kurds, the Refugees. The Unaccompanied Minors who had to flee their countries.

VI. Slide19 DAVID THE WARRIOR (28-45) and the Worshipper

A. The picture here is that of a courageous warrior letting nothing stand in the way of victory.

1. He’s running through a troop or breaking through the enemies barricades, even scaling a wall to take a city.

¹ Charles Swindoll, David, pg.179.
² Shepherd’s Notes, 1 & 2 Samuel, pg.88.
B. (28) You will light my lamp - David could say, The Lord is my light and my salvation; Whom shall I fear? Ps.27:1 [Fear?? Uhh, how about life, failure, the unknown, financial disaster; being laid off, loosing someone you love, a broken heart.]

1. In the darkest times, David found a Lamp to light his way.

2. When days are dark, the Lord is our only Light.

C. (30) His Word is...proven - What is God’s Word to you?

1. Are you more concerned with Getting His Word right, or getting it lived out?

2. Are you more concerned with stacking your theology in neat piles like crackers, or is your desire to squeeze His Word like grapes seeking after its juice?

3. Are you more concerned with taking His Word into the laboratory to dissect it, or taking it into your soul & assimilating it.

D. (32-34) It is God who...He makes...He teaches - David was a gifted warrior, but it was the anointing power of the Lord that enabled him to succeed on the battlefield.

1. In the strength of the Lord David was invincible.

2. Slide20 George Whitefield quote, We are immortal until our work on earth is done

3. Slide21 or this one... (read slide)

E. (33) God became David’s Strength, Song, & his Salvation.

1. If my legs were shaking, I probably would be looking for a place to sit down… not bounding up the side of a mountain, like a deer.

2. The Lord gives us bounding feet so we can overcome the obstacles of life.

3. God doesn’t always change the circumstances, but He can change us to meet the circumstances.

4. Faith gives you the ability to stand sure-footed like a deer, & to be able to run-swiftly & go higher than ever before.

5. Like the eagle & like the deer, God made us for the heights.
   a) They both will go down into the valley but that’s not where they live. (us too)
   b) Jesus didn’t come to make life easy but to make men/women great.

F. (35) When you look back on your years of difficulties & struggles, do you see the hardness of life, or the gentleness of God?
1. David affirmed that his yoke was easy & the burden was light. Mt.11:28-30

2. Your life today may seem hard, keep trusting & obeying. One day God will give you your own victory song. (Warren Wiersbe)

3. Your gentleness has made me great...is David’s amazement that the Lord would stoop down to make him great.
   a) God the Father condescends to work in our lives & to fit us for the work of His choosing. Is.57:15 I dwell in the high & holy place, with him who has a contrite & humble spirit.
   b) God the Son stooped down, when He came to earth as a man; God the Spirit stooped down, when He came to live in the lives of the people of God.

G. (36) So my feet did not slip (turn an ankle) - with the Lord as your Lamp in a dark forest you don’t see all the trees, but you do see a few steps ahead of you. (Burma night hike/red head-lamp)

1. As the Lord lights your path, He may not shine all the answers to your shadowy questions in your mind, but He will give you the light you need to scale life’s obstacles with confidence & agility.

H. (37-45) You might cringe as we read his description of his victories (ie. stepping on their necks. vs.40)

1. But these are truly battles of the Lord. What we really can term “Just War.”

VII. Slide22 DAVID THE WORSHIPER (46-50)

A. David’s shout of praise was his bold witness, to these subjected peoples, that their dead idols could not save nor protect them.

1. Only Jehovah, the God of Israel, is the true & living God. God was his Champion.

B. Slide23 Review:

1. What thrilled the heart of David? God Himself! (mentioned at least 19 x’s)
2. David saw God in the affairs of his life, both sunny days & in stormy seasons.
3. David saw God’s purposes in his life, with Israel & rejoiced to be a part of it.
4. David saw God’s gentle hand, despite trials, troubles & trauma along the way.
   a) David’s battleground turned into his proving ground for his faith.
      (1) And this can be our experience as well.
C. Slide24 David, a Warrior that fights on his feet; but equally comfortable as, a Worshiper falling on his face. [Warriors & Worshipers]

D. Pray: Lord, whom have we but You? Only You can satisfy our thirsty souls...You are an endless spring. Your water is free, all other streams are dry.

E. * Try setting time aside this week to set your heart free to sing to God. Maybe jot down how multifaceted your God is.