

Studies in Psalms by [John T Polk II](#)
For [The Fellowship Room](#)

Psalms 18

10/9/12

Vs. 1-3 express David's complete confidence (faith) in God as Protector;
Vs. 4-19 describe God as He delivered David from King Saul;
Vs. 20-28 give the reasons why God delivered David;
Vs. 21-45 describe how David "felt" to be "empowered" in that deliverance;
Vs. 46-50 show David's acknowledgement that God is the real power!

This Psalm is exactly recorded in its historical setting in 2 Samuel 22:1-51.

In picturing God and His deliverance, *anthropomorphisms* and *theophanies* abound! An *anthropomorphism* (compound word, "anthropos"="human" + "morphos"="form, shape") is: "an interpretation of what is not human or personal in terms of human or personal characteristics." Theophanies (compound word, "theos"="deity" + "phaneros"=appearance) are also mixed into this language. According to Jesus Christ, "God *is* Spirit" (John 4:24) and "a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have" (Luke 24:39), therefore there is no physical form for God to be described, except for Jesus Christ as "God was manifested in the flesh" (1 Timothy 3:16), *and there is absolutely NO physical depiction given of Jesus Christ in Scripture!* In Psalm 18, God actually isn't a: "rock," "fortress," "shield," except as physical terms to help us understand what He means to one in distress. God doesn't actually have: "ears," "nostrils," "mouth," "feet," except to help us visualize how He responds to us. God didn't actually move about on: "a cherub," or "wings of the wind," except to help us visualize how easily and quickly God does what He desires. By inspiring men to write the Scriptures, God has used their words and meanings to describe Himself to us in terms we may understand and appreciate, so that we may "know God" (1 Thessalonians 1:5-8; 1 Corinthians 1:21; Galatians 4:8-9; 1 John 4:6-7).

Psalm 18:20-28 explain that David strives to be righteous (obedient to God's Will), and God helps and sometimes delivers the righteous from dangerous enemies. David's profession that his hands were "clean" obviously didn't mean that he had never sinned, but that he had confessed and repented of his sins and was currently obedient. In the New Testament, only the self-deceived say, "we have no sin," and only liars say, "we have not sinned" (1 John 1:8-10). David was neither of these, for God said he was "a man after My own heart, who will do all My will" (Acts 13:22). *Everyone should learn this lesson of the Bible: God doesn't expect us to live without sin, as Jesus did (1 Peter 2:22), but to continually repent of our sins, as David did, but today we must appeal to the blood of Jesus Christ to wash us clean (1 Peter 3:18-22).*

David was delivered to keep God's promise alive to send His promised "seed" (2 Samuel 7:12-16, which was fulfilled in Jesus Christ, Romans 1:1-4) and to establish a people, both Jews/Israelites and Gentiles, which is the church of Christ and began on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:29-36, 37-47). David lived under Moses' Law, which was for Israelites,

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not Gentiles (non-Jews/Israelites, Deuteronomy 5:1-6). Psalm 18:49 contemplated a worship in song that included Gentiles, which was not done until the New Testament church of Christ (Romans 1:16-17; Ephesians 2:11-22). The only time Jesus used music on earth, He sang with His brethren (Matthew 26:30).

But of all references to musical instruments used by David and Israelites when they lived under Moses' Law, there are only two which apply to the worship in the churches of Christ: Psalm 18:49, quoted in Romans 15:8-9; and Psalm 22:22, quoted in Hebrews 2:12, both of them specify "singing," or vocal music! "Singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord" (Ephesians 5:19) is the only authorized music in Christian worship.

Because **Psalm 18:49** is a clear prophecy pointing to the church of Christ, which is the body of Christ (Colossians 1:18), one may re-read the entire Psalm and see a parallel between David's deliverance and God's concern for Christians today (as, for example, in the case of the Apostle Paul, 2 Corinthians 1:8-11).

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