

2 Samuel 22 — Speaking Of God's Goodness

January 21, 2024

Good morning, CrossWinds Church! If you are new, my name is Kurt. I am one of the pastors. We are grateful to have you. This morning, we continue our studies in 2 Samuel. We are in 2 Samuel 22. After today, there are only two more chapters until we finish the book. Where are we heading after 2 Samuel? We are heading to 1 Thessalonians. If you are worried about the end of the world, 1 and 2 Thessalonians have you covered and will help us get that straight.

This week, I was talking with one of my sons on the phone. For many young men in their twenties, life is tough. The economy is hard. People live paycheck to paycheck. Entry-level wages are not enough to pay the grocery bill, heat the bill, and put gas in your car. My son is there, and it has him stressed out. The good news is that hard times teach you to pray. When times are hard, we pray hard. That is what my son is doing. He said, "Dad, I am praying all the time about this. Either I need to find a higher-paying job in the company, or I need a new job. The numbers don't add up." On Thursday, just before I wrote this message, he called. He saw a job opening at another store in town. He applied for the job. The next day, they called him back, offering him the job. The job has a much higher income potential than his current job. He was bubbling with excitement. He said, "Dad, God answered my prayers! Two days ago, things looked hopeless. Now, it looks like things will be ok."

Have any of you been in the same situation? Things in your life looked hopeless. It looked like you were facing a bitter end. In desperation, you called out to God, and he answered your prayers. He may not have answered your

prayers as fast as you would like or in the way you expected, but he did hear and come to your rescue.

If you are a little older, you can most likely look back on many times when God came to your rescue and answered your prayers. If you resonate with that experience, you will like this chapter. In 2 Samuel 22, at the end of David's life, he looks back on all the trials and near-death experiences he found himself in and how, in those moments of desperation, every time he prayed for rescue, God heard him and answered his prayers. He is filled with a grateful heart because of that.

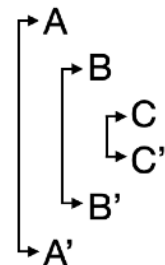
Background

If you were one of the few brave people to be in church last week when it was a -40 degree wind chill, this portion of the message will be a review. If you were not here last week, this portion of the message will be new. We are going over it again because we need to know it to understand this chapter.

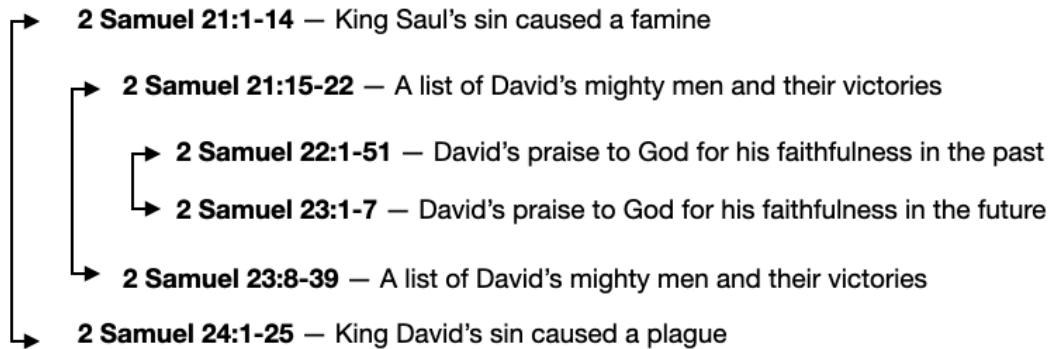
1 and 2 Samuel is a chronological story. 1 Samuel is the life of King Saul. 2 Samuel is the life of King David. The chronological part of David's story ended in 2 Samuel 20. The last four chapters of the book are a summary of David's life and how God established His kingdom through David. Instead of the last four chapters being organized chronologically, they are organized thematically. They are in the form of a Hebrew inclusio.

As soon as I talk about a Hebrew inclusio, some of you are mystified. What is an inclusio? Can I get one for my car?

Don't be mystified. Inclusio is a new word, but it is a simple concept. It means the beginning of a unit of thought in



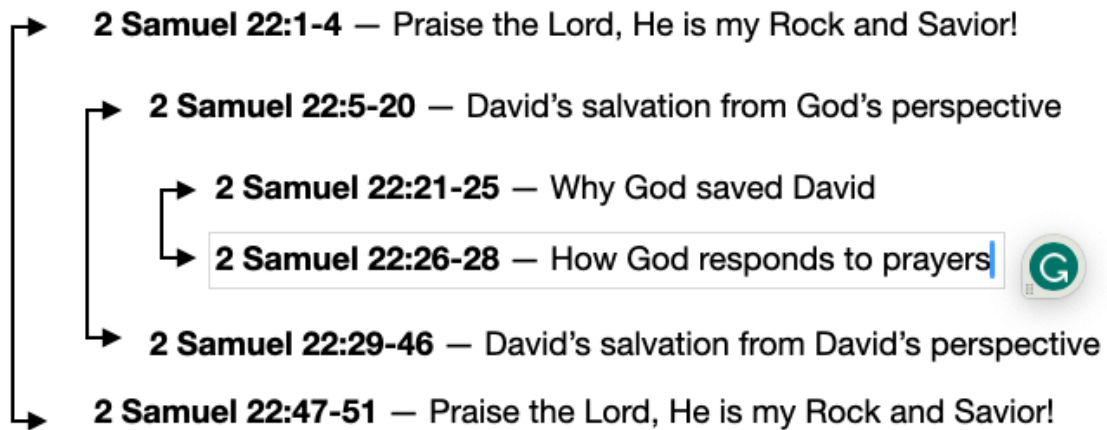
Hebrew is mirrored in the ending. What is talked about in the A section of the inclusio is talked about again at the end. The same is true for the B and C sections.



The last four chapters are put together in the form of an inclusio. Chapter 21 begins with King Saul's sin causing a famine. Chapter 24 ends with King David's sin causing a plague. The next level of the inclusio in 2 Samuel 21 talks about David's mighty men and their victories. The same topic is covered in 2 Samuel 23. At the center of the inclusio is David's praise to God for his faithfulness in the past, followed by David's praise to God for his faithfulness in the future.

Once we realized that is the structure of the final four chapters, those chapters make better sense.

Now we have a surprise. When we come to 2 Samuel 22, which is the chapter we will study this morning, we find it is an inclusio inside of the inclusio.



2 Samuel 22 begins with David praising the Lord for God being his rock and savior, and it ends with David praising the Lord for being his rock and savior. The next level in is seeing God's salvation of David from God's perspective. On the back side of the inclusio it is seeing God's salvation from David's perspective. In the center of the inclusio, David tells us why God answered his prayers to be saved in a crisis and what we can do to put ourselves in a better position for God to answer our prayers and save us in a crisis.

Let's look at the first verse of this chapter, which gives us an overview of what we will study.

And David spoke to the LORD the words of this song on the day when the LORD delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul. 2 Samuel 22:1 (ESV)

2 Samuel 22 is a song written by David. If you like worship music, this is your Sunday. This is one of the last songs David wrote after God saved him from all of his enemies. The last enemy God saved him from was his son Absalom. This was written either shortly before or after 2 Samuel 20. This was a popular song. It is not only found in 2 Samuel 22, but a slightly different version of it made it into the book of Psalms. It is Psalm 18. This is the third longest psalm David

wrote. It is 51 verses, which means that to study it, we will move through it quickly.

As we study this song, look for these two big themes that come screaming out of this song.

1. The only reason David was a good and great king is not because he was so good, but because God was so good. Any rescue in David's life and greatness in David's life, was all because of God's kindness to David. \
2. God answers prayer. When David faced trials, and his life hung in the balance, David prayed, and God came to the rescue. God may not have rescued David the way he expected, but he did hear and respond. If God answered David's prayers in his time of need, when we face a crisis, we should also pray because we know God will hear and respond.

2 Samuel 22:1-4 — Praise God! He is my rock and savior.

He said, "The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, my God, my rock, in whom I take refuge, my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold and my refuge, my savior; you save me from violence. 2 Samuel 22:2-3 (ESV)

David gives a barrage of images, all designed to convey one point. God saved David's life again and again. David described God as a rock. In the desert, a rock shelters people from the sun. A rock gave you a safe place to go for protection when your enemies were shooting at you. David ran from King Saul for years. David ran for his life from Absalom, his son. In those times when people were trying to take David's life, God was the rock who sheltered him and protected him from harm.

He also described God as a fortress. When an enemy attack you, you run to a fortress for safety. God was the fortress that David went to every time King Saul tried to take his life. Every time King Saul threw his spear at David and it narrowly missed, the spear didn't miss David because David was quick, but because God was good and saved him.

In your heart, you may think that the reason David survived a close call was luck. The problem is there were far too many attempts on David's life and close calls that nearly ended his life for those rescues to be considered chance. They happened again and again. Each time, God delivered David.

David described God and the shield around him. Did you ever stop to consider how many wars David found himself in? He fought the Philistines and many others dozens of times. He fought the Amorites and Ammonites. Somehow, in all of those battles, a stray arrow or thrust spear never took his life. Is that because David was so far, or because God was so good? It was God at working being a shield around him.

Notice how David describes God. David calls God MY refuge, MY savior, and MY shield. God was not some impersonal energy force. God is a person. David knows God. David personally talked with God. For David, knowing God was not about adding a spiritual dimension to life. It was about knowing the God of the universe who cared for him and responded to his prayers for rescue in his time of need.

Do you realized, the same is true for us. God loves you. He wants us to talk to him personally. He wants us to call out to him with those things that are

worrying us and threatening us. God loves you. He is our savior, not just David's savior. This doesn't mean God will take away all our problems when we call to him. David's life should be testimony enough to that. It does mean God loves us. He hears our prayers and responds in a good, wise, and loving way when we call to him in a crisis.

Look how David summarizes this section.

I call upon the LORD, who is worthy to be praised, and I am saved from my enemies. 2 Samuel 22:4 (ESV)

David says that God is worth praising because he saved David from his enemies, and he had a lot. It began with Goliath when he was a boy. It was the Philistines as he grew older. It was King Saul, then Absalom his son. Every time, God came to his rescue. That is why David says God is worthy of praise. This is why God is worth talking about. It is why God is worth singing about. He saves people who call out to him.

Have you been there? Have you called to God in your time of need and you have a story of how he rescued and saved you?

David doesn't want his song just to praise God for God's rescue in his life, but he wants his song to cause us to look back on our lives with gratitude for God's many rescues so we also have hearts filled with gratitude and worship.

2 Samuel 22:5-20 — David's Salvation from God's perspective

David begins by poetically describing the troubles in his life, then he looks at how God responded when he prayed.

"For the waves of death encompassed me, the torrents of destruction assailed me; the cords of Sheol entangled me; the snares of death confronted me. "In my distress I called upon the LORD; to my God I called. From his temple he heard my voice, and my cry came to his ears. 2 Samuel 22:5-7 (ESV)

David describes his troubles as a massive wave that swept over him. The mental picture is of a surfer riding one of the massive waves in Hawaii, but instead of riding it, the surfer falls and is caught in it. Underwater, he is spun in a circle in the pounding surf and doesn't know which way up. That is a panic-stricken moment.

David then describes his troubles as a torrent of destruction. Those are out-of-control flood waters. We have seen them on the news as houses, trees, cars, and people are swept away, and there is nothing they can hold onto for safety or stability. That is what David's troubles felt like to him. His life was being swept away.

David also describes his troubles like the cords of Sheol entangling around him. Sheol is a Hebrew reference to the grave. The mental picture is of swimming and getting your feet caught in seaweed. If that has happened to you, you know the more you pull on the seaweed, the more the seaweed pulls you under and you have a feeling of panic as you struggle to keep your nose above water to get your next breath. That is what David's troubles felt like in his life. He was under water spinning around in a wave. He was caught in flood waters. He was being pulled under by the seaweed around his leg. Every single one of those produces sheer panic and a sense of helplessness. Many times, that was the way David felt. Let me show you.

In 1 Samuel, as David ran for his life from King Saul, he didn't know if God would save him. Look what he said.

...there is but a step between me and death. 1 Samuel 20:3b (ESV)

If we go a little further in 1 Samuel, we get another window into the sense of terror that ruled David's heart at that time.

Then David said in his heart, "Now I shall perish one day by the hand of Saul." 1 Samuel 27:1a (ESV)

While David felt helpless and swept away by troubles that seemed certain to take his life, that is when he desperately prayed for rescue. Let's see how God responded.

"Then the earth reeled and rocked; the foundations of the heavens trembled and quaked, because he was angry. Smoke went up from his nostrils, and devouring fire from his mouth; glowing coals flamed forth from him. 2 Samuel 22:8–9 (ESV)

That sounds serious! David was just one person in a sea of humanity, yet when David's life was threatened and he prayed, God responded by becoming angry. He shook heaven and earth. He was angry that someone was trying to take the life of his king. Fire came out of God's mouth, and smoke out of his nostrils. I read that, and it looks like God is seriously upset when David's life is threatened.

If you know your Old Testament, this scene will be a reminder of something you read about earlier in the Old Testament. Do you remember what happened when God met with his people at Mount Sinai in the days of Moses? When God came down to Mount Sinai in Exodus 19, heaven and earth shook. The mountain was covered in fire and smoke. The people at the base of the mountain trembled in fear. That same God, the God of fire and smoke who shook the earth, heard David's prayer in his time of need, and he was angry at those who threatened David's life.

He bowed the heavens and came down; thick darkness was under his feet. He rode on a cherub and flew; he was seen on the wings of the wind. 2 Samuel 22:10–11 (ESV)

David describes God pulling back the curtains of heaven and flying to earth on a mighty angel as he came to David's rescue. God didn't just hear David's prayers of desperation, but he did something about it. He came running to save the life of his chosen king.

He made darkness around him his canopy, thick clouds, a gathering of water. Out of the brightness before him coals of fire flamed forth. 2 Samuel 22:12–13 (ESV)

Here is a brief pause in the action. David describes what God's presence looks like when he shows up. This is another reference to Mount Sinai, where the mountain was wrapped in clouds and smoke to hide the glory of God's presence, which flamed with fire.

Think about this for a moment. This is the God who loves David. This awe-inspiring, powerful God is the one who cares about David and comes to his rescue when he cries for help.

The LORD thundered from heaven, and the Most High uttered his voice. And he sent out arrows and scattered them; lightning, and routed them. 2 Samuel 22:14–15 (ESV)

God's coming can be dramatic. God's voice is described as loud as a clap of thunder. His arrows are bolts of lightning. Sometimes God shows up in a dramatic way to save his people. We see that in 1 Samuel 7.

As Samuel was offering up the burnt offering, the Philistines drew near to attack Israel. But the Lord thundered with a mighty sound that day against the Philistines and threw them into confusion, and they were defeated before Israel. 1 Samuel 7:10 (ESV)

Let's see what else can happen when the God of Mount Sinai shows up to rescue his people in their time of need.

Then the channels of the sea were seen; the foundations of the world were laid bare, at the rebuke of the LORD, at the blast of the breath of his nostrils. 2 Samuel 22:16 (ESV)

We have more shock and awe as the God of the universe shows up to rescue David in his time of need. This is more impressive than Thanos getting all the infinity stones in the Marvel movie. God is so powerful that one blast of breath from his nostrils pushes back the waters of the earth, leaving the channels of the sea exposed and bone dry. One puff of God's breath is enough to push away the sea and leave the Mariana Trench exposed and dry as a desert.

Hearing this should remind us of a time in the Old Testament when God showed up in response to the prayers of his people to save them. It should remind us of the time the Israelites came out of Egypt. They came to the Red Sea. The sea was on one side, and the army of Egypt was bearing down on the other side. Moses prayed for rescue. God showed up. A thick cloud kept the Egyptians away from the Israelites that night as God blew and turned the sea into dry ground so his people could walk to the other side in safety. The same mighty God who saved Moses and the nation of Israel when they prayed for rescue is the God who showed up to save David when he prayed for rescue in his time of need.

He sent from on high, he took me; he drew me out of many waters. He rescued me from my strong enemy, from those who hated me, for they were too mighty for me. They confronted me in the day of my calamity, but the LORD was my support. He brought me out into a broad place; he rescued me, because he delighted in me. 2 Samuel 22:17–20 (ESV)

We return to David's story. David described his trouble as spinning him around in wave and sweeping him away in a flood. In those times, when David

prayed for rescue, God showed up and plucked him out of the waters and set him in a safe space.

As we have seen, David has a number of Old Testament allusions in this song. Here is another of them. When David says, “He drew me out of many waters,” those Hebrew words are unique. They are only found in one other place in the Old Testament. That is Exodus 2:10, where Pharaoh’s daughter drew Moses out of the water to safety. The name Moses means to be drawn out of the waters.

Just as baby Moses faced certain death as he swirled around the rushing Nile river in the currents as he floated in a reed basket, God providentially floated him in front of Pharaoh’s daughter, who heard his cry, drew him out of the water, adopted him, and saved his life. In the same way, when David’s life hung in the balance. Like baby Moses, his life was spinning out of control in the waters. Just as God saved Moses, God saved David in his time of need.

David also says God brought him to a broad place. That language is another Old Testament echo. Look what God said to Moses about the Promised Land.

...bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey, to the place of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. Exodus 3:8 (ESV)

Just as God rescued his people from their enemies and brought them to the Promised Land, God rescued David from his enemies and brought him to a time of peace as well.

The rescues David was referring to are those written about in the pages of 1 and 2 Samuel. They were military victories against King Saul when he was

outnumbered. Victories against his son Absalom when he was outnumbered. Victories against the Philistines when he was outnumbered. Victories against Goliath when he was overmatched. In one sense, they were ordinary events. They were simply military victories. Rarely do we see anything in David's rescues that were overtly miraculous. Yet behind David's rescue was God coming down from heaven to answer his prayers and protect his king again and again. So much of it looked ordinary. David was just incredibly successful in battle. David just happened to have amazing luck. It wasn't luck or skill. It was God at work.

Do you remember the time in 1 Samuel when David and his men were atop a mountain? Saul and his army were about to surround the mountain to cut off the possibility of escape. Just before Saul's army circled the mountain news came that the Philistines attacked. Saul and his army needed to immediately leave to defend the country. Was that chance? It wasn't! It was the way God showed up to save the life of David and his men. It was God's rescue. It was God's answer to their prayer.

You may think of this as chance, but the problem with this being chance is that kind of thing happened repeatedly in David's life. It happened too many times to be chance. It was God at work answering David's prayers and saving his king.

2 Samuel 22:21-25 - Why did God save David?

When we see the answers to David's prayers and the many rescues he was given, we wonder how those kinds of answers to prayer can be part of our lives. What does it take for God to answer my prayers and rescue me? In the center of the inclusio, David answers that question.

David gives us two reasons God came to his rescue.

God rescued David because he delighted in him.

He brought me out into a broad place; he rescued me, because he delighted in me. 2 Samuel 22:20 (ESV)

The first reason God rescued David in those desperate times is simply because God delighted in him. For whatever reason, God chose to be kind to David. God chose David to be the king. David was just the youngest son of Jesse. He was tending the sheep when the prophet Samuel came to his father's house to anoint the next king. David wasn't invited to the party because he was too young and insignificant. Yet, God chose David because he wanted to. We have no explanation for it other than this was God's sovereign will and choice. There was nothing about David that made him worthy of God's love and favor. Yet, for reasons unknown to David and us, God chose to delight in David.

If you are like me, you are left wishing God would choose to delight in us. Before any sense of gloom drifts over your heart, know that God has delighted in you. Like David, God chose you. God has been incredibly kind to you through Jesus, and through Jesus God has been kinder to you than he ever was to David.

Why were we born in a place in space and time where we could hear the good news of Jesus instead of a Muslim land where we would never know it? Why did God soften your heart when we heard the good news about Jesus so you placed your faith in Jesus, you were saved by Jesus, and made into a new person by Jesus? All of that was God's underserved kindness to you and me.

I love what it says in the beginning of the book of Ephesians.

...even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him... Ephesians 1:4 (ESV)

Before God created the world, in God's kindness, he determined to save us by Jesus and to put us together with Jesus to make us the most blessed beings in the universe for eternity. God can't be any kinder to us and more gracious than he has already been to us by completely saving us by Jesus and putting us together with Jesus for eternity. Folks, God couldn't delight in us more than he already has through Jesus!

Why did God save David and answer his prayers for rescue? First, it was simply because God chose to delight in him. The second reason is different.

God rewarded David for his righteousness.

The LORD dealt with me according to my righteousness; according to the cleanness of my hands he rewarded me. For I have kept the ways of the LORD and have not wickedly departed from my God. For all his rules were before me, and from his statutes I did not turn aside. I was blameless before him, and I kept myself from guilt. And the LORD has rewarded me according to my righteousness, according to my cleanness in his sight. 2 Samuel 22:21–25 (ESV)

I read many Bible scholars on this passage, and for some reason, these verses give some Bible scholars fits. They say, "How could David say this? He was a murderer and an adulterer. He wasn't righteous. If God dealt with him according to the cleanness of his hands, he should be dead." What is going on in these verses? They read like works of righteousness.

Too many people overthink this passage. As for David's sin with Bathsheba and the murder of Uriah, yes, they were tragic. Thankfully, David repented of those sins. The prophet Nathan let David know that God forgave him of those sins. Even though David's sins with Bathsheba and Uriah were forgiven, they still carried consequences. The sword never left his family. There was

constant turmoil in his home. His murder of Uriah led to the death of four of his sons. There were consequences to his sin, even though it was forgiven sin.

This may sound strange to you, but outside of David's horrendous sins with Bathsheba and Uriah, David was a good and godly king. He was remarkably faithful to God. That may be hard to believe, but 1 Kings tells us this was the case.

...because David did what was right in the eyes of the LORD and did not turn aside from anything that he commanded him all the days of his life, except in the matter of Uriah the Hittite. 1 Kings 15:5 (ESV)

For David, living a godly life mattered. God honors those who honor him. This simple truth is found all over the Bible. Don't overthink it. The holiness of our lives determines the way God responds to the prayers in our lives, especially in times of need.

That doesn't mean those who live a godly life will never be diagnosed with cancer. It doesn't mean they will never get sick. It doesn't mean they will live to be 102. David lived a godly life, but he faced a lot of suffering. Job was the most righteous man to live, but he suffered because of his righteousness.

Nevertheless, as a general rule of thumb, God honors those who honor him. He loves to answer the prayers of those who delight in him. This basic principle is found all over the Bible.

For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and his ears are open to their prayer. But the face of the Lord is against those who do evil. 1 Peter 3:12 (ESV)

What an important reminder of why we want to address any area of sin in our lives of which we can repent. Many Christians think sin is no big deal. After

all, we have a get-out-of-jail-free card with Jesus. Jesus forgives our sins. It doesn't matter what I do, as long as I ask Jesus to forgive, I am good to go.

While it is true that Jesus does forgive, that doesn't mean Christians should live sinful, rebellious lives against him.

Let me give you an example. Many people live together before marriage. They know the Bible tells us to save sex for marriage, but marriage isn't that important today. Most people think it isn't a big deal to live together before marriage. After all, God will forgive me. Wait a minute, if I am knowingly living out of God's will that will not help my prayers in my time of need. That is not the kind of life God rewards. Practically, if you are living with your girlfriend or boyfriend, simply repent of living together and get married. That is the best way to put yourself in the position of being rewarded by God.

For you, the issue might be what you look at on your phone in your free time. There is a lot of junk on the Internet, and it is easy to watch it. Will Jesus forgive you? Of course, he will. That doesn't mean we should look at a bunch of trash and fill our minds with ungodly garbage. Holiness matters. God rewards godliness. Let us not forget that principle. Look how David put this earlier in the book.

The LORD rewards every man for his righteousness and his faithfulness,...
1 Samuel 26:23 (ESV)

2 Samuel 22:26-28 - How God responds to our lives

With the merciful you show yourself merciful; with the blameless man you show yourself blameless; with the purified you deal purely, and with the crooked you make yourself seem tortuous. You save a humble people, but your eyes are on the haughty to bring them down. 2 Samuel 22:26–28 (ESV)

David teaches us another principle about life that is important to remember. God responds to men and women based on how we treat other people. If we are merciful people, God is merciful to us. If we are pure, God will deal purely with us. If we are humble, God will be kind to us.

This principle is also found in the New Testament. Paul speaks about this principle when it comes to financial giving.

...give, and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For with the measure you use it will be measured back to you. Luke 6:38 (ESV)

How we give to other people is the way God will give to us. How we treat other people is the way God treats us.

The same principle holds for the opposite. If we are crooked, God will make himself seem torturous to us. This means those who are devious tricksters toward other people, God will find God making life difficult for them.

There is an interesting connection in the Hebrew. The Hebrew word for crooked is *tithophel*. It is one letter different from the name Ahithophel. Do you remember him from 2 Samuel? He was smart but devious. He was David's best friend. He was his counselor. Behind the scenes, he switched sides. He masterminded the plan for Absalom to overthrow David's kingdom. He stabbed David, his best friend, in the back.

Everything went according to his devious plan until God decided to work against him. God threw a monkey wrench in response to David's prayer. When David heard of Ahithophel's treachery, he prayed God would frustrate the counsel of Ahithophel. God immediately answered that prayer. As soon as he finished praying, a man named Hushai just happened to show up. David sent him into the

city to frustrate Ahithophel's council. Hushai arrived in the city moments before Absalom. Hushai gave unwise advice to frustrate Ahithophel's plan, and Absalom believed it. That one misstep was the beginning of the end for the conspiracy. Ahithophel knew it. He went out and hung himself.

God treats us the way we treat other people.

2 Samuel 22:29-46 — David's salvation from David's perspective

For you are my lamp, O Lord, and my God lightens my darkness. For by you I can run against a troop, and by my God I can leap over a wall. This God—his way is perfect; the word of the Lord proves true; he is a shield for all those who take refuge in him. 2 Samuel 22:29–31 (ESV)

Remember what we are doing at this point. We are on the back side of the inclusio. We will go over the same things we went over earlier but in reverse order. Earlier, we looked at how God responded to David's prayers from God's perspective. We saw God breathing fire and riding to earth on angels as he came to the rescue. Now, we see those same rescues from David's perspective. While God's side of the rescue looked dramatic, David's side of the rescues looked ordinary.

God enables David to run against a troop. He enabled David to attack an army, even though he was outnumbered. God enabled David to leap over a wall. Some think this is a reference to David conquering Jerusalem. I don't know. The point is that God gave David some amazing athletic abilities in battle

"For who is God, but the LORD? And who is a rock, except our God? This God is my strong refuge and has made my way blameless. He made my feet like the feet of a deer and set me secure on the heights. He trains my hands for war, so that my arms can bend a bow of bronze. You have given me the shield of your salvation, and your gentleness made me great. You gave a wide place for my steps under me, and my feet did not slip; 2 Samuel 22:32–37 (ESV)

God's power gave David feet like a deer. God enabled David to be surefooted in battle. He did not slip. God trained David's hands for war. God gave David the athletic skills and the battle skills he needed to be victorious. God enabled David to bend a bow of bronze. Bows of bronze are not easy to bend. God gave David incredible natural strength. David had amazing athletic abilities, but God gave him those abilities. He credits God will success in the battles.

Today, if someone has excellent athletic abilities, that should not go to their credit. God gets the credit.

I pursued my enemies and destroyed them, and did not turn back until they were consumed. I consumed them; I thrust them through, so that they did not rise; they fell under my feet. For you equipped me with strength for the battle; you made those who rise against me sink under me. You made my enemies turn their backs to me, those who hated me, and I destroyed them. They looked, but there was none to save; they cried to the LORD, but he did not answer them. I beat them fine as the dust of the earth; I crushed them and stamped them down like the mire of the streets. 2 Samuel 22:38–43 (ESV)

God is the one who gave David victory over his enemies. God is the one who sent the Philistines running. God is the one who turned his enemies into cowards, so they turned their back and ran. David completely decimated his enemies because God gave him success.

As I read this, I kept thinking about Absalom's much larger army that fought David and his smaller army in 2 Samuel. On that day, 20,000 men died. That is probably just the number of Absalom's men who died, not David's. It says on that day more died from the forest than the sword. God fought for his king. The enemy were impaling themselves on the trees. This was a shocking defeat. Nobody could imagine this miraculous turn of events. Why did it happen? God

was at work answering the prayers of his king. The miraculous God came to the rescue, but he showed up in rather ordinary ways giving victory instead of defeat.

You delivered me from strife with my people; you kept me as the head of the nations; people whom I had not known served me. Foreigners came cringing to me; as soon as they heard of me, they obeyed me. Foreigners lost heart and came trembling out of their fortresses. 2 Samuel 22:44–46 (ESV)

God delivered David from strife with his people. Remember when David first became king, but it was only over the southern tribe of Judah. At that time, the northern tribes of Israel were led by Abner and King Saul's son—Ish-Bosheth. After seven years of war between the northern and southern kingdoms, God created a falling out in the relationship between Abner and Ish-Bosheth. As a result, Abner brought the northern kingdom to David to unite the nation of Israel without bloodshed. Who created the falling out between Abner and Ish-Bosheth that brought the northern kingdom to David without bloodshed? That was God working behind the scenes.

God brought people David didn't know to serve him. Remember when Absalom's coupe was underway? Ittai the Gittite and his mercenary army showed up to serve in David's army the day before Absalom's coupe. During the coupe, David offered Ittai the chance to leave, since he just arrived. Ittai didn't leave. He stayed loyal to David and, in the battle against Absalom, led an entire division of David's army to victory. Who sent Ittai and his mercenaries to help David in his time of need? God!

David looks back on his life and wants to be clear that his outrageous success as a kill and military leader did not come from him. All of his success came from God. God gets all the credit for his amazing grace.

Let's review. What put David in the position where God chose to answer his prayers and show favor? First, God simply chose to be kind to him simply for God's reasons and good purposes, just like he chose to be kind to us through Jesus. We don't deserve that kindness, but God has shown it. Second, the holiness, purity, and faithfulness in our lives matter. God honors those who honor him. God rewards those who live to honor God. Third, God treats us the way we treat other people. If we are merciful toward others, God is merciful toward us. If we are crooked, God will make himself tortuous.

2 Samuel 22:47-51 — Praise the Lord, He is my rock and savior.

The Lord lives, and blessed be my rock, and exalted be my God, the rock of my salvation, the God who gave me vengeance and brought down peoples under me, who brought me out from my enemies; you exalted me above those who rose against me; you delivered me from men of violence. "For this I will praise you, O Lord, among the nations, and sing praises to your name." 2 Samuel 22:47-50 (ESV)

David returns to where he started. He thanks God for being his rock, protector, and savior. Not only was God his savior and protector in times of trouble, but God took vengeance of David's enemies and wiped them out. God gave David the victory over violent men like Saul, Absalom, the Philistines, and ant others that rose against him.

David ends by saying that for this reason, he will praise the Lord among the nations. God is so good; he is worth talking about, not just in church but in public. David didn't just want to tell his friends about God's goodness, but he wanted to tell the world about God's goodness.

This is a good challenge for us. When we are at the YMCA or out in public, we can be slow to talk about the goodness of God in our lives. Think about all

God has done for us through Jesus. He forgave all our sins. He gave us a new heart. He made us into a new person. How can we not bubble over with excitement to talk about what God has done? Verse 50 is quoted in the New Testament.

For I tell you that Christ became a servant to the circumcised to show God's truthfulness,...in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written, "Therefore I will praise you among the Gentiles, and sing to your name." Romans 15:8–9 (ESV)

Christ came to the Jews, but Paul tells us the good news of what Jesus has done for us was not to be kept among the Jews. Just as David wanted to tell the world about the goodness of God, we are to also tell the world about the goodness of what Jesus has done.

Great salvation he brings to his king, and shows steadfast love to his anointed, to David and his offspring forever. 2 Samuel 22:51 (ESV)

David closes by saying God brings great salvation to his king and faithful loves his chosen one, that is to David, but it is also to his offspring forever.

Applications

1. God is our rock, savior, and protector. If God saved David when he called on him in times of desperate need, as God's chosen people, we can be confident God will respond when we call on Him in our time of desperate need.
2. The holiness of our lives impacts the way God responds to our prayers. God honors those who honor him.
3. As David couldn't help but tell the nations about the goodness of God in his life, we should be overflowing with the message of God's goodness in our lives through Jesus.



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