David’s Song of Praise 2 Samuel 22

In our journey through the life of David, we’re beginning to detect the long shadows of age and pressure stretching across his life. We now approach his twilight years. A series of events put David on his knees before God: the death of his favored son (2 Samuel 18:32-33); the shift of Joab’s allegiance (2 Samuel 20); a severe famine that struck the land (2 Samuel 21:1); and a renewed battle with Philistia (2 Samuel 21:15). It’s very interesting to observe the ways different people handle pressure. Long before David was a king … he was a musician. Weary from his struggles, he composed a psalm (2 Samuel 22) of praise to God his deliverer. Perhaps this was the last song he was to compose. Four themes are contained in this piece which are worthy of our remembrance.

I. First Theme: When times are tough, the Lord is our only security (2 Samuel 22:2-20).

David characterized his times by using words like “violence” (v. 3) … “waves of death” (v. 5)… “torrents of destruction” (v. 5)… “my distress” (v. 7)… “day of my disaster” (v. 19). David was under pressure. However, he saw God as the One who offset all that. His word pictures are rich and hopeful in their meanings: “rock” (vv. 2-3)… “fortress” (v. 2)… “deliverer” (v. 2)… “refuge” (v. 3)… “shield” (v. 3)... “stronghold” (v. 3)... “savior” (v. 3). The comfort of these words is not limited to David’s day – it is for today as well. These words provide the essence of His grace to us. Perhaps this theme is best underscored by verse 20: “He also brought me forth into a broad place; He rescued me, because He delighted in me”. That kind of truth offsets the hard times.

II. Second Theme: When days are dark, the Lord is our only light. (2 Samuel 22:21-31)

Keep in mind that a lamp doesn’t illuminate everything … just that which is immediately in front of or surrounding it. A lamp gives enough light to see where one should step next. With that in mind, note the key statements of this section of the text: “You are my lamp, O Lord; the Lord turns my darkness into light. With your help I can advance against a troop, with my God I can scale a wall” (vv. 29-30). David develops a picture of agility and confidence mixed together in one invincible package. David affirms confidence in God’s way with the words “blameless” and “tested” (v. 31). His lyrics in Psalm 27:1-10 tell of his earlier thoughts of God in respect to His lamp-likeness: “The Lord is my light and my salvation.” He has led to ask a simple, yet probing question: “Whom shall I fear?,” as if to say, nothing … no one.

III. Third Theme: When our walk is weak, the Lord is our only power. (2 Samuel 22:32-49)

Let’s remove some phrases from this block of verses to see this theme illustrated: “… Who is God, besides the Lord?... Who is a rock, besides our God? God is my strong fortress” (vv. 32-33)); “For You have girded me with strength for battle” (v. 40a); “… He is the God who avenges me, who puts the nations under me, who sets me free from my enemies. You exalted me above my foes; from violent men you rescued me” (vv. 48-49). These lines give foundations to a key principle of the Christian life: God is never stronger in His work than when we are weak.

IV. Fourth Theme: When our future is foggy, the Lord is our only hope. (2 Samuel 22:50-51)

Times had been hard for David, but he wasn’t bitter. As a matter of fact, he died with a song on his lips. “… I will give thanks … I will sing praises…” David saw the Lord as a tower of victories, a giver of lovingkindness, a protector of his family (descendants).

V. Conclusion

One should not wait until the long shadows of age and pressure stretch across his life to take a hard, close look at it. All of us need to take close looks frequently. Are there tough times in your life? Have there been dark days? Is there a weakened walk? Do you see a fuzzy future? Only the Lord of security… light… power… and hope can see you through. We who are down can only say, in unison, “Who do we have, Lord, but You?”

Long before David was a king, he was a composer. His feelings came through clearly in his songs. How about you? Have you ever tried to write a song or poem to God? Why not use this as an occasion to give it a try? Don’t worry about rhyme and rhythm, just let your true praise to God flow from your pen. Perhaps you’d like to expand on one of the four themes David developed in 2 Samuel 22. Whatever you choose to do, use this as a time to try something different in offering praise and worship to God.