

Yahweh God is My Rock

The Names of God part II series

by Chris Famisaran

Let's pray, Lord, as we continue our series on the names of God. Lord, be with us as we study. Lord, how you are our rock Jesus name. Amen.

Good to see you all. I missed you. So we are in the second week of a series on the names of God. Bill took care of Yahweh Tsebaoth last week, the Lord of hosts, or could actually be translated multiple ways, even as a commander. But today we're going to talk about Yahweh as God, as my rock.

As a child, I loved dirt and I loved rocks. So much so that I tried to eat rocks one day. Didn't work out well for my teeth. And of course, as any young boy also likes to find rocks. What do we do with rocks? We throw rocks. And if we're in the presence of other boys, what do we try to do? We try to throw the rock the furthest as much as possible, or we try to find another rock to hit. It's always a competition, right? And then even as I got older and I would go backpacking and when I'd hike up to Mount Baldy or Mount San Gorgonio, at the top you will find shelters that have rocks stacked up in circles to protect the tent, to at least try to break the wind so that even if it's a high wind, the tent, even if you don't even have a tent, the wind will not be as bad or as strong. In many ways, it was almost like a little bit of a refuge, a fortress.

Now, today I'd like to go to Psalm 18. Okay, let's go to the book of Psalms, chapter 18. Today again, we're going to be looking at Yahweh, God is my rock. And here's a couple of verses that we're going to be looking at. So Psalm 18, verses 1 through 3. We all there? Okay. Actually, in your Bibles, majority of the Bible's version should also say for the director of music of David, the servant of the Lord, he sang to the Lord the words of this song. When the Lord delivered him from the hand of all of his enemies and from the hand of Saul, he said, the Lord is my what? The Lord is my strength. The Lord is my rock, my

fortress and my deliverer. My God is my rock in whom I take refuge, my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.

Now, as you read that passage, what word keeps popping up over and over and over? It does, but not as much. There's another word that keeps popping up. No. "My". How many times does "my" pop up and when it says my, what does that imply? There's this sense of personal relationship, right? And so we see that David is giving God credit and it's actually David is pointing out his Thanksgiving, okay?

Psalm 18 is rooted in Thanksgiving. And these first three verses act as an invocation, okay? And so this passage is very personal. The use of word my indicates that there is a closeness, that David is close and knows God. You know, the larger story of David, David is a very, as well, not always, but generally humble guy and tries to be as faithful as he could be.

And it also shows how David or **the psalmist shares how Yahweh loves and cares for his people.** When you look here, it says rock is mentioned, okay? In verse two, it says, the Lord is my rock. And then he adds, on my fortress and my deliverer. When you think of castles, I was watching Robin Hood, the Disney cartoon, right? And how is the castle built? With a bunch of rocks that have been carved out. Why is it made of rocks? Well, because it was a fortress. It needed to be guarded from the other enemies trying to take over the castle. That's how the king was protected. And maybe perhaps, or the queen was protected, maybe their family members, the staff. If the fortress grows down, the kingdom is at risk of being taken over.

There's also this sense of it's not just a protection, but the Lord or Yahweh is my deliverer. And what does Yahweh mean to be or I am? We were talking about this earlier today in Sabbath school where God says I am. And when you hear the word I am, well then what do you think I am? Was? God is not just I am. God is from the beginning to now and will be in the future. God is all encompassing. God is self sustaining. God is all powerful, all knowledgeable. And here David says, the Lord is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer. He says, my God is my rock in whom I take refuge, my shield and the horn of my

salvation, my stronghold. So God is not just a rock. God is also a place of, as a refuge, a protection.

Have you ever perhaps maybe been in the mountains and it starts to sprinkle and then turns into rain and there's no shelter until you find maybe a cave or a rock that's overhanging. And once you get under it, how much relief you feel because you're out of the rain or out of the snow, there's this protection that you can experience and also not only as a rock, but also as a shield. And what does a shield do? It protects you from things pointed at you and trying to hit you. And also the horn of my salvation, my stronghold. So here David is presenting, painting a word picture that God is our refuge, our stronghold, our rock, one that we can trust. My fortress and who delivers.

So a rock can also mean safety and protection. In fact, this is also maybe, perhaps, let's keep a. Keep a finger here on Psalm 18. I want to go to the book of Exodus just real quick. Similarly, Exodus also points out something similar. Exodus, chapter 33. Okay, Exodus 33. And then I want to go to verses 21 through 23. 21 through 23. Exodus 33. 21 through 23. Ya'll there? Okay. It says, then the Lord said, there is a place near me where you may stand on a rock. And when my glory passes by, I will put you in the cleft in the rock and cover you with my hand until I have passed by. And then I will remove my hand and you will see my back, but my face may not be seen.

Why does God say this? In some respects, one would say, well, you look at God and your eye, you'll probably go blind because of the majesty, majesticness, who God is, right? But even so, God is able to take Moses and to put him in the cleft in a place where he will be protected. Perhaps this is what David was also thinking when he wrote this particular psalm.

Also, if you go to Psalm sorry, second Samuel, I think it's chapter 22, basically. This is also repeated there very similarly now when we say, of course. Well, okay, God's my rock, God's my protection, God's this, God's that. What does that mean? God's just going to be my protection forever. Is God going to intervene for me? Let's actually continue to read. So starting at verse three, I called to the Lord, who was worthy of praise, and I have been saved from my

enemies. The cords of death entangled me. The torrents of destruction overwhelmed me. The cords of the grave coiled around me, and the snares of death confronted me.

Sounds very scary, right? David's life perhaps is on the line. And he says, in my distress, I. What? I called to the Lord. I called to my God for help from his temple. He heard my voice. My cry came before him. Into his ears the earth trembled and quaked, and the fountains of the mountains shook. They trembled because he was angry. Smoke rose from his nostrils, consuming fire came from his mouth. Burning coals blazed out of it. He parted the heavens and came down. Dark clouds were under his feet. He mounted the cherubim and flew. He soared on the wings of the wind. He made darkness his covering his canopy. Around him the the dark rain clouds of the sky. Out of the brightness of his presence, clouds advanced with hailstones and bolts of lightning. And the Lord thundered from heaven. The voice of the Most High resounded. He shot his arrows and scattered the enemy. With great bolts of lightning he routed them. The valleys of the sea were exposed and the foundations of the earth lay bare. At your rebuke, Lord, at the blast of your nostrils, from your. At the breaths from your nostrils. He reached down from on high and took hold of me. He drew me out of deep waters. He rescued me from my powerful enemy, from my foes who were too strong for me. They confronted me in the day of my disaster. But the Lord was my support. He brought me into a spacious place. He rescued me because he delighted.

Here David is painting again a word picture. He was in distress. He called upon the Lord. And as he called upon the Lord, the Lord came and rescued him. And of course, this is all a picture that David is trying to paint, similarly to what he had experienced when there were people trying to kill him. Even Saul, King Saul, which I might remind you, David stayed loyal to Saul because he was anointed as the king. He never went against Saul in spite of Saul trying to kill David. And so he's trying to share, trying to express how in this situation, God still is his refuge, is his rock, is his fortress, is his deliverer, the horn of salvation. When David called out, God responded.

Verse 20. The Lord has dealt with me according to my righteousness, according to the cleanness of my hands. He has rewarded me for I have kept the ways of the Lord. I'm not guilty of turning from my God. All his laws are before me. I have not turned away from his decrees. I have been blameless before him and have kept myself from sin. The Lord has rewarded me according to my righteousness and according to the cleanness of my hands in his sight to the faithful. Okay, now to those who are faithful who believe, you show yourself faithful to the blameless, you who show yourself blameless. To the pure, you show yourself pure, but to the devious, you show yourself shrewd. You save the humble, but bring low those whose eyes are haughty. You, Lord, keep my lamp burning. My God turns my dark into light. With your help, I can advance against the troops. With my God, I can scale a wall.

Have you ever experienced a time in your life where it just felt like darkness surrounded you and it felt like there was no hope. Day after day, it felt like everything just continues to go wrong. There were many points in David's life where this was true for him. Of course, there were some things as well that he did that kind of caused those situations. But in David's life, he did not have an easy life. Even though he was king, he dealt with a lot of problems. And he had to rely on the wisdom from the Lord and the protection and the guidance. He had to wait at times. But God was faithful.

Verse 39. As for God, his way is perfect. The Lord's word is flawless. He shields all who take refuge in him. For who is God besides the Lord? And who is the rock except our God? It is God who arms me with strength and keeps my way secure. Where do we get our strength from the Lord. He makes my feet like the feet of a deer. He causes me to stand on the heights. He trains my hands for battle. He my arms can bend a bow of bronze. You make your saving help my shield, and your right hand sustains me. Your help has made me great. You provide a broad path for my feet so that my ankles do not give away.

Who does he acknowledge for his success? The Lord. Okay.

I pursued my enemies and I overtook them. I did not turn back until they were destroyed. I caused them so they could not rise and they fell beneath my feet.

You armed me with your strength for battle. You humbled my adversaries before me. You made my enemies turn their backs in plight and I destroyed my foe. They cried out for help, but there was none to save them to the Lord. But he did not answer. I beat them as fine as wind blown dust. I trampled them like mud in the streets. You delivered me from the attacks of the people. You have made me the head of nations. People I did not know now serve me.

Does David say because of me I've done all of this? No. Who is he giving credit to? God!

Verse 44. Actually, yeah. 44 people who do not know. I do not know serve me. Foreigners cower before me. As soon as they hear me, they obey me. They all lose heart. They come trembling from their strongholds. The Lord lives. Praise be to my what rock? Exalted be God, my Savior.

Throughout this, David is not taking credit for any of his accomplishments. He is always continually referring to God. Exalted be God, my Savior. He is the God who avenges me, who subdues nations under me, who saves me from my enemies. You exalted me above my foes from a violent man. You rescued Me, Therefore I will praise you, Lord, among the nations. I will sing the praises of your name. And he gives his kings great victories. He shows unfailing to his love, to his anointed, to David, and to his descendants forever.

So what does this all mean? What is it that we can take away from this passage? There are going to be times in your life where it will be challenging.

Do we then just try to exist and try to do the best that we can, or is there a source of hope, of strength that we can go to, that can give us hope?

Obviously, that is God. What did David do when he was feeling downcast and when he was troubled? He called upon the Lord. He called out to Yahweh, who was his protection, who was his rock, who was his fortress, who sustained him. And in your lives, when you come across challenges, maybe it's a challenge at work. Maybe you're having to deal with a difficult person, whatever it may be. Maybe you've been handed a situation you have no idea how to handle. I want you to call out to the Lord, just as David did, and say, Lord, please help me, because I don't know how to handle this situation. I

don't see how I can get beyond this. Pray and where perhaps, maybe difficult situations may make you feel small, where you feel attacked, where. Have you ever felt like you just. You can't get out of bed because you just feel like the weight of the world is on you? Have you ever felt that? Have you. Have you felt that recently? At one point it was just, man, it was so hard to just want to get out of bed because I felt like, what's the point? I don't know how to solve these problems. And there was a problem in my thinking because I was trying to solve my problems by myself, and I wasn't seeking God's wisdom. And the more I try to do things on my own, it gets much harder. Amen. Amen. So, just as David repeats multiple times in Psalm 18, when a challenge presents itself, know that you have a rock that you can go to for strength, for protection, for safety. And when we call upon the Lord, God will rise and come to your aid.

Now, Os Guinness was, I believe he was born in China. And at the age of five, he was sent to go to a school. He grew up in China and unfortunately, for several years, several centuries of European and American adventuring there. By World War II, and there was this brutal civil war taking place, his parents sent him to boarding school. He lived in Nanjing, which at the time was the nation's capital and there was only a few good schools to go. So I believe he gets on a train and he goes off at 5 years old. Moms, dads, can you send your child on a train to another school at that age? Can you imagine that There are some things even 30 years ago, when I was growing up as a kid, it's like maybe I had a little too much freedom. But at five years old, he left. And as he left, his mom and dad gave him two gifts. Two stones. And imagine yourself. Imagine being in his place where he would be alone, far away from his parents for the first time. But they gave him two constant reminders. Two stones, two flat stones. And painted on them was his father's life motto and also his mother's. And eventually, unfortunately, as he tried to escape China, because Mao came in, those two life motto stayed with him. They were the rocks where his father's motto was found. Faithful. And in the left pocket, he carried his mother's stone, which was to please him. The first rock of found faithful or be faithful. And the second one that he carried was to please him. Throughout his whole life, he tried to live as best as possible to be faithful to God and to

please him. Many years passed, but he still keeps these reminders, these two stones.

And I want to encourage you, my friends, we live in a time where every day I just. I'm afraid to check the news because who knows what's going to happen this next day. There are so many things that are weighing on my heart. Just in Texas alone and the divide that we are experiencing. And I wonder, could it get worse? And it can. And sometimes it feels so exhausting, like, why even try? And it's easy to be negative and to be cynical. It is. But in those difficult times, I have to remind myself, the Lord is my rock, and in my rock I can find peace. I can find comfort. The God of the universe that was before, that is now and will be today, will be assure salvation.

So may you lean on the rock where you're feeling overwhelmed, where you're feeling exhausted, where you're feeling like, I don't know what to do. Lean into the fortress that God provides and be patient, because the Lord will respond. Maybe not in the timing that we like, but call out as David did in Psalm 18, call out to the Lord and the rock will respond.

So, reflection. **Where have you experienced God as a rock in your life?**
Where have you experienced God as a rock in your life?

This week, **face your fears with conviction, okay? With conviction, not arrogance. Trusting that Yahweh, your rock will help you overcome them.**
Amen. Amen.

Father in heaven, thank you Lord, that we can go to you in all things in our life. Lord, you as Yahweh, you are our rock. Someone that we can go to that will sustain us and protect us, but also hold us up. May we never forget that. And Lord, help us to see the good things that you're doing in our life when it's so easy to focus on the negative. Help us to find the good things that will sustain us moving forward and be with our church family together as we continue to minister wherever we go, in the city and in our homes and our school and our work in Jesus name.

Everybody said grace and peace.