

Robert Bennett - My Strong Tower

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You know, we've been asked here to consider the theme text for this convention, which is Psalms 18:2.

The Lord is my rock and my fortress, and my deliverer, my God, my strength in whom I will trust, my buckler and the horn of my salvation and my high tower. This is a wonderful expression by the psalmist. It's a vote of confidence, a declaration of his reliance upon and devotion to our Heavenly Father. But it also presents something of a problem. After all, the passage is clear and complete in itself.

So what more can I possibly add? Nevertheless, that is our job today. So we hope that you will permit us a bit of leeway in our attempt to expand upon the topic, and we'd like to begin by noticing that David wrote the psalm in the first person. We see this reflected in our theme.

The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer, and so forth. David claims this relationship to our Heavenly Father for himself. The Lord, all capitals. Or in other words, Jehovah was David's high tower. Of course, as we have all learned, in many ways, David was a picture of the church militant, which means that if we count ourselves as a part of that David class, we too can make that same claim.

Jehovah is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer. Our next observation is that David appears to be comparing our Heavenly Father to a list of different items. A rock, a fortress, a buckler, a high tower. This left us unsure about how to approach our subject until we realize that the comparison is not to a list of things. Rather, David is painting a number of expressions that describe his relationship to our Heavenly Father.

For this reason, we are going to use the semicolons that are found in the King James Version to divide our theme text into four phrases. As expressed in this verse, these expressions the Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, and then the Lord is my God, my strength, in whom I will trust, followed by the Lord is my buckler and the horn of my salvation, and then lastly, the Lord is my high tower. However, we are not going to examine these phrases right away. Instead, we would like to digress a little and ask a question. Before we look at what our theme text has to say, we'd like to ask why our theme text has said it.

Why did David write this psalm? What was his motive? Well, this question is actually easy to answer, at least superficially. All we have to do is look at the first verse of Psalm 18. It tells us that it was written in thankfulness to God for deliverance from the hand of Saul however, this answer is not as complete as we would like, because when we consider the biblical record, we find that Saul tried to kill David a number of times.

Which leads us to wonder, for which attempt was this psalm written? Well, we believe that the psalm treats all of them as though they were one large experience. However, we note that David also wrote about some of the individual parts of this overall experience. So check out the dedication to Psalm 34, 42, 3452, 54, 56, 57, 59, and 63. They're listed there on the screen.

Our next question is how long did this experience that David had last? Well, the exact length of time is not easy to determine, but we believe that it was at least 10 years. Certainly it was a long and difficult trial. But now let us come back to our question. It is not enough to know that David

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wrote Psalm 18 in response to his experience with Saul.

What we would really like to know is what motivated David to write the expressions that we find in our theme text. For this, let us review what we know about David and his relationship to Saul. As we do this, let us take note that the lessons of the lessons that we learn from David's character there will be also lessons that we can learn from Saul, but they are more along the lines of what not to do. Remember, Saul began his reign with a number of advantages. He was especially chosen by God and blessed with his Spirit.

He also had Samuel as his counselor and confidant. The record is that Saul was very humble when he was first made king, but unfortunately that humility did not last. Twice Saul was tested by the Lord, and both times he came up short. The first is recorded in 1st Samuel 13, where Saul gathered his army against a larger and better equipped army of the Philistines.

Samuel had told Saul to wait seven days until he would come and offer a sacrifice to the Lord. But as the days went by, Saul saw his army slowly melting away, scattering out of fear. When the seventh day finally arrived and Samuel had not yet showed up, Saul decided to make the sacrifice himself. We do not believe that he had an evil motive. It was simply a lack of respect for the arrangement that God had set forth.

By making that sacrifice, he assumed the role of a priest, a role for which he was not authorized, and for this he was reprovved. Samuel told him that the Lord had desired a man after his own heart, and Saul had been given the chance to prove that he was such a man. But by taking matters into his own hands, he demonstrated a failure to trust in the overruling power of our God. For this, the kingdom was taken away, although not immediately. We learn in reprint 1887 that the Lord seems to have given him an opportunity to repent and to reform.

Sadly, Saul did not benefit from that opportunity. His second test came when the Lord commanded Saul to completely destroy the Amalekites, man, woman and child, even their animals. Again, Saul failed to obey fully. Instead of doing all that he was commanded, Saul spared the Amalekite king as well as the best of their sheep and cattle. To make matters worse, when Samuel came, Saul proceeded to lie about what he had done.

Of course, Samuel was not fooled. He told him that his actions were in direct disobedience to God's commandment. Still, Saul continued to make excuses. He insisted that he had done the will of God. He had just made certain modifications.

He had allowed the people to take a spoil, and surely God would approve of this because the people were going to use that spoil as a sacrifice. But that was not what the Lord had commanded him to do. You see, the annihilation of the Amalekites was intended to be a picture of God's indignation against sin.

It was a declaration that he had placed a limit on how long he would allow evil to exist. Their destruction was to be a display of God's intention to completely cut off all evil doers in his own due time. It was also intended to be a lesson for the new creation. Reprint 5648 tells us that the destruction of the Amalekite shows us how each of us must completely eradicate all vestige of sin within our hearts.

The temptation that we run into is that flesh, like Saul, wants to keep the desirable things alive, even to the point of fooling ourselves that we are going to sacrifice them at a later date. But that is

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not what our Heavenly Father is looking for. He wants to see our full heart obedience to the best of our physical ability. If he does not find it, we may find ourselves in the same position as Saul, who was told that the Lord had given his portion to another, and the one to whom that portion was given was David, whom we first meet in chapter 16.

In the account, Samuel was sent to the house of Jesse to anoint one of his sons. Only the son who impressed Samuel was not the Son that God had intended. God does not look on the outward appearance, but on the heart, and the man after God's own heart was David. But the point we wish to notice here is that even though the prophet Samuel had anointed David to be King David was not the actual king, at least not yet.

Time and experience was needed to develop and to prove his character. After all, how could David say the Lord is my rock and my fortress if he had never needed God's protection? And how could he say that the Lord is my deliverer if he had never been rescued from danger by the Lord? And this is true of the atypical David. Also, we have been anointed as prospective members of the body of Christ, but we are not yet actual members.

Like David, we need time and experience to prepare us for the future work that our Heavenly Father has in store for us, and like David, how can we say the Lord is my rock and my fortress if we never needed God's help or his protection? It's only when we realize the limits of our own strength that we can truly appreciate the power and the overruling of our Heavenly Father. To this end, he has given us a most difficult task. He has told us to slay the giant of sin that we find in our own heart.

This, of course, brings us to David's claim of fame as well as the beginning of his troubles. In 1st Samuel chapter 17, we find the account of David's encounter with Goliath. We are not going to go into the details because these are all familiar to us. Instead, we'd like to take a note of the outcome. You see, the death of Goliath was instrumental to the defeat of the Philistine army in that day.

It also catapulted David to a hero status among the Israelites. The downside was that it triggered Saul's jealousy. Now, this did not happen all at once. It took some time. At first, Saul appointed him to be his armor bearer.

In this role, David would be expected to accompany Saul in battle to carry his extra weapons and protect the king with a large shield. Except we have no record of David ever actually doing this. Instead, 1 Samuel 18:5 tells us that Saul set him over the men of war, and he was accepted in the sight of all the people.

So rather than becoming Saul's armor bearer, David became a leader within the army of Israel when not in battle. It was part of David's duty to play the harp for Saul when he was feeling depressed. 1st Samuel 16:23 describes this depression as an evil spirit from God, but the translation is misleading. In reprint 5663, we read that this evil spirit was not from God in the sense that God gave it to Saul. Rather, it was from God in the sense that it was away from God.

It was the absence of the Spirit of God, and jealousy was its root cause. Now, jealousy is a most terrible and at the same time most foolish manifestation of selfishness. It unbalances the powers of reason and is really a form of insanity. We see this in the actions of Saul. In many ways he was noble and courageous.

But when it came to David, his jealousy often took control and he acted in evil ways.

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Saul's jealousy was rooted in his knowledge that the Lord had rejected him. He no longer felt the presence of his spirit, and neither did Samuel come to counsel him anymore. Saul could see that the Lord was with David. As his victories accumulated, Saul saw the admiration of the people turn from himself to their new hero, and this was the fuel for his jealousy.

But instead of fighting against this intrusion of evil, Saul allowed it to fester.

Soon it took full possession of him, and from then on his one purpose seems to have been to destroy David. His jealousy said that David must be eliminated in order that the house of Saul might continue. On at least two occasions when this evil spirit was upon him, Saul threw a javelin at David, intending to kill him. But the Lord was with David and he escaped unharmed. However, after the first attempt, Saul realized that if David's death were to be the result of his own hand, there would be an outcry from the people.

And so he secretly began to plot against David. His first attempt was to offer his elder daughter Merab to be David's wife. The offer was made on the condition that David would fight the battles of Israel. But 1st Samuel 18:17 records that Saul actually hoped that David would be killed in battle. In this way Saul could claim innocence, yet be free of him.

David agreed to Saul's offer and completed his part. But just before they were to marry, Saul abruptly gave her to another. Perhaps he was attempting to draw David into a quarrel which might be construed as disloyal and justify his execution. David, however, meekly submitted to the injustice. He merely said that his family was not noble enough to be given such honors.

Neither was he financially able to give an adequate dowry for a king's daughter. This comment was reported to Saul and it became the basis for his next attempt to lure David into a life threatening situation. You see, Saul's other daughter observed that Saul's other daughter loved David, and so Saul offered her to him on the condition that instead of a dowry, David would bring him 100 philistine foreskins. Again, we learn from verse 25 that secretly Saul hoped that David would be killed in the process. But that did not happen.

Instead, David returned with twice the number required and received Michal as his wife. Now, as we consider these events, they obviously required some period of time to take place, and during that time Saul continued to promote David, first to a captain over a hundred and later to a captain over a thousand. Saul continued to hope that David would be either killed in battle or do something that would cause him to fall out of favor with the people. But the Lord was with David and he prospered.

This caused him to be even more popular among the people, which in turn fed Saul's jealousy. Saul continued to brood over his suspicion that David would replace him on the throne in an act of desperation. 1st Samuel 19:1 records how Saul instructed his servants to assassinate David. The mistake he made was that he included his son Jonathan in the plan. So far we have avoided any mention of the celebrated friendship between David and Jonathan, but it was Jonathan that warned David of the plot.

And more than this, it was Jonathan who stood up to his father and defended David at the risk of his own life. Jonathan argued that David had only done good to Saul to seek his life, for no just cause would be to sin against innocent blood. Jonathan's appeal seems to have quieted his father's jealousy. But the change of heart did not last very long.

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Chapter 19 records the second time that Saul threw a javelin at David and David escaped into the night. It seems that David had really that Saul had never really abandoned his desire to have David killed. So again he sent men after him, and that night Michal let David out of a window and allowed him to escape into the night. Chapter 20 outlines how Jonathan and David devised a plan to test Saul's intent and whether it would be safe for David to return.

But the test failed. It only proved that Saul was still determined to kill David, and with the failure of their plan, David and Jonathan said their goodbyes, and David began what reprint 3238 tells us was a seven year period of exile. We can only imagine how confused David must have been.

These events marked a dramatic change in his standing in Israel. He went from being an exalted hero, the protector of Israel, to being a fugitive, and David was not the only one who needed to flee from Saul. Many others, including David's own family, were also affected. The details of that period are recorded for us in chapters 22 through 31 of 1 Samuel.

Time prevents us from exploring them all, but there are two incidents that highlight the difference between Saul and David.

The first is found in chapter 24. Saul learned that David was in the wilderness of En Gedi and set out after him with 3,000 men. During the search, Saul and his men came to a holding pen for the sheep, and next to the pen was a cave which Saul went into to rest. What he did not know was that David and some of his men were already in that cave, hiding in the shadows.

Verses 3 through 7 tell us how David's men suggested that this was God's overruling. God had put the life of Saul into David's hands. His men urged him to take the opportunity and to slay Saul. That this was a plausible suggestion is shown by the fact that David began to give in to the temptation. He quietly cut off a part of Saul's robe.

But then his conscience kicked in. He realized that to harm Saul was to harm the Lord's anointed, and this he refused to do. Neither would he let any of his men cause Saul any harm. In due time, Saul got up and went his way, unaware of what had just happened. When he was outside, David followed and called out.

He told Saul what he had done and offered the cut off piece of robe as a proof. David asked Saul why he continued to chase him. What had he done to warrant such a treatment? In a moment of clarity, Saul admitted that he was in the wrong. In verses 20 through 22, he confessed that he knew David would become the king.

His request was that when he was king, David would spare his family. Well, David swore that he would do that, and the two men went their separate ways. Now, earlier we had mentioned that there were other psalms dedicated to the individual events that happened during David's exile, and this is one of them. The episode in the cave is the subject of Psalm 57. It describes David's mental struggle when he was tempted to kill Saul.

It speaks of the net that was set to entrap him. It affirms his love and the respect for the arrangement of our Heavenly Father, and we find something similar in Psalm 54. It covers the second incident that we would like to review. In this account, Saul was told by the Ziphites where David could be found.

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Again, Saul gathered 3,000 men and set out after him. Only David saw them coming, as well as where they had made their encampment. During the night, David and one of his warriors, Abishai, slipped into that camp right up to where Saul was sleeping.

Once again the argument was presented that God had placed the life of Saul into David's hand. Abishai urged David to slay him or to at least allow him to do so.

But again David refused. Only this Time, there was no hesitation. Even after all the evil that Saul had caused him, David would not lift up his hand against the Lord's anointed. He would not take the kingdom by force. Rather, he would wait for the Lord's due time.

So David took Saul's spear and his water bottle, and they left the camp unnoticed. When they were a safe distance away, David called out in the darkness. He called for Abner, Saul's cousin and the commander of the army. David chastised him for failing to protect Saul. He told him what he had done and how he had taken the king's spear and water bottle.

Well, Saul heard all of this and recognized David's voice. Once again, David asked, what wrong had he committed that he should be hunted? So in verse 21, Saul seems to have finally gotten past his jealousy. He told David that he had been playing the fool and promised that he would harm him no more. A promise that he appears to have kept.

For there is no record that Saul ever hunted after David again. David's steadfast course of mercy had conquered Saul. He had proven that he was a man after God's own heart. But what exactly does that mean? It means that David was full of faith in God.

He trusted in God's overruling providence even when he could not trace him. David was absolutely loyal and always sought to do the Lord's will. Although he was far from perfect, David continued to strive for righteousness. When he failed, it caused him grief and it led him to repentance. Contrast this with Saul, who had allowed his better judgment to be overcome by an evil spirit.

And so we circle back to revisit the question we posed earlier. Why did David write Psalm 18? Well, verse one told us that it was in thankfulness for deliverance from the hand of Saul, and as we have examined some of the details of that deliverance, we saw how Saul attempted to kill David a number of times. Twice he threw a spear at him.

Twice he used his own daughters to manipulate David to put him into harm's way in the hope that he would be killed. When that did not work, Saul sent his servants to kill him, forcing David to become a fugitive. He was hunted for years before Saul was killed in battle and David could begin the process of becoming the actual king over Israel. This entire experience shows us the reason behind what David wrote in Psalm 18. Now let us take a closer look at what he was actually saying.

Like most of you, I make no claim to being a Hebrew scholar. I rely on strongs and vines and all the other reference material to try to understand the subtleties of the Scriptures. However, in the case of our theme text, those references do not seem to help us very much. As we have already observed, the words that David used were not intended to be taken literally. When David wrote, the Lord is my rock, he does not mean that our Heavenly Father is a literal rock.

He was speaking figuratively, and this is not so unusual. We use figurative language all the time. But let us notice that there is also another layer to what David wrote, a prophetic layer. When we read Psalm 18, we observe that some of it seems to be overstated.

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As an example, consider verses 6 and 7.

If David were speaking only of his own experience, the wording here seems a little over the top.

However, when we recognize that David was used as the mouthpiece of the Lord, then in these verses we see a prophetic picture. So when David says, in my distress I called upon the Lord, in one sense he is speaking for Himself. But in a larger sense, when he declares that the earth shook and trembled, and the foundations also of the hills moved and were shaken, we understand that David is speaking for the Christ, head and body, and we hear something that sounds a lot like other prophecies. They tell us of the trouble that occurs when the Lord installs his antitypical David as king.

Now, while a study of the prophetic aspects of this psalm would be enlightening, it is not our intention to go that route. At this time our focus is primarily on verse two. So when we read, the Lord is my rock, and my fortress and my deliverer, we ask again, why would David compare our Heavenly Father to a rock? After all, a rock is inanimate. It has no intelligence nor any power of itself.

So what did David mean when he used this metaphor? Well, perhaps we can gain some insight by looking at other places in the Bible where this same illustration is used. For instance, in Deuteronomy 32, 3, 4, we read, ascribe ye greatness unto our God. He is the rock, his work is perfect, for all his ways are judgment a God of truth, and without iniquity Just and right is he. Notice here that the Lord is not compared to just any rock, but to the rock, as if this rock were superlative above all else.

And the same claim is made in 1 Samuel 2, 2. There is none holy as the Lord, for there is none beside thee Neither is there any rock like our God. Yes, our Heavenly Father is a rock unlike any other, and in this illustration we do not imagine a small rock such as we might hold in our hand or even a large rock that might take two or three men to lift. No, we think of something immense, a geological formation of such size and majesty that it evokes a sense of awe, immovable, impenetrable.

We imagine a place such as it says in Psalm 62:7 in God is my salvation and my glory. The rock of my strength and and my refuge is in God, and notice that in this verse, not only is our Heavenly Father our strength, he is also our refuge. He is our defensive position. Which brings us back to our theme text.

David has connected this idea of our Heavenly Father as a rock with the idea that he is also our fortress, and we find this same combination of Hebrew words used in a couple of other places. Psalms 31:3 proclaims, for thou art my rock and my fortress therefore for thy name's sake lead me and guide me, and Psalm 71:3 makes a similar declaration. So what does this particular combination of words tell us?

Well, when you or I think about a fortress, we might think of a medieval castle surrounded by a moat, or perhaps high on a mountaintop. Of course, David never saw such a thing. Yet the idea is similar. If we were to imagine ourselves alongside him in the wilderness, running from those who sought his death, we can see why David would seek out a place that was easily defended, some natural fortress where a small band of men could hold off a large number of attackers, and the top of a large rock formation might be just such a place.

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So when we look at the phrase the Lord is my rock and my fortress, we find that David has pictured God as a place where no harm can reach him. He describes our Heavenly Father as the fortress wherein we might find safety, our strong habitation. This is a familiar concept. Even our hymns portray our Heavenly Father in such a manner. Take, for instance, hymn 1:67.

God's promises exceeding great, he makes to us secure. Yea, on this rock our faith may rest, immovable and sure. Or perhaps you might have thought of the familiar Words of hymn 124. In the rifted rock I am resting, safe and sure from all alarm, storms and billows have united all in vain to do me harm. But then, as if it were not enough to describe our Heavenly Father as the place of our protection, David adds that he is also our deliverer.

The Lord God is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer. The Hebrew carries the idea of escaping, of slipping away, or of causing that escape, and who among us hasn't found this to be true? Our Heavenly Father is the provider of our escape from any and all harm that might come to the new creature. He is our deliverer in the present time as well as in the ultimate sense.

And the condition for this salvation is our trust in Him. As we read in Psalm 37, 39, 40, the salvation of the righteous is of the Lord. He is their strength in the time of trouble, and the Lord shall help them and deliver them. He shall deliver them from the wicked and save them because they trust in Him.

This trust in our heavenly Father comes up again in the next phrase of our theme text. In it, David proclaims, the Lord is my God, my strength in whom I will trust. Although what strikes us first here is that the phrase appears to be redundant. The Lord is my God. Why this duplication?

Well, as we said before, we recognize that in the King James, when the word Lord is written with all caps, it is the Hebrew word commonly pronounced Jehovah. So the question really is, why did David need to add the word God? But of course, that word God is just a translation of the Hebrew. The word he actually used was El.

It's a variation of Strong's 430 Elohim, with which we are all familiar, and while Strong's 410 is normally translated God, we have also learned from our studies in the fifth volume that it can be applied to angels, to men, as well as to false gods and even to idols. In the King James, we also find it translated as might mighty, great power, and also strength. An example of this is found in Proverbs 3:27 withhold not good from them to whom it is due when in the power when it is in the power of thine hand to do. This sense of the word power seems to be what David was after in our theme text.

However, it would have been problematic to translate El in this verse as either power or strength, because the very next word is also translated strength, which for that word is the best translation. So we'd like to offer another way to think about this phrase. We would like to interpret what David has said here using the following the Lord is the strength of my strength in whom I will trust. In other words, our Heavenly Father was the power or the might behind David's strength. If this seems like an odd concept to you, notice that we find the same principle in 2 Corinthians 12, 9:10.

The apostle Paul recounts how he had petitioned the Lord to remove what he calls the thorn in his flesh, and what did the Lord tell him? My grace is sufficient for thee My strength is made perfect in weakness.

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We'd like you to take note that included in the apostle's response is this for when I am weak, then I am strong. In other words, our reliance on the power of our Heavenly Father gives us the strength that allows us to continue along this narrow way. Our Heavenly Father is the power that underlies and fuels our strength. But then we come back to the last part, in Whom I will Trust. The Hebrew here implies the act of fleeing to some place or something for protection.

Figuratively, it means to confide in it's the act of placing our confidence in the power of our Heavenly Father and then consciously using that confidence as the basis for our strength. Our weakness is made perfect in his strength. In the next phrase, David changes the image a little. He proclaims, the Lord is my buckler and the horn of my salvation. The Old Testament speaks of two different types of a large shield and a smaller one called a buckler.

The word translated buckler in this verse can mean either, and while buckler is probably the more correct translation, I am not sure if it makes any difference in our understanding. Because once again, David is not talking about a literal shield or buckler. He has given us a symbol for the protection our Heavenly Father grants, and once again, we are not unfamiliar with the concept.

In Ephesians 6:16, the apostle Paul speaks of the shield of faith as a part of the armor of God. This shield of faith protects us from the arrows and the darts shot at us by our enemy, the adversary, and that's an image that we can easily imagine going through David's mind as the javelin struck the wall beside him. The Lord was his shield and protector. But this protection applies only to those in a covenant relationship with our God.

It is our faith in our Heavenly Father that gives him reason to become our shield.

But then we find an anomaly. You see, David has given us a slightly different Metaphor. In Psalm 91:4. Here he speaks of the shield of truth. So is he telling us something different?

Not really. We find the two combined in reprint 4926 when it says his truth that grand system of truth comprised in the divine plan of the ages, is an ample shield and buckler to all who in simplicity of heart receive it and prove faithful to is the armor of God, which the apostle urges all the faithful to put on. So it is our faith in our Heavenly Father's grand plan, the truth of his word, that is the shield that becomes part of our armor, and notice that our theme couples this buckler with another phrase, the horn of my salvation. Throughout the Scriptures, a horn is used as a symbol of power.

For instance, Psalm 75:10 tells us that all the horns of the wicked also will I cut off, but the horns of the righteous shall be exalted. Yes, a time is coming when the power of the wicked will come to an end, a time when the power of righteousness alone will stand. So when we read that the Lord is the horn of my salvation, we understand that our Heavenly Father is the power, is the power behind our salvation or our deliverance, and not only ours, but also for the entire race of mankind.

This brings us to our last comparison made in our theme text, which is also the source for our title the Lord is My High Tower what is David saying here? While the word translated high tower is Strong's 4869 misgob, it is usually translated either defense or refuge, and in three places it is rendered high tower, an elevated vantage point. This makes us think of a watchtower, a place from which one would sound the alarm at the approach of danger, a watchful eye, as in the wilderness of Ziph when David saw the approach of Saul's army.

A strong tower is also a position of defense when attacked by an enemy. It would be a place of safety. We read of this In Psalm chapter 61, verse 3 For thou hast been a shelter for me, and a

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strong tower from the enemy. Our strong tower shelters us he is our refuge from the attacks made by our adversary, and the hymn that we sang at the beginning of the hour conveys this My strong tower is he to him will I flee in him, confide in him abide my strong tower is he.

But now let us what is it about our Heavenly Father that makes him our strong tower?

Proverbs 18:10 tells us that it is his name. The name of the Lord is a strong tower. The righteous runneth into it, and is safe.

The Hebrew word carries the idea of reputation. In other words, it is what we know about our Heavenly Father that becomes our strong tower. Our knowledge of his character and our personal relationship to him. These make him our refuge.

And what an encouragement it is for us to seek out that knowledge, to adopt his character as our own. As it says in 1st Chronicles 16:10, Let the heart of him rejoice that seek the Lord. We only wish that the world would also recognize this truth. But alas, they do not. They have their own strong tower.

Scriptures such as Zephaniah 1:16 use the analogy of a strong tower to represent the well entrenched governments of the present evil world.

Of course those strong towers are not as strong as the world thinks that they are. They are part of the old order and will not last. The Lord's hand will be heavy upon them during this great time of trouble. As we read in Isaiah 2:17, the loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be made low, and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day. Yes, that is the day that we look forward to, a day when only the strong tower of our Lord will exist.

Until then, in the heat of the battle of this day, sometimes it is hard to tell which side is actually prevailing. But this does not concern us.

We remain unmoved because, as we have read in reprint 5539 excuse me, no power in the universe is able to cope with our God. Now take a moment and think about the magnitude of that statement. No power in all of creation can thwart the plans for God. Indeed, he is the strong tower of those who put their trust in Him. He is our rock and our fortress, our deliverer.

He is the strength that makes perfect our weakness, our shield from all that would harm us as new creatures. He is the power that will accomplish our deliverance, our strong tower. In him we have placed our trust and so we'd like to close today with a scripture that connects our theme text to our closing hymn. It is Psalm 61, verses 2 and 3. From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee when my heart is overwhelmed.

Lead me to the rock that is slight, that is higher than I, for thou hast been a shelter for me and a strong tower from the enemy, and may the Lord add his blessing.