

DAVID: A MAN OF PASSION AND DESTINY

STUDY TWENTY-TWO

A Song of Triumph

2 Samuel 22

Are times hard? Are there troubled days upon you? Believe me, from this psalm you have the assurance that the Lord takes delight in you in your time of need.

—Pastor Charles R. Swindoll

GROWING old has its benefits. Greying hair and wrinkled skin reflect the years of hard-earned wisdom and skill. These benefits of lifelong experience seem particularly evident among artists. Many painters, poets, authors, and musicians produce their best work toward the end of their lives.

For King David, on the other hand, his final days were not his best days. One might expect David to have ended his rule with successful political schemes or grand military victories. But during his last days, his kingdom, his family, and his own spirit were weaker than they had ever been.

Yet, he enjoyed mastery of one skill that helped him through these difficult days. Long before he signed royal decrees, he composed music—songs for his people, songs for his God.

This *Searching the Scriptures* study invites us to listen to David sing his swan song. Contrary to what you might expect based on his immediate circumstances, His song is a song of triumph and faith. It reflects upon a long and difficult life lived for God, offering timeless lessons about how those who desire to be people after God's own heart can endure life's hardest moments.



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A Song of Triumph

2 Samuel 22



PREPARE YOUR HEART

As you prepare your heart to encounter the truth of God's Word, meditate on *Psalm 37:23–25, 39–40* from David's final years of life. Ask God to reveal Himself to you and to carry you through your remaining days.

*The LORD directs the steps of the godly.
He delights in every detail of their lives.
Though they stumble, they will never fall,
for the LORD holds them by the hand.
Once I was young, and now I am old.
Yet I have never seen the godly abandoned
or their children begging for bread. . . .
The LORD rescues the godly;
he is their fortress in times of trouble.
The LORD helps them,
rescuing them from the wicked.
He saves them,
and they find shelter in him.*



TURN TO THE SCRIPTURES

Though David could have spent his last days looking back with pure satisfaction about the many wonderful things God had accomplished through him, many challenges still heaped loads of grief upon his heart.

First, David lost his rebellious son Absalom. Even though the king stopped Absalom's coup, his son nevertheless died in the process. Second, a famine swept over Israel for three years, leaving the land desolate and the people with little food. Finally, the Philistines—those age-old enemies David had battled his whole life—waged war against Israel yet again.

David could have looked at his circumstances and painted his life with one word: *failure*. Even so, David loved God, trusted Him, and saw Him successfully working out His plan despite David's shortcomings. In 2 Samuel 22, David offers a song of praise to God for all the triumphs He produced both in and through David's life.



A Song of Triumph

2 Samuel 22



Observation: God's Deliverance, David's Praise

Read the song preserved in *2 Samuel 22* through from beginning to end one time before answering the following questions. As you read, imagine an old and weary David sitting alone in his throne room offering this song in prayer to his God.

According to *22:1*, when did David write this song?

Having read the whole psalm, note David's emotions and attitude.

Now, read the song again, and as you read, gradually fill in the answers to each question below, focusing on observation.¹ Notice how David stacked his images, and look out especially for repeated words and ideas.

How did David describe his own difficult circumstances?



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How did David describe God and His character?

What did God do to rescue David from his circumstances?

How did David describe his relationship with God?

Though David felt like his life was crumbling, God held him together, all the while forging him into a man of great faith. As soon as David realized this hopeful reality, he had no other desire than to pick up his harp and sing praises to his God.



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Interpretation: Ancient Song, Timeless Truth

While the beautiful poetry of David's song fills the mind with pictures of God's love and power, it may be difficult to discern what these images mean for God's people. Use the questions below to guide your interpretation of 2 Samuel 22.

Pick the most meaningful images David used to express and to praise God's character. What do these images teach?

How is David's attitude instructive for followers of Jesus who face difficult circumstances today?

What is the theme verse of this song of David? Summarize this verse's main idea in your own words.



A Song of Triumph

2 Samuel 22

God is our only light and strength and security and hope. He alone. Not our family. Not our church. Not our job. Certainly not this world. He alone will be there when everything else fades from the scene. Do you really believe that? I mean really believe that? It will transform your life if you really do. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll



Correlation: Paul's Pain, God's Response

Like David, the apostle Paul endured a season when he desperately needed reassurance from God. And like David's sufferings, Paul's trials taught him important lessons about himself and about God's character.

Read [2 Corinthians 12:7b–10](#). According to [12:7b](#), what was the source of Paul's pain? Why did he suffer this way? (For some insights into this tricky verse, feel free to consult your [Bible study tools](#).)

According to [12:8](#), what did Paul do about his suffering? According to [12:9](#), how did God respond to Paul?



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What lessons did Paul learn about himself and about God through this experience according to 2 Corinthians 12:9–10?

Aren't Paul's words hard to put into action? We want to be strong. And yet he declares a very key principle in the Christian life: God is never stronger in His work than when we are weak. When we have come to an end, He has come to His beginning.
—Pastor Chuck Swindoll

When I am weak, then I am strong. Both Paul and David realized that strength doesn't come from mere grit or determination. No, *true* strength comes from dependence on God, and people rely on Him only when they admit how desperately they need Him. Do you recognize this need in your own life today? Consider this question as you work through application for this passage.



Application: Troubled Days, Blessed Assurance

Based on David's godly reflection of the essential role of God's guiding hand in his life, Pastor Chuck Swindoll developed four points of application for Christians enduring a difficult season.

- *When times are tough, the Lord is our only security.*
- *When days are dark, the Lord is our only light.*
- *When our walk is weak, the Lord is our only strength.*
- *When our future is foggy, the Lord is our only hope.*



A Song of Triumph

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Can you connect with David's feelings prior to writing his song of triumph? Are you enduring a difficult season right now? Do you feel like you're failing in your faith journey? Are you uncertain or worried about what awaits you down the line? Record how so and why.

In what ways has God proven to be your security, light, strength, or hope in the past? How does remembering these examples of God's faithfulness encourage you to hold fast to Him amid your difficult circumstances?

The reason we have trouble believing He is our only hope, security, light, and strength is because we try everything else. We have too many built-in crutches to which we turn automatically. And I openly declare that as being my problem just as well as it's your problem. Yet He waits patiently to show Himself strong. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll

What would it look like for you to follow David's example by embracing a posture of worship and faith despite your hardships? Write down some practical steps you can take below.



A Song of Triumph

2 Samuel 22

David easily could have retraced the steps of his life and stopped only at his lowest moments, lamenting his folly and regretting his mistakes. Instead, David knew that God magnified his strength despite his own weaknesses. So he turned to God in worship. Through David's inspired song that has been preserved through the centuries, Jesus invites us to do the same.



A FINAL PRAYER

Father, I know times will come when I feel burdened by life and distant from You. During these seasons, show me Your love, grace, and faithfulness, and remind me of all the times You've acted as a guiding light during my darkest days. Thank You for caring for me throughout my life. Help me remain faithful to You until my very last day. In Jesus' name, amen.

ENDNOTE

1. To learn about Pastor Chuck Swindoll's *Searching the Scriptures* method of Bible study, go to the web page, "[How to Study the Bible for Yourself](#)."

