

# PSALM 18:1–3

---

Psalm 18 is the second psalm in the collection that is usually labeled a royal psalm, a category delineated by modern scholars to identify those psalms that feature discussion of, or speech from, the Israelite monarch or that celebrate the office of human kingship. Psalm 18 has been called the king’s psalm of thanksgiving. Because the psalmist prays for and receives help in what appears to be a military conflict, the psalm is sometimes referred to as a victory hymn. Note that a version of Psalm 18 appears in 2 Samuel 22, inserted after a chapter concerning David’s battles against the Philistines (similar to the setting indicated in the superscription to the psalm itself).

Note the feelings of intimacy and devotion for the Lord expressed in the first verse: “I will love thee, O Lord” (rendered as “I love you, O Lord” in most modern translations). The next verse goes on to describe the great trust the psalmist has in the Lord, using several metaphors that communicate the speaker’s experience with the Lord’s protection and security in times past (for example, in military conflicts). Compare this to how the Book of Mormon prophet Nephi similarly expressed his trust in God’s deliverance, referring to the Lord as “the rock of my salvation” (2 Nephi 4:30). Jeremiah likewise called out to the Lord as “my strength, and my fortress, and my refuge in the day of affliction” (Jeremiah 16:19). When times were trying and afflictions were bearing down upon them, these individuals were able to remember the many times God had been there for them and protected them from harm.

The phrase “the horn of my salvation” may be the most unfamiliar metaphor from verse 2 for modern readers. In biblical times, a horn was a symbol of strength and power. For example, in Psalm 75:10, the Lord said that he will give the righteous power over the wicked in declaring that “all the horns of the wicked also will I cut off; but the horns of the righteous shall be exalted.” Additionally, the corners of the altar

of the temple were referred to as horns and were sanctified with blood during the rituals of atonement (see Leviticus 8:15). The horns of the altar became a place of refuge for those seeking sanctuary and mercy (see 1 Kings 1:50–53). The Savior Jesus Christ is referred to as the “horn of salvation” (Luke 1:69).

### ***Related verses***

Exodus 15:2

Leviticus 8:15

Deuteronomy 32:18

1 Samuel 2:1

2 Samuel 22:1–3

Psalms 5:2–3

Psalms 50:15

Psalms 55:16

Psalms 62:2, 7

Psalms 132:17

Psalms 144:2

Proverbs 18:10

Jeremiah 16:19

Jeremiah 48:25

Luke 1:69

2 Nephi 4:30, 35

### **Credits**

***Author:*** David J. Larsen

***General Editor:*** Taylor Halverson

***Associate Editor:*** Morgan Tanner

***Senior Editor:*** Sarah Whitney Johnson

***Assistant Editor:*** Sam Lofgran

***Assistant Editor:*** Verlanne Johnson

***ScripturePlus Design:*** Jasmin Gimenez Rapple