

Scripture: Psalms 18:1-6

The Lord Is My Rock and My Fortress To the choirmaster. A Psalm of David, the servant of the Lord, who addressed the words of this song to the Lord on the day when the Lord delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul. He said: 1 I love you, O Lord, my strength. 2 The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, my God, my rock, in whom I take refuge, my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold. 3 I call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised, and I am saved from my enemies. 4 The cords of death encompassed me; the torrents of destruction assailed me; 5 the cords of Sheol entangled me; the snares of death confronted me. 6 In my distress I called upon the Lord; to my God I cried for help. From his temple he heard my voice, and my cry to him reached his ears.

Sermon Title: The Lord is my Strength / Translated by Melody Lee

The Bible says that the source of life comes from the heart (Proverb 4:23). When the heart collapses, the person's existence itself collapses. On the other hand, no matter how difficult a situation may be, if the person's heart is calm and is not broken, they will never break down. Even if you worship in the midst of such beautiful nature, eat delicious food, and have a good time with people, you will not feel any interest if your heart is in despair. If you watch sports, you can see how important mindset or mentality is. In this Wimbledon Open tennis final, a 20-year-old player named Alcaraz lost the first set to Djokovic, who is called the world's best tennis machine, 6-1. However, when this young friend found himself in a crisis, he said that he ordered himself like this. 'The more difficult it is, the more aggressive I have to go. I have to be more aggressive.' In the end, he defeated Novak Djokovic 3-2 in a full set match to win his first Wimbledon title. If your heart doesn't break, you won't break easily. Today is a day for us to enjoy and relax together in our outdoor worship, but nothing will be interesting if your hearts are very heavy. Through worship today, I hope that we will rely on the Lord, who is our strength, and taste the true joy and victory of life through him.

If you look at the title of Psalm 18, it says that David sang this song to Yahweh on the day he was delivered from the hands of all his enemies, especially Saul. It's really unpleasant to have people who hate me for no reason. There must be a reason, but if the reason is an unfounded fact or out of envy and jealousy, it's really unfair. Saul just didn't like David's existence. Saul even raises an army to kill one person. David lived in exile for 13 years until he became king of the tribe of Judah at the age of 33. So, he wasn't even twenty years old when he started running away. For thirteen years he had to find his way to live by wandering through the wilderness where there was no one. David called himself a dead dog. It was said that he was only a step away from his death. Even in verses 4 and 5, the words death and grave are repeated over and over again. David really overcame death countless times. He confesses that the chains of death have encircled me, the waters of death have overtaken me, the ropes of the grave have bound me, and the snares of death have overtaken me. How did David survive and endure this fear of death for 13 years?

As David was driven outside the boundaries of such a life, he became unable to rely on everything he depended on. As if he were cut off from the land of the living, when he was deprived and wandered, the words of his mouth were confessed in verse 1. "O LORD, my strength, I love you." These words mean, "Lord, who took away all my strength, you took away all the resources I depended on so that I could believe that you alone are my strength." This is a confession of the weight of a desperate life. It is to look back on one's life for over 13 years and make a sincere confession to God.

Only those who have hit the bottom of life enough to confess that only God is my strength will be able to understand the deep meaning of this word. When you are driven to the edge of death, everything you depend on will disappear. The relationships I depend on, the friends I can lean on, the leisure life I enjoy, the food that makes me happy, the books I enjoy reading, etc. Everything that supports and relies on my life becomes meaningless. The only thing you can hold on to is death or being in a state where there is only God. In order not to be driven to death, you have no choice but to rely on God. David's confession, "I love you, Lord, who is my strength," is a profound confession that implies the meaning of life.

Has there ever been a time in your life when this confession was truly made? Do you have the experience of hitting the bottom of life enough to confess that only God is my strength? In Isaiah 30, Hezekiah, the king of Judah, is in danger of dying. In front of the Assyrian invasion, he conducts a mole operation for three years to wage war against the Assyrian king. He works on water supply by digging an aqueduct underground. Through the underground tunnel, they have stored up the strength to last for three years. And allied with Egypt to continue importing food to fill the underground tunnels. At that time, God had the prophet Isaiah speak to King Hezekiah. "I will cut off the staff on which you rely, both food and water." The reason is to make you realize that only God is your strength, and that faith in God is your strength. Sometimes God takes what we rely on and love more than He does. There are times when God leaves us in the wilderness like a kite that has fallen off the string so that we can only love and rely on the Lord.

"The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, my God. You are my rock, in whom I take refuge, my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold." Look at David praising God for sustaining him unshakably. He is exalting and praising God by bringing everything he can to keep him safe. He confesses that he has been in exile for over 13 years and that his fugitive life has just come to an end, but for only one reason. It is because God has been my unwavering help. Is there anyone who wants to give up his life with a sigh, saying, "What are you doing living a life like this?" Has anyone fallen into such a serious state of mind that he seems to cross the border of death with one more step? May Yahweh be your last remaining hope. By relying on Him, he not only passed many hurdles in his life, but also blessed you to praise God. David confesses to us with his own life experience and existence. I hope David's confession becomes our true confession. Lord, my strength, I love you. You are my Lord, and there is no blessing outside of You (Ps 16:2).