

## **Names of God from the Bible**

# **19 – The Fortress (High Tower)**

*All God's Names are eternal names – so He is still The Fortress for us today.*

### **Reading: 2 Samuel 22:1-20**

King David did not have an easy life. Even as a boy, he was consigned to look after the sheep. That was a huge responsibility for a young lad, particularly if you took the role seriously. Not only did David have to find food, water and shelter for the animals, he also had to protect them from thieves, enemies and wild animals.

The environment in which David lived was harsh terrain, with scorching hot, dry summers, and freezing cold winters, especially at night. He was used to violent storms, with strong winds and torrential rain. David would have to ensure that the sheep had enough to drink during the long hot summers and adequate shelter from the sudden downpours. He was used to reading the signs of the weather.

Marauding bandits frequently raided any harvest or stock belonging to the Israelites. Additionally, lions and bears roamed free and would attack any unprotected sheep. David experienced all these before and during his teenage years. David also confronted Goliath, the giant leader of the fearsome Philistines.

However, even after dispatching Goliath and winning a mighty victory over the Philistines, David's joy quickly turned to despair, as King Saul, instead of making David the leader of his armies, became obsessively jealous of David and embarked on a campaign to eliminate him. It was not long before that campaign turned into a full-scale war against David. This gives us a glimpse into the background to David's heartfelt description of God as his Fortress.

At the time, towns had robust defences surrounding them. Larger towns had not only a barricade, but high walls with towers as command posts. Within the compound, there would have been an even higher and stronger fortified tower, known as the fortress. No-one who breached the outer security ring was expected to be able to over-run the fortress – it was to be the impregnable retreat of last resort.

For David, his first fortress against Saul was his home. Saul's armies were outside keeping watch, ready to kill David should he attempt to leave. However, Michal, David's wife, helped him leave safely and so began David's years of living on the run. Nowhere was safe, as even his supporters often turned traitor, informing Saul where David was.

But David did have another Fortress. An invisible Fortress and His Name was Jehovah. Yes, David may have to live as a fugitive on earth, nevertheless, his God was his Fortress whom David could 'run' to, and find peace and protection.

Many times David was 'hidden' by and within his Fortress. Saul rarely found David, even when he was in close proximity. David, however, knew whenever Saul or his soldiers were close by. David spared Saul's life when it would have been easy to kill Saul, for neither Saul nor his soldiers would have known anything about it before it was too late.

David's enemies did not triumph and, in the end, David became the King of Israel. However, during his reign as king, life was never easy for David; he continually faced challenges and insurrection.

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Nevertheless, at the end of his life, David was able to proclaim with absolute conviction and joy that *"The Lord is my Fortress."* He acknowledged that it was God who had been protecting him from all his enemies and preserved his life.

### **What does that name mean for us today**

When Christianity is derided, when Christians are subject to ridicule and persecution, when Christ is just a swear word and the Bible criticised, it's good to know we have a Fortress. We can run to God and find that He is still the True God of Creation and totally impregnable. Our faith is secure and our future is certain. In the end, those enemies will be defeated and we will live safely in our Fortress forever.

### **Prayer**

*Father, we are so grateful that we, like David, have a Fortress to which we can run in times of oppression and opposition. Help us never forget that the door is always open and our Fortress is totally impregnable. Amen.*

### **Additional Readings**

- Psalm 62:1-12
- Psalm 144:1-10
- Jeremiah 16:14-21

### **Questions**

1. What evidence have you seen in the Bible for calling God our Fortress?
2. Has God revealed Himself in this way to you? How and when?
3. How does Jesus fulfil that name?