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The
Songs

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PSALMS - The SONGS

Three

A Cry to God for Deliverance from Adversaries

READ AND OBSERVE

Read through **Psalm 3** and mark every reference to the LORD, including pronouns and synonyms, with a red triangle.

Read through **Psalm 3** and mark every reference to the author with a green capital "D".

Read through **Psalm 3** and mark every reference to David's adversaries with an orange capital "A".

Read through **Psalm 3** and divide the passage into the following segments. Mark and title these segments in your text using brackets in the margin.

1. Adversaries rise up
2. Confidence and comfort in the LORD
3. Salvation belongs to the LORD

READ AND ANSWER

Psalm 3:1-2

Before we begin observing the text, notice the title of this psalm. Who is the author?

What event was the catalyst for David's psalm?

David and his son Absalom had experienced a tortured relationship for years.
Their story is found in 2 Samuel 13-14.
Absalom's brother Amnon had raped his sister, Tamar.
David did nothing about it, but Absalom would.
Absalom killed his brother and fled for safety.
Years went by and finally David was influenced to call him back to Jerusalem.
Absalom came home but was kept estranged from his father, David.
Finally Absalom decided to make a move.

2 Samuel 15

Now it came about after this that Absalom provided for himself a chariot and horses and fifty men as runners before him. Absalom used to rise early and stand beside the way to the gate; and when any man had a suit to come to the king for judgment, Absalom would call to him and say, "From what city are you?" And he would say, "Your servant is from one of the tribes of Israel." Then Absalom would say to him, "See, your claims are good and right, but no man listens to you on the part of the king." Moreover, Absalom would say, "Oh that one would appoint me judge in the land, then every man who has any suit or cause could come to me and I would give him justice." And when a man came near to prostrate himself before him, he would put out his hand and take hold of him and kiss him. In this manner Absalom dealt with all Israel who came to the king for judgment; so Absalom stole away the hearts of the men of Israel. Now it came about at the end of forty years that Absalom said to the king, "Please let me go and pay my vow which I have vowed to the LORD, in Hebron. For your servant vowed a vow while I was living at Geshur in Aram, saying, 'If the LORD shall indeed bring me back to Jerusalem, then I will serve the LORD.'" The king said to him, "Go in peace." So he arose and went to Hebron. But Absalom sent spies throughout all the tribes of Israel, saying, "As soon as you hear the sound of the trumpet, then you shall say, 'Absalom is king in Hebron.'" Then two hundred men went with Absalom from Jerusalem, who were invited and went innocently, and they did not know anything. And Absalom sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite, David's counselor, from his city Giloh, while he was offering the sacrifices. And the conspiracy was strong, for the people increased continually with Absalom. Then a messenger came to David, saying, "The hearts of the men of Israel are with Absalom."

**David said to all his servants who were with him at Jerusalem,
“Arise and let us flee, for otherwise none of us will escape from Absalom.
Go in haste, or he will overtake us quickly and bring down calamity on us
and strike the city with the edge of the sword.”**

**Then the king’s servants said to the king,
“Behold, your servants are ready to do whatever my lord the king chooses.”**

**So the king went out and all his household with him.
But the king left ten concubines to keep the house.**

**The king went out and all the people with him, and they stopped at the last house.
Now all his servants passed on beside him,
all the Cherethites, all the Pelethites and all the Gittites,
six hundred men who had come with him from Gath, passed on before the king.**

**Then the king said to Ittai the Gittite,
“Why will you also go with us?
Return and remain with the king, for you are a foreigner and also an exile;
return to your own place.
You came only yesterday,
and shall I today make you wander with us, while I go where I will?
Return and take back your brothers; mercy and truth be with you.”**

**But Ittai answered the king and said,
“As the LORD lives, and as my lord the king lives,
surely wherever my lord the king may be, whether for death or for life,
there also your servant will be.”**

**Therefore David said to Ittai,
“Go and pass over.”**

**So Ittai the Gittite passed over with all his men
and all the little ones who were with him.**

**While all the country was weeping with a loud voice, all the people passed over.
The king also passed over the brook Kidron,
and all the people passed over toward the way of the wilderness.**

**Now behold, Zadok also came,
and all the Levites with him carrying the ark of the covenant of God.
And they set down the ark of God,
and Abiathar came up until all the people had finished passing from the city.**

**The king said to Zadok,
“Return the ark of God to the city. If I find favor in the sight of the LORD,
then He will bring me back again and show me both it and His habitation.
But if He should say thus, ‘I have no delight in you,’ behold, here I am,
let Him do to me as seems good to Him.”**

**The king said also to Zadok the priest,
“Are you not a seer? Return to the city in peace and your two sons with you,
your son Ahimaaz and Jonathan the son of Abiathar.
See, I am going to wait at the fords of the wilderness
until word comes from you to inform me.”**

**Therefore Zadok and Abiathar returned the ark of God to Jerusalem
and remained there.**

**And David went up the ascent of the Mount of Olives, and wept as he went,
and his head was covered and he walked barefoot.
Then all the people who were with him each covered his head
and went up weeping as they went.
Now someone told David, saying,
“Ahithophel is among the conspirators with Absalom.”
And David said, “O LORD, I pray, make the counsel of Ahithophel foolishness.”
It happened as David was coming to the summit, where God was worshiped,
that behold, Hushai the Archite met him with his coat torn and dust on his head.
David said to him,
“If you pass over with me, then you will be a burden to me.
But if you return to the city, and say to Absalom,
‘I will be your servant, O king; as I have been your father’s servant in time past,
so I will now be your servant,’
then you can thwart the counsel of Ahithophel for me.
Are not Zadok and Abiathar the priests with you there?
So it shall be that whatever you hear from the king’s house,
you shall report to Zadok and Abiathar the priests.
Behold their two sons are with them there,
Ahimaaz, Zadok’s son and Jonathan, Abiathar’s son;
and by them you shall send me everything that you hear.”
So Hushai, David’s friend, came into the city, and Absalom came into Jerusalem**

**David and his entourage leave Jerusalem
while Absalom takes over the palace and the city.
The rest of the story is found in 2 Samuel 16-19.**

To Whom does David pray?



**The Hebrew word for LORD is *YHWH*, often pronounced Yehovah or Yahveh.
It is the proper name of the God of Israel.**

**In the New American Standard Bible
the tetragrammaton *YHWH* is identified for us by small caps.**

Why is David crying out to the LORD? What is happening to him?

1.

2.

What is true about David's number of adversaries?

What are the adversaries doing?



David's adversaries, led by his son Absalom, increased in number to the point they thought they could overpower him. Once they were sufficiently convinced they could do so, they began their active stand against his kingship.

Reread 2 Samuel 15:7-12 which tells about Absalom's treacherous trip to Hebron, where he garnered his final support before attempting his coup d'etat against his father, David, the king of Israel.

What are these adversaries saying about him?

How confident are David's adversaries?

What do they mean—deliverance from what, or whom? (Hint: Remember, David's enemies are rising up against him)



Isn't it amazing to think of David writing this psalm when his whole world was being taken from him? He was calm and confident in His God despite what was happening to his kingdom; despite the fact that it was his own son who was driving the malicious conspiracy against him.

This psalm has so much to teach us. We can learn immensely important lessons, both by David's personal example and by the precious doctrine he has written down.

Psalm 3:3-6

There is a contrast between **verses 1 and 2** and **verse 3**. Do you see it? What is the “but” there for?

Even though David’s adversaries have increased, are now rising up against him, and are completely confident they will defeat him; even though David’s adversaries believe God will not save him, what does David say is true about his God?

1.

2.

3.



The word “shield” comes from the Hebrew word *magen* and carries the idea of covering over completely in order to shield from danger.

Why does David need a trustworthy shield? What danger is he in?

Why does David need to remember that God is his glory?



The word “glory” is the Hebrew word *kabod* and means abundance, honor, glory.

This situation with Absalom seems to be taking glory from David. What is that glory?

How is God David’s true glory?



Point of Depth

**What does the world say your glory is?
How is God your true glory?**

Who is the One Who lifts David's head?



Point of Depth

**The word for "lift" is the Hebrew word *rum*
and means to be high, exalted, or rise.**

What has this situation done to David's "head"?

Who is really in control?

David cried to the LORD about his situation—did he cry from his mind or out loud?

Did the LORD answer David?

From where did the LORD'S answer come?



Point of Depth

Psalm 48

***A Song; a Psalm of the sons of Korah.
Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised,
In the city of our God, His holy mountain.
Beautiful in elevation, the joy of the whole earth,
Is Mount Zion in the far north,
The city of the great King.
God, in her palaces, has made Himself known as a stronghold.
For, lo, the kings assembled themselves, they passed by together.
They saw it, then they were amazed;
They were terrified, they fled in alarm.***

*Panic seized them there,
Anguish, as of a woman in childbirth.
With the east wind You break the ships of Tarshish.
As we have heard,
so have we seen in the city of the LORD of hosts,
in the city of our God;
God will establish her forever.
Selah.
We have thought on Your lovingkindness, O God,
In the midst of Your temple.
As is Your name, O God, so is Your praise to the ends of the earth;
Your right hand is full of righteousness.
Let Mount Zion be glad,
Let the daughters of Judah rejoice because of Your judgments.
Walk about Zion and go around her;
Count her towers;
Consider her ramparts;
Go through her palaces,
That you may tell it to the next generation.
For such is God, our God forever and ever;
He will guide us until death.*

2 Samuel 6:2

*And David arose and went with all the people who were with him to Baale-judah,
to bring up from there the ark of God which is called by the Name,
the very name of the LORD of hosts who is enthroned above the cherubim.*

*Although, as the church, in the New Covenant,
we imagine praying to God as He sits on His throne in heaven,
Israel, in the Old Covenant,
prayed to God as He was enthroned on the mercy seat of the ark of God.*

*David, by faith, sent the ark of the covenant back to Jerusalem
when Zadok and the Levites brought it to him during his flight.*

2 Samuel 15:24-29

*Now behold, Zadok also came,
and all the Levites with him carrying the ark of the covenant of God.
And they set down the ark of God,
and Abiathar came up until all the people had finished passing from the city.
The king said to Zadok,
“Return the ark of God to the city. If I find favor in the sight of the LORD,
then He will bring me back again and show me both it and His habitation.
But if He should say thus, ‘I have no delight in you,’ behold, here I am,
let Him do to me as seems good to Him.”*

*The king said also to Zadok the priest,
"Are you not a seer?
Return to the city in peace and your two sons with you,
your son Ahimaaz and Jonathan the son of Abiathar.
See, I am going to wait at the fords of the wilderness
until word comes from you to inform me."
Therefore Zadok and Abiathar returned the ark of God to Jerusalem
and remained there.*

What was the LORD'S answer? (Hint: Reason this through considering what David remembers about the LORD in **verse 3**.)

What was David's response to the LORD'S answer? (After he believed God, that is.)

1.

2.

Why was David able to lay down and sleep in the midst of being pursued by his adversaries?

Why was he able to awake safely?

What was David's decision upon awakening safely due to His LORD?

What could David have been afraid of?

How many people were against David?

What had ten thousands of people done in regards to David?

Psalm 3:7-8

What does David call on the LORD to do?

What does David call on his God to do?

What does David reason God has done in the past for him?

1.

2.

David desires the people of Israel to be saved from the evil intentions of his son, Absalom. Where does he know that deliverance will come from?

What does David ask God to do?

1.

2.

Salvation is blessing... Who receives God's salvation?

Salvation is blessing... Who receives God's blessing?

READ AND REASON

Do you see the word *Selah* in your Bible, probably over to the right? *Selah* is often thought of as an interlude or pause in a musical piece. Without going into the many interpretations of *Selah*, let's just look at its general significance in this psalm.

There are distinct changes between verses 2 and 3, as well as between verses 6 and 7.

Try to think of David writing this psalm while escaping Jerusalem as Absalom violently tried to wrest his power from him. David is on the run from his son, yet shepherding all his loyal subjects while leading them across the Mount of Olives into the wilderness toward the Jordan.

His heart is dismayed and broken, yet his confidence remains in His God.

Knowing he will be followed by Absalom's soldiers,
knowing he must protect the families entrusted to his care,
knowing that more and more "loyal" subjects
are defecting to the wiles of handsome, deceptive Absalom,
(including Shimei, who is hurling rocks, dirt, and insults at him and his character)
David does what any mighty warrior would do—
he sits down and writes a psalm, right?

Can you just imagine that David places the interludes (the *Selah's*)
at each juncture of his own contemplation?
Can you just imagine David writing, say, verses 1-2, and then pausing,
peering into the heavens above him, crying out to God within his heart?
Can you just imagine, for instance, between verses 2 and 3,
David pausing his writing, waiting on his God to listen to what he has written,
and then listening to God's response in his heart?

What would seem to be God's response?
It seems God filled David with confidence
by reminding him of truths about Himself.
He reminded David that He was a shield which totally surrounded him.
He reminded David that He was David's glory, not David's circumstances.
He reminded David that He was the One Who would ultimately lift his head
by restoring him to his rightful place as king over Israel.

David listens to his God's answer—
and believes Him.
David is able to lay down and sleep peacefully,
despite knowing he is being pursued by a mass of deadly foes.
He will not be afraid of his adversaries, rather, he chooses to trust in his God!

A second *Selah* is inserted.
Perhaps the interlude is the quiet of the night?
Perhaps David's thoughts have come to a rest themselves because God, Himself, has
spoken and David can simply still his troubled mind.

Now imagine David waking up in the morning—
the catastrophe still awaits,
but his God is still there—
the same God he trusted throughout the night before.
Invigorated by powerful trust and belief,
David calls on his mighty God to not only take care of himself,
but to actively bring the victory for the people of Israel,
the very people who have followed David from the city of Jerusalem
to the barren land in which they find themselves.

The final “*Selah*” appears and I have to wonder why it seemed necessary—until I reflect on the fact that what David has written is not silent; what David has written is what David believes and will embrace as he faces each coming day.

The final interlude is between verse 8 and the next verse—how David will walk out the next moment of his life.

The final “*Selah*” is there for us, too.

We can pause and think about what David has written and conclude it is true.

We, too, can ask God to save us from our adversaries.

We, too, can remember that he has destroyed our enemies before us many times.

We, too, can remember that salvation belongs to the LORD—

defeat does not come by the hands of our enemies,

defeat comes simply by not trusting in God, Himself.

Salvation belongs to the LORD because the battle belongs to the LORD...

and He will give His victory to His people.

Selah...

 Segment by Segment

**Try titling these segments yourself.
Ask God to help you.**

Verses 1-2

Verses 3-6

Verses 7-8

Purpose of Psalm 3

**Try to identify the purpose of Psalm 3.
The purpose simply states “why the Psalmist wrote the Psalm”.**

Theme of Psalm 3

**Try giving Psalm 3 a title by identifying its theme.
The theme simply states “what the Psalm is about”.**
