

Psalm 3

A Psalm of David When He Fled from Absalom His Son

¹ LORD, how they have increased who trouble me!

Many are they who rise up against me.

² Many are they who say of me,
"There is no help for him in God."

Selah

³ But You, O LORD, are a shield for me,
My glory and the One who lifts up my head.

⁴ I cried to the LORD with my voice,
And He heard me from His holy hill.

Selah

⁵ I lay down and slept;

I awoke, for the LORD sustained me.

⁶ I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people
Who have set themselves against me all around.

⁷ Arise, O LORD;

Save me, O my God!

For You have struck all my enemies on the cheekbone;
You have broken the teeth of the ungodly.

⁸ Salvation belongs to the LORD.

Your blessing is upon Your people.

Selah

God gives us Psalms for specific times.

One of the reasons that it is helpful to know that this was written about the time that David fled from Absalom is that we too will experience betrayal and danger—probably not to the extent that David did, but the comfort wherewith he was comforted has been given to comfort us as well.

God cares about hearing the details of our situation, v1–2.

Yes, God already knows them, and of course the inspired psalmist knows that as well. But he cries out to Yahweh with the details of his circumstances. We, too, ought to tell God what is happening to us. For though He knows them already, He teaches us here that He desires for us to tell Him about them.

God's own details are the most important details of our situation, v3.

David gets to the critical point at the end of v2. God has invested His Name in us, especially in declaring Himself our helper. David distinguishes himself in v3 from the mockers by drawing the exact opposite conclusion regarding his circumstances from what his enemies have concluded.

If Yahweh is your Shield, Glory, and Sustainer, your enemies and circumstances are always "right where you want them."

When God's details are the most important, you may have assurance, peace, and courage, v4–6.

How very different is David's response from Ahithophel's! David has no access to Yahweh's holy hill (whether glory *or Zion*, at this point), but he is **assured** by Yahweh's character and covenant that He hears, v4.

v5 is stunning for its staccato matter-of-factness. I lay down. I slept. I awoke. Oh, the **peace** that one may have when he is sustained by the unchangeable God more than his ever-changing circumstances! It is sweet to think about how God gave David not just protection, but even a pleasant night's rest. Prayer makes great preparation for the pillow.

And v6 speaks great **courage**. The numbers aren't hyperbolic. That was actually Absalom's plan. But, when Yahweh is your shield (or, when you are to be strong in the strength of the Lord and the power of His might), you needn't fear any creature or any collection of them.

God's salvation and judgment go together, v7–8.

We often find it more difficult to cry out to God about shattered cheeks and broken teeth than about His saving us, but they are one and the same.

His salvation of His people comes through their union with Christ. His blessing upon His people comes through their union with Christ. And His saving and blessing us reminds us that He takes whatever is done unto us as personally done unto Christ. How dreadful for those who would attack His church!

It is an important part of thinking and praying biblically to desire that God would take His holy and righteous vengeance on those who attack His church, and even those who attack us. Only let us keep in mind that it is on behalf of His Anointed that the Lord does this, lest we take such imprecations as license to indulge our own vengeful spirits.

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are welcome to listen to the audio recording, which you may find via tinysa.com/hopewellarp)

Psalms 3. The psalm of David when he fled from Absalom his son.

Yahweh how they have increased who trouble me? Many are they who rise up against me. Many are they who say of me? There is no help for him in God, say law. But you oh you always are a shield for me. My glory and the one who lift up my head.

I cried to Yahweh with my voice and he heard me from his holy hill say law. I lay down and slept. I awoke for you always sustain me. I'll not be afraid of ten thousands of people who have set themselves against me all around. Arise, oh you always save me, oh my god for you have struck all my enemies on the cheekbone.

You have broken the teeth of the ungodly. Salvation belongs to Yahweh. You are blessing. Is upon your people. Say law.

For the reading of God's word. This is the first psalm in the soldier that gives us the particular occasion says a psalm of David when he fled from absence his son some take that as indicating the time at which it was written. Probably better and the majority reformed opinion is the time concerning which it was written for instance song of Moses or song of Deborah were written after in retrospect, so probably something like that, but it's helpful for us that it tells us.

When it was written because we too will experience betrayal and danger and perhaps it will even occur as a result of our own sin. David was told that trouble would arise from for him from his own house because of his sin with Bathsheba and an executing or causing the execution of Uriah.

And so. We have this divinely inspired psalm that helps us because when we are in great trouble, we need something to sing and something to pray but perhaps if that great trouble has come upon us as a consequence of our sin or in some other way we feel that it is a chastisement for our sin we might shrink.

From calling upon God the way David does here. And so the Holy Spirit gives us encouragement, of course. David had long since repented for the sin with Bathsheba and Uriah and that also is instructive to us as a reminder that the consequences of our sin may long linger. And that even after we have long repented of something we may in God's wisdom endure some of the pain that that's in brings but God gives us Psalms for specific times it is good to be familiar with the superscript and the solder and it's also just good to be familiar with the Salter generally so that we have kind of a, A tool bag and we know which area of the bag to reach into for which time of of our lives this is a very comforting psalm.

In great trouble. And so we can reach into the Salter for that. It also ends up being a comforting. Psalm for. When you need to sleep verse 5, which is in the Hebrew verse 6 because verse 1 in the Hebrew is what we have in English as the superscript is above my little computer station there in my office.

Heather cross-stitched it for me while we were in seminary and sleep would fly away. So, Good to know what Psalms to refer to in what situations. You look at verse 1 and 2. Lord how they have increased who trouble me? Do you think God had lost count of the number of people who were against David and troubling in?

No yet many are they who arise up against me. Many are they who say of me there is no help for him and God. You think David had heard them and that God hadn't heard them say that. No, God heard them. God knew how many had risen up against him.

God knew how many were saying and what they were saying that there is no help for him in God. And so we have here in this inspired prayer and this as we're going to see in a moment inspired song. We have here in this inspired prayer. The teaching from Scripture that God cares for us to tell him the details of our circumstances.

He already knows them, doesn't he? He doesn't need the information. But he wills that his children call upon his name. He wills that his people tell him the details of what is going on and what is troubling them? Some of us fathers can be either in a hurry or maybe just not as sympathetic as we ought to be and if a child starts to tell us about it situation that we already know about when cut them off and say yeah, I know all about that and repeat back to them very quickly what they were going to repeat to us and much greater detail.

But God has. Of course he's never in a hurry and he's always willing to hear us tell him the details of our circumstances the details of our situation. Of course the details about God are the most important details of the situation. When they refer to or when they say or David is referring to them saying at the end of verse 2, there is no help for him in God.

And he turns around and he says exactly the opposite. That's their view of how God connects the situation. Haha God isn't helping him. You remember anyone else that they said that about? The Lord Jesus on the cross, right? But in contrast to the Lord Jesus on the cross, who himself did cry out.

My God my God, why have you forsaken me? When the Lord was forsaking him for our sake David here draws the exact opposite conclusion from his enemies. They say there is no help for him in God, but David says Yo, Yahweh are a shield for me. You are my glory and the one who lifts up my head.

So David distinguishes himself from the mockers by drawing the exact opposite conclusion regarding his circumstances circumstances for David cannot overrule what he knows about God by God's word. And so if Yahweh is your shield and your glory and your sustainer then your enemies and your circumstances are always right where you want them.

Where there's almost like. You have set a trap and you need to get them exactly in the the place you want to get them but it can be very frustrating if you've ever tried to do that with anything, you know, that that can be very frustrating but God. Who works all things according to the Council of his will Ephesians 1:11 always has everything and everyone right where he wants them.

And so while those who are his enemies and the enemies of his church might cry out, there's no help for them in God. We knowing that God is ruling an overruling and doing everything perfectly according to his will. We can say aha. Yov is my shield you are my shield.

You are my glory. You are the one who lifts up my head. So the details about God himself are the most important details in any of our situations. And if that is the case for us. Then we may have assurance and peace and courage in every situation. How very different David's response is from a hippopalse.

It seems like every single thing has gone wrong for David here. And yet he has assurance and peace and courage. A hippophel everything had gone right for him, except one. Absalom decided to listen to his eye the architect. Now. I hit the doesn't say that it hit the film new that it was because Yahweh was answering David's prayer that Hush eyes counsel would frustrate or overrule the hithertofells counsel, but when Absalom doesn't listen to it the fell when he does what I recommend, what does that fell do?

It goes home since his house in order and kills himself. Just one thing goes wrong. And his despair is complete. And to destroys himself. David by comparison everything seems to be going wrong humanly speaking but he has assurance. I cried to Yahweh with my voice and he heard me from his holy hill.

Now that is a wonderful statement because it's not just his holy hilt in glory, probably this is holy hill in Zion to where the ark has been relocated and where he hopes one day to build the temple. David doesn't have access to the Holy Hill what's he doing? He's running.

He's crossing the Jordan. He's he can't go. But. Even without access to the place he knows that the Lord hears him because the Lord always acts in accordance with his character and with his covenant. You don't have to be able to see with your eyes or hear with your ears that he is doing so to know that he is acting in accordance with his character.

And with the promises that he's made and the salvation that he has bound himself to he is always doing those things and so is that cried do you always my voice and he heard me from his holy hill? Well, we're on the second say law. And this is the first Psalm in the Salter as we have it that has the say law in it.

The question is what does Cela mean? And the answer is. No one knows of a certainty now who are still living. It is of a certainty a musical notation. It is not reflect or meditate or no well or all those things that have been invented in the last thousand years or so it does break the Psalms in which it is written into divisions.

That's how the Septuagint the Greek translation that existed at the time of Christ. It translates it division. And. There are references to musicians noting it. And it comes from the same Hebrew root as increased, but that could mean increase the tempo. It could mean increase the volume. It is even suggested that it means perhaps repeat the last line or this one.

I don't know if it's as likely I don't know enough about the history of music to know whether or not they had such a thing as a key, but perhaps a key change. And yet if all that we know from the word say law is that it's a musical notation it tells us something about the kind of document that we have.

It's a musical document. It's meant to be sunk and so we have this reminder of what the apostle says in Ephesians 5 and Colossians 3 that one of the ways that we are to be filled with the Holy Spirit is by the Word of God and especially the Word of God's sung.

One of the ways that God has, Given for us to have. His word dwell in us richly is to have that word sung. It's a kind of mid-salm reminder the way some of the superscripts which say perhaps to the choir master or may name a specific tune or a specific instrument.

That the the word of God is to be sung. Now, I'm grateful that for those around these tables, that's not that surprising. If you made it, however to seminary and you'd never heard economical psalm sung all the way through it would it was quite a revelation for me. Of course God put a song book in his word.

We should be singing these things. So, Enough of say law Assurance verse 4, he knows that he's heard peace verse 5. I lay down. Slept I awoke. Excuse me. Free always sustain me. It's mercifully very very short in the Hebrew as is very staccato, very abrupt and three verbs and the front.

I lay down and slept awoke. In fact, only I think one of the verbs has the the little and particle appended to it. Although the pronoun the first person singular nominative pronoun does start the verse but it's it's very short very abrupt the thing that it communicates is that it is matter of fact.

Here he is on the run for his life this this prophecy the about the chastisement for his sin that has been many many years in coming to pass and it's finally happening to him. I mean, it looks like it has life as in danger and everyone has taken the opportunity all of his enemies at least have taken the opportunity to rise up against him along with Absalom and he gets a good night's sleep.

I lay down I slept how many of us have been in bed wishing that it would be that quick that immediate that automatic. I lay down. I slept I woke four that is always sustains me, so not just the assurance in verse four, but the peace and the sleep in verse in verse five.

God doesn't just give David protection, he gives him a good night's sleep as well. Prayer makes great preparation for our pillows and then verse six great courage. I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people who have set themselves against me all around well for us that would ordinarily be hyperbole, we are not going to be in many situations where tens of thousands personally surround us but that was actually the plan by Absalom that's how shy was able to sway him well that and the Lord gave Absalom over into the council of Hasheva.

I said all you know your dad and the you know, what kind of warrior he is if you don't really prepare and get everyone with you. David is going to strike a quick initial victory and then all of your men's hearts are going to fail and then you're going to be wiped out so you should gather all of Israel and go surround David so this actually isn't exaggeration in verse 6, this is something that was the actual prospects of David's.

David circumstances, but. Suppose there are many tens of thousands of of warriors who are going to surround you and then all you have is Yahweh as your shield. If the Lord himself is your shield. Then it really doesn't matter how many creatures set themselves against you doesn't it does it?

Isn't that what happened with Israel and Egypt at the Red Sea. If the Lord is your trust if the Lord is your hope then you say of whom shall I be afraid what can man do to me? And then finally God's salvation in God's judgment go together there's a judgment sandwich in verses seven and eight the judgment is the meat in the salvation is the bread arise that we always save me, oh my god beginning of verse seven.

Then verse 8 salvation belongs to Yahweh your blessing is upon your people. Say law. Well, those are the bits that you might hear on Caleb or your favorite, you know, contemporary Christian station, whatever it is. You probably are not going to hear for you have struck all my enemies on the cheekbone.

You have broken the teeth of the ungodly. But God's cheek shattering shattering and tooth breaking judgment is one and the same with his saving us. His saving us comes through our union with Christ. His blessing us comes through our union with Christ. And therefore. His saving and blessing us reminds us that He has counted us as one with Jesus and He takes what has done to us as personally done unto Christ.

Doesn't the Lord Jesus also tell us this that whatever good or ill is done to one of His little ones. He receives as personally done to himself. And so, it is very appropriate for us to pray for God's salvation and blessing which come to us in union with Christ in the same Idea.

At the same time as praying for God's holy vengeance. It doesn't important part of thinking and praying biblically to desire that God would take holy and righteous vengeance on those who attack His church and even on those who attack us personally only let us keep in mind that it is in behalf of his anointed his Christ that the Lord does this lest we take such implications such curses as licensed to indulge our own vengeful spirit rather than calling upon God to execute his holy and righteous.

Vengeance.