

PSALMS 3

The official title of this Psalm is "A Psalm of David, when he fled from Absalom his son." This is the first of the psalms that has a title, and is called a Psalm. The Hebrew word translated Psalm is "mizmor" and comes from a Hebrew word which signifies to "cut" or "prune" as trees are lopped of their un-needed branches. Those chapters that are designated as "psalms" indicate they are set to music and are lyric odes. Many of the Psalms are said to be "a psalm of David", which may be rendered "a psalm for" or "to David" as if it was written by another for his use, and inscribed to him. Some render it "a psalm concerning David." This particular psalm addresses his troubles, his faith and security in God, his victory over his enemies, and salvation from the Lord. It is generally accepted that David was the composer of this psalm, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. The occasion was his flight from Absalom.

David was a type of Christ in the Old Testament. This Psalm is a messianic passage and parallels the betrayal by Judas. In fact when Jesus left Jerusalem on the night of his betrayal, He took the same route from Jerusalem as David did. At this time he went over the brook Kidron, and to the mount of Olives; see John 18:1 Mt 26:30; compared with 2Sam 15:23,30.

2 Sam 15:23 And all the country wept with a loud voice, and all the people passed over: the king also himself passed over the brook Kidron, and all the people passed over, toward the way of the wilderness.

2 Sam 15:30 And David went up by the ascent of mount Olivet, and wept as he went up, and had his head covered, and he went barefoot: and all the people that was with him covered every man his head, and they went up, weeping as they went up.

John 18:1 ¶ When Jesus had spoken these words, he went forth with his disciples over the brook Cedron, where was a garden, into the which he entered, and his disciples.

Matt 26:30 And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives.

The whole psalm may be applied to Christ. The second psalm sets forth the dignity of Christ's person, as the Son of God, the stability and enlargement of His kingdom in spite of the opposition made to Him. The third psalm expresses His troubles from His enemies, His death and resurrection from the dead, His victory over His enemies, and the salvation He obtained for His people.

Finally, this psalm presents a pattern of learning for Christians today as we deal with problems, it relates to our confidence in God, helps us in recognizing the wisdom of applying Kingdom principles to life's challenges, and teaches us that the victory is ours in Christ.

THE PROBLEM DEFINED:

{3:1} O LORD, how many are my foes! How many rise up against me! {2} Many are saying of me, "God will not deliver him." Selah

A. In a historical sense, this Psalm is related to fulfillment of the prophecy of Nathan to David because of his sin with Bathsheba. David's problems were related to his "sins."

B. We must be careful to not conclude that all such problems and oppositions are a result of disobedience and sin. The cause of our problem is likely a combination of "sins" and "Sin."

C. This Psalm is also a description of the experience of Jesus in His troubles (specifically His arrest, trial, crucifixion, resurrection, and vindication). Jesus' troubles were related to the "Sin" principle.

Who were David's foes? Those who followed Absalom in his attempt to become king.

Our foes: Those who are against Christianity, those who would turn our society and culture into crudity, crassness and godlessness.

Christ's foes: The leaders of the Jews and the disciple who turned traitor, Judas.

Prayer: Lord help us stay faithful to you even when we are experiencing problems.

THE PROBLEM SOLVED:

{3} But you are a shield around me, O LORD; you bestow glory on me and lift up my head. {4} To the LORD I cry aloud, and he answers me from his holy hill. Selah

A. David recognized the protection given to him by God. He knew that God had chosen him as His choice for king of Israel. Consequently, when David had problems he did not hesitate to call for help from God. God is still in the business of protecting His own.

B. We fail to realize how many times we are delivered from peril simply because God is watching over us. Any honor we receive is a result of God's sovereign choices for our lives and any encouragement when we are down comes from the Good Shepherd who knows His sheep and responds when they cry out to Him.

C. In the Messianic sense of this Psalm we see the protection given to Jesus as He grew up (shield), the bestowing of glory in the testimony of God concerning Jesus (this is My Beloved Son), and His resurrection from death (lifted Him up). As David cried out to God and as we must do, so did Jesus in His passion.

Prayer: Father, we thank You for watching over us and protecting us. Thank You for preserving our lives physically and spiritually. Keep us from looking in the wrong places for help so that we will rely on You and Your provision.

BENEFITS OF RELYING ON GOD'S SOLUTION:

{5} I lie down and sleep; I wake again, because the LORD sustains me. {6} I will not fear the tens of thousands drawn up against me on every side.

A. David was confident in the Lord's protection so he could sleep in the midst of all his problems when it seemed everyone had turned against him. David had been in tough situations before he was recognized as king and he was able to sleep though Saul was determined to kill him.

B. The opposition we face in our daily lives is not so evident. However, there are many enemies of our soul that would "steal, kill and destroy" us. Sometimes we lie down and sleep because we are simply oblivious to the danger. We should pray for discernment to know the threat and then to rely on God for our confidence in the battle.

C. During the trial and crucifixion of Jesus, it seemed that all who had not turned against Him had abandoned Him. Though Jesus could have called for angels to come rescue Him, He laid down His life and died (sleep) knowing that resurrection (wake again) would come.

PRAYER: Regardless of how many people are in opposition to righteousness, regardless of the persecution and the problems we encounter, help us to remember that the battle belongs to the Lord and that You are our sure salvation and that no weapon formed against us will be successful because You are there for us.

ELIMINATING THE PROBLEM SOURCE:

{7} Arise, O LORD! Deliver me, O my God! Strike all my enemies on the jaw; break the teeth of the wicked. {8} From the LORD comes deliverance. May your blessing be on your people. Selah

A. David was a great warrior king and learned to rely on God to disarm those who opposed him. Many times he found himself in situations that his only hope for survival was the intervention of God. He also realize that no nation could be great without the blessing of God. One of David's prayers was for God to turn the advice of Absalom's closest advisor into foolishness. David also sent one of his supporters to Absalom to counteract the advice of those against David (2 Sam 15:31-34)

B. We have practically lost the sense that we are in a battle against evil. Even when we realize there is a battle we may not grasp the truth that we cannot win the war without God's intervention. Most have certainly abandoned the idea that all the greatness of our nation is because of God's blessing and, consequently, we have abandoned our close ties to the word of God. If we continue to go in this direction, then we should seriously question whether God will answer our prayer "God Bless America" in the affirmative.

C. In His death and resurrection, Jesus broke the power of the devil and thus achieved victory for all people to be delivered from the penalty and power of sin. Because the victory has been won, then Jesus could say with confidence, "All power and authority (in heaven and in earth) is given to Me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations.

PRAYER: Lord give us a sense of the victory we have in Christ and that nothing (not even the gates of hell) shall prevent us from carrying out Your great command to tell the world about Your great salvation.