

Psalm 3: David Flees From Absalom

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- [0 : 0 0] We'll be looking at 2 Samuel chapter 15 and Psalm 3. So we'll be going back and forth a little bit.
- 2 Samuel 15 and Psalm 3. We'll start in Psalm 3.
- Psalm 3.
- I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people that have set themselves against me round about. Arise, O Lord, save me. O my God, for thou hast smitten all mine enemies upon the cheekbone.
- Thou hast broken the teeth of the ungodly. Salvation belongeth unto the Lord. Thy blessing is upon thy people. Selah. Let's pray. Father, we thank you for your word.
- [1 : 3 4] Lord, we realize that with this opportunity comes great responsibility. And with this great responsibility, there's a tremendous amount of accountability.
- One day we'll give an account to everything that's said from this pulpit this morning. And so we take this very seriously. We ask for your help. We dare not trust in our own power and strength. We're dependent upon you and the power of thy spirit to help us through this morning.
- We pray that the word would be a blessing to people and an encouragement to those who may be going through difficult times. In Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. So if you look back at Psalm 3, the first part, a lot of times we don't read the title of the psalm.
- But a lot of psalms come with a title. And that can tell you a few different things. That can tell you the theme of the psalm. For example, if you read some psalms, it says a psalm of degrees.
- Or some say a psalm of ascent. Meaning these would be psalms that they sung as they ascended the mountain to go to Jerusalem, to go to the temple. But different psalms were for different purposes.
- [2 : 4 4] And a lot of times these psalms came as a result of things that were happening in somebody's life. And they wrote a psalm of worship to the Lord, describing a time they were going through.
- And the title of this psalm is a psalm of David when he fled from Absalom, his son. And so David is writing this at a very difficult time in his life.
- And the account of David fleeing from Absalom is in 2 Samuel chapter 15. So with that psalm in mind, we'll flip back to 2 Samuel 15.
- And kind of get the context of where this psalm came from. And so when we come to 2 Samuel 15, it's good to think about who exactly David is.
- Remember, you grew up, those of you that were in Sunday school as a child, you heard the story of David and Goliath. If you didn't hear that in Sunday school as a child, if you've been to church very many times visiting, at some point you've heard of David and Goliath.
- [3 : 4 9] It's used as a metaphor sometimes. If you're describing a sporting event with some low-rated team against some higher-rated team, it's a David versus Goliath kind of match.

It's used as a metaphor. Even in sports, even in the world today, it's used as a metaphor. So we've all heard of David and Goliath. And so this is that same David that walked out and faced Goliath as just a young boy, to the point where Goliath laughed at him.

And was like, is this who you're sending me? And David, through the power of the Lord, killed Goliath. And so David would later be anointed king. And he would take over after the death of Saul.

He would be one of Israel's greatest kings. And the Bible calls him a man after God's own heart. But that doesn't mean he was perfect. We know David had struggles.

David had times in his life where he made some really bad decisions. When the kings were supposed to be out at war, he stayed back. And then he had this encounter with Bathsheba.

[4 : 53] He committed adultery with her. He had her husband put in a position where he would surely be killed. And as a result of this affair, a child was born. And God said the child's going to die.

And so David repents. And God forgives him. But it comes with a promise that the sword will not depart from your house. So David was promised that his family would see trouble.

You know, we're promised that anyway. The Bible says man that is born of woman is a few days and full of trouble. In other words, our days are going to be filled with trouble just because of who we are, the world we live in, the reality of sin.

Trouble happens. Bad things, bad things happen. And so it's something that can't be avoided. We can increase the number of those things that happen by decisions and choices that we make. And we see that in David's life.

And so David has committed adultery with Bathsheba. Well, we fast forward a little bit of time. And David has a son named Amnon. He has a daughter named Tamar.

[5 : 57] And Amnon forces Tamar into a sexual act and basically rapes her. And as a result, David has another son, Absalom, who is upset at Amnon for what he's done to his sister.

And so now Absalom has Amnon killed. And so for what he did to Tamar. So all of these are children of David. One has forced the other one into a sexual act.

One has killed the other one in an act of revenge. And now Absalom, his son, is still there. But Absalom begins to, after some time, Absalom begins to try to steal the hearts of the people away from his father.

And he gets the people's attention turned toward him. And now Absalom is going to even lead a rebellion against his father.

To the point where Absalom wants to be king. He wants what he feels like is his. He wants the throne. He wants the attention of the people away from David.

[7 : 04] And he wants that position. And so the hearts of the people have turned against David. And that's where we come. David has forgiven Absalom for what he has done to Amnon.

But yet, 40 years later, after the fact, Absalom is going to lead a rebellion against his father. So we come to chapter 15, verse 7. And it says, So he's basically taking over as king, pulling the people away from his father.

The same David that's already had all this turmoil in his family. He's had a child that has died because of a sinful affair. He's had a son force a daughter into a sexual encounter.

He's had another son kill this other son in revenge. And now, 40 years later, this son is leading a rebellion and trying to steal the kingdom right away from his father. All within David's family.

All within the same family of this man after God's own heart. This chosen king of Israel. This one that God made a covenant with to the point where he said, Your house is established forever.

[8 : 46] Your throne is established forever. Your kingdom is established forever. This same man has went through all of this. And now his son is trying to take the kingdom away from him.

So then with Absalom went 200 men out of Jerusalem that were called. And they went in their simplicity and they knew not anything. And Absalom sent for Ahithophel, the Gileonite, David's counselor from his city, even from Gilo, while he offered sacrifices.

And the conspiracy was strong for the people increased continually with Absalom. For there came a messenger to David saying, The hearts of the men of Israel are after Absalom.

So now not only is Absalom leading this rebellion, he's trying to take the kingdom away from his father, but David's trusted advisor, Ahithophel, has actually sided with Absalom.

So now Absalom has gotten into the head and into the mind of David's most trusted advisor. So again, Absalom, the king's son, doing all of this, leading this.

[9 : 54] And it said, remember back in verse 12, And the conspiracy was strong for the people increased continually with Absalom. Hold your finger there, turn back to Psalm 3 for a minute.

Notice how David starts verse 1. Lord, how are they increased that trouble me? Many are they that rise up against me. So it's in the context of what's happening here with Absalom that David is writing this Psalm 3.

And so now when we go back later on and we read Psalm 3, let's keep in mind the context of what was going on when David wrote this. Verse 14, And David said unto all his servants that were with him at Jerusalem, Arise and let us flee.

Remember the title of Psalm 3, As he fled from Absalom. Arise and let us flee, for we shall not else escape from Absalom. Make speed to depart, lest he overtake us suddenly, and bring evil upon us, and smite the city with the edge of the sword.

And the king's servants said unto the king, Behold, thy servants are ready to do whatsoever my lord the king shall appoint. And the king went forth and all his household after him.

[11 : 01] And the king left ten women, which were concubines, to keep the house. And the king went forth and all the people after him and tarried in a place that was far off. And all his servants passed on beside him, and all the Cherethites and all the Pelethites and all the Gittites, six hundred men which came after him from Gath, passed on before the king.

Then said the king to Ittai the Gittite, Wherefore, goest thou also with us? Return to thy place, and abide with the king, for thou art a stranger, and also an exile.

And so David continues on with these men. He's literally leaving Jerusalem. He's fleeing away from Jerusalem. If you look down a little bit farther, you'll find that David, in verse 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. So David has left Jerusalem and is traveling east.

He's went down through the Kidron Valley, crossed the brook Kidron, and now he's going to go up the other side. The other side is where the Mount of Olives would be, and that's where David is going to end up, as we'll see. It said, And lo, Zadok also, and also all the Levites were with him, bearing the ark of the covenant of God.

[12 : 24] And they set down the ark of God, and Abiathar went up, until all the people had done passing out of the city. So not only David, but a lot of people are going with him. They're just, they're leaving.

They're fleeing from Absalom, his own son. You know, here's the king, the most powerful man in Israel, but his son has created such a strong rebellion against him, turned the hearts of the people in such a way, by such a large number, that he's feeling necessary to just leave, to get out of the city where he's been ruling and reigning from all this time.

He's leaving there, and because of his son, because of a family member that has rebelled, that has rebelled, that has turned the hearts of the people against him.

And let's skip down to verse 30. And it said, 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. And so here's David, he's climbing the Mount of Olives, he's weeping, he's in misery, he's in sorrow, he's in heaviness of heart, because he's running from his own kid.

[13 : 43] He's running from his own son, that has stirred up this whole rebellion. And a lot of people are against him, all because of his son has got into their head. And so here's David, just kind of beaten down and broken, head covered, weeping, climbing Mount of Olives, and at this point, David doesn't know that his chief advisor has already turned against him as well, but somebody's going to tell him that.

Verse 31, And one told David, saying Ahithophel is among the conspirators with Absalom. And David said, O Lord, I pray thee, turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness.

So, if things weren't bad enough for David already, your son's leading a rebellion, a lot of people of Israel are coming after you, he's trying to take the kingdom away from you, and by the way, your trusted advisor is with him now.

And so things are just going from bad to worse for David. But remember, this is the context he's writing Psalm 3 in. This is what is happening in the life of David when he's writing Psalm 3.

And it says in verse 32, And it came to pass that when David was come to the top of the mountain, where he worshipped God.

[14 : 58] Behold, Hushai the archite came to meet him with his coat rent and earth upon his head. So remember all this has happened to David? He gets to the top of the Mount of Olives where he worshipped God.

So imagine in the human mind, you're thinking, God has the power to stop all this. God has the power to fix all of this.

But he didn't. But David worshipped God at the top of the mountain while running from his own flesh and blood.

The very one he gave help is responsible for him being here alive on planet Earth. that Absalom. He's running from as he's trying to steal the kingdom from him and lead this big rebellion.

And after all the things that's transpired over the years in David's life, just one bad event after another. And now you've got this happening and David gets to the top of the Mount of Olives and he worships the Lord.

[16 : 01] So you can worship the Lord in the worst of circumstances. And that's what David did. But notice how David started up the hill. He was broken.

He was beat down. He was barefoot, his head covered, weeping. And on the way up the hill, somebody says, oh, by the way, your trusted advisor Ahithophel, he's now with Absalom. David keeps climbing and gets to the top of the hill where he worships the Lord.

And so now with that in mind, let's go back and look at Psalm 3. Psalm 3. It said, Lord, how are they increased that trouble me?

Many are they that rise up against me. Remember that revolt that Absalom was leading? It was growing in number. Multitudes were following Absalom and they were coming against David trying to snatch the kingdom.

And he says, many are they that rise up against me. Many there be which say of my soul, there is no help for him in God. Selah.

[17 : 05] The word Selah, when you see that, that means stop and think about that for a minute. Ponder over that. Think about it. Let it sink in. It said, many there be which say of my soul, there is no help.

The word help there is the same word sometimes we see translated salvation or deliverance. In other words, David's in such a place right now, a lot of people are saying, God's not going to deliver him from this one.

So imagine being in such a circumstance where people are saying there's no help for him in God. God's not going to save him. God's not going to deliver him from this mess that he's in.

There's no help for him even in God. But David says, but thou, O Lord, art a shield for me. My glory and the lifter up of mine head.

Now in those days, a shield was large. You could actually stand and hide yourself behind the shield. And so what David is saying is there's many people that are coming against me and that number is growing.

[18 : 05] They're increasing, but the Lord is someone I can stand behind and hide myself behind him. He's my shield. He will take care of what they're sending at me.

He's my shield. I can stand behind him and I can literally duck down and hide behind him to where the enemy can't see me. Because the shields were large in those days and because they had to stop arrows and you think about how many arrows could come within a moment's notice and so you got to hide yourself behind this shield.

And so David is saying, yeah, all these people are coming against me. Many that are coming against me. That number is increasing, but the Lord is someone I can hide behind. He's going to protect me.

So David had confidence in the Lord even in all of this going on. He's writing this. Remember 2 Samuel 15? He's running from Absalom.

Absalom stealing the kingdom. Absalom leading a rebellion. David says, the Lord is a shield for me. My glory. There that word, my glory there, he's saying, he's the object of my honor.

[19 : 11] David is saying, I'm going to honor the Lord. He's my glory. He's the object of my worship. He's the object of my honor. Remember what David did when he went to the Mount of Olives? He worshiped.

So the Lord is the object of his honor. He's the object of his reverence. He's the object of his glory. And the lifter up of my head. I cried unto the Lord with my voice and he heard me out of his holy hill.

Selah. I laid me down and slept. I awaked for the Lord sustained me. So think about how hard would it be to sleep knowing what David knows now?

How hard would it be? Put yourself in David's position. You're somewhere in the wilderness. You're somewhere on top of a mountain. Wherever you are, you're running from your own flesh and blood.

You're running from your own son who has led this massive revolt and you've got these people rebelling against you. But David said, the Lord sustained me in such a way that I laid down and slept during this.

[20 : 17] During all that was going on, he was able to to sleep. Why? Because he was, remember the Lord is his shield. He's hiding, he's hiding himself behind the Lord. He said, I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people that have set themselves against me round about.

Arise, O Lord, save me, O my God, for thou hast smitten all mine enemies upon the cheekbone. Thou hast broken the teeth of the ungodly. Wasn't it David who said once before the battle is the Lord's?

And so this is, he says, I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people that have set themselves round about me. In other words, yeah, the number's growing, but let it grow into the thousands and the tens of thousands and the hundreds of thousands.

I'll not be afraid. The Lord, arise, O Lord, save me. The battle's yours. The battle belongs to the Lord. So David knew that this wasn't his battle to fight.

David knew that he could hide behind the Lord. That was his shield and the Lord would also fight for him. That was, the battle was the Lord's. He said, Arise, O Lord, save me, O my God, for thou hast smitten all mine enemies upon the cheekbone.

[21 : 31] The idea here is the idea of a wild beast. If you take a wild beast, if he has a broken cheekbone, if he can't move his mouth, most of the danger has been taken away.

So basically, he's saying, Arise, O Lord, save me, O my God, for thou hast smitten all mine enemies upon the cheekbone. In other words, you've taken away the threat. You've taken away the danger.

I'm secure because of you and what you have done. You have already done this. You've already disabled the enemy. You have already made the enemy where they're not as dangerous as they once was.

Thou hast broken the teeth of the ungodly. Salvation, deliverance, belongeth unto the Lord. Thy blessing is upon thy people. Selah.

So David knew where his deliverance come from. This wasn't something he was going to be able to fight his way out of. This wasn't something he was going to be able to figure out. David's tried things on his own before.

[22 : 34] Got himself in trouble. Remember, he thought it would be a good idea to number the people one time and God said, no, don't do that. But he thought he always had ideas and plans of ways to figure things out.

And he had his idea, he had his plans. But this one he said, salvation belongeth to the Lord. I'm not getting myself out of this one. The deliverance that I'll experience, the salvation that I'll experience from this will be from the Lord because he's my shield.

I'm hiding behind him. As I'm hiding behind him, he's my protector. The enemy can't even see me when I'm hiding behind him. I'll be protected from the things they throw at me.

And as a result, he'll be the one that delivers. Why? Because he's already crippled the enemy. He's already made the enemy where they're not as dangerous as they once was. He's smit them upon the cheekbone, broken the teeth of the ungodly.

So remember, David is writing this psalm of comfort. He's writing this psalm of worship. while he's running from his son, while he's fleeing from Absalom, who's got into the minds and the hearts of the people of Israel.

[23 : 47] But David said, in the middle of all of that, I laid me down and slept. I awaked for the Lord sustained me. So the wonderful thing about Scripture is when we look at it in its historical context, we see what was happening then.

To real people, in real difficulties, in real hard times. But then we remember there's a verse in Hebrews that says that he's the same yesterday, today, and forever.

So the same God that David had confidence in, the same God that David worshipped in the midst of horrible circumstances, he's still God today.

He's the God we pray to. He's the God we worship. and he's the God that has said, I will never leave you nor forsake you. So maybe your life is going through some difficult times.

Maybe you feel like David right now. Maybe you feel like the walls around you are just kind of caving in on themselves. But in the middle of all of that, David worshipped. David knew where his help come from.

[24 : 58] Remember Psalm 121, I will lift up mine eyes to the hills from whence cometh my help. My help comes from the Lord, which made heaven and earth. So David knew where his help comes from.

David knew if he was going to be delivered from this one, he knew who it would be. It would have to be the Lord. And sometimes the Lord, either by design or by his allowance, puts us in positions to where if we get out of them, it's only going to be him.

He's going to put us in things where we realize we don't have the answer. He's going to allow us to be put in places where we don't know what to do. And it's in those times where you are forced to either panic, lose hope, and just go into some depression or depend upon him.

And David was at that point. It was either be terrified, it was either go into just this state of terror, or trust in the Lord.

And David knew where his strength was from. He knew his strength was in the Lord. So whatever life looks like for you right now. Maybe you're going through a good time.

[26 : 08] Maybe things have leveled out. Maybe things are going well right now. But you could experience trouble at some point. Maybe trouble is around the bend somewhere.

Maybe you're going through really difficult times now. Maybe you're coming through a difficult time. But however it is, whatever it is, we that are saved have the Holy Spirit living in us.

The Holy Spirit, the third person of the Godhead, the third person of the Trinity, he can enable us to have this attitude of David. To have this comfort that David found in the middle of this, we can have that same comfort in whatever it is we're experiencing.

Because ultimately it will be the Lord that fights for us. The battle is his. If we have a victory, if we see things in our life that look like victory, it's not us, it's him.

Because if it's us, we're going to be defeated, we're going to make the wrong move, we're going to make the wrong decision. But if it's him, if we look to him, he's the one where deliverance can be found.

[27 : 15] So truly salvation, deliverance, belongeth to the Lord. Maybe you're here today and you're lost. The salvation you need is a deliverance from sin, deliverance from the wrath of God that hangs over your head.

That deliverance can be found in the Lord as well, just simply by faith looking to Jesus. John chapter 3 verse 14 says, as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up.

Why? That whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have eternal life. Just like in the wilderness when they were bitten by those vipers, if they looked at the brazen serpent on a pole, all they had to do was look.

They didn't have to reform, they didn't have to promise to do all these kinds of things. All they had to do by faith was look to Jesus. Look to the serpent on the pole, they could be healed of their snake bite.

God. And the fact that John joins those two together, that whosoever believeth in him shall not perish but have eternal life, that means salvation, eternal life is found in Christ just that same way, just by looking to him.

[28 : 24] Maybe it's deliverance from sin you need. That deliverance is found in the Lord. Maybe it's a difficult circumstance of life. Maybe it's a difficult family situation.

But deliverance can be in the Lord. Now deliverance might not mean escape. Deliverance might just mean grace to get you through it. But at some point you'll come through. And then you'll be able to look back on it and you'll be able to say wow, look how the Lord brought me through that.

Because that's truly where deliverance comes from. So David running from his own son, running from the rebellion being led by his own flesh and blood, goes to the top of the mountain and worships the Lord.

Let's pray. Father, we thank you for you.