

Salvation Belongs to the Lord (Psalm 3)

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[0:00] Amen. Amen. What beautiful songs to remind us of our Heavenly Father's love for us! What a joy it is to be here today, worshiping you on this Father's Day. And so happy Father's Day to all of you dads.

If you still have the opportunity to let your dad know how much they mean to you, the difference they made in your life, I encourage you to take that opportunity to let them know how grateful you are.

It really is a joy to be a father. This morning, as I was getting, I was going up on the stage, Clay was praying. I was reminded of some of those joys it is to be a dad. I'm up there as Clay's praying. I just kind of glance my eyes open, look up, and Ressi, my middle child, makes eye contact with me and goes, just like that.

And I'd like to think that I didn't get down on her level, but I'm going to have to go back and look at the live stream because I'm pretty sure I just went right back to her. But it is so much fun to be a parent and just those little things that remind you of the joy that it is.

[1:12] And so let me encourage you, again, if you have the opportunity to tell your dads how much you appreciate them, let them know by buying them that new recliner they've been looking at or that Browning Satori 725 over under.

Just throwing it out there for anybody that needs a hand, not directing, well, but it is a joy to remember our fathers today because fathers are a wonderful gift that hopefully will point us to the love our Heavenly Father has for us.

And in many ways, they are able to shape and guide how we see our Heavenly Father. And so it is a joy to remember them and honor them, but also challenge our fathers today as we look at this passage in Psalm chapter 3.

Psalm chapter 3 is where we'll be today. And one of the things that I love most about reading the Scripture chronologically is getting to the Psalms. You know, at the beginning, you're skipping back and forth.

You're turning pages, going back and forth, trying to follow along chronologically. But then it's all worth it when you get to the Psalms. Because in the Psalms, many times what you get to do is you read the story that's the inspiration behind the Psalm.

[2:32] And Psalms are songs that were meant to be sung for this corporate worship. And many times it's those Psalms that remind us of who God is.

And when we understand the story behind it, it just takes on new meaning. For most of us, we can understand when we listen to both secular and non-secular music, if there's a story that goes behind a song, all of a sudden, it takes on new power.

It takes on new meaning. It takes on new life for us because we understand the circumstances in which it was written. Now, this Psalm today, Psalm chapter 3, it gives us a clue as to what those circumstances were.

In fact, if you look right above Psalm chapter 3, verse 1, you'll see a superscription up in the top, a little heading that reminds you of when this Psalm was written.

So if you look at the Scripture, it'll tell you right above Psalm chapter 1, it says, A Psalm of David. So immediately we realize that this is a Psalm that David wrote.

[3:37] And it also was written, it says, when he fled from Absalom, his son. And so this immediately reminds us and puts us into the story of when this took place.

And so as we look at this, we are reminded of this. To get the full context, I would encourage you to read primarily 2 Samuel 15 through 18.

But if you really want to get the full story, go back a few chapters and read the story behind the story that starts in 2 Samuel chapter 13.

But here's the condensed Cliff Notes version of what is happening. You see, Absalom was one of David's sons and he was an incredible man.

The Bible tells us that he was handsome and impressive. Listen to how 2 Samuel 14, 25 describes him. It says it this way. It says, Now in all Israel, there was no one so much to be praised for his handsome appearance as Absalom.

[4 : 43] From the sole of his foot to the crown of his head, there was no blemish in him. That sounds a lot like the Father's Day card Catherine gave me this morning.

But here what we see is someone who walks into a room and may overthrow his father David. And his plan involves staying right outside the gates in Jerusalem. And every time that somebody would come into Jerusalem to settle a dispute, let's say that one of the tribes had a dispute and they needed to bring this issue before somebody to figure out and put to rest this dispute.

They would come in and Absalom would say, Come over here. Let me hear what's going on. Tell me about what is taking place. And they would come over and tell them all that was going on. He says, Well, there's nobody here that's going to listen to that. But if I were king, if I were the judge, if I were the one in charge, I would make sure that your case is heard.

[5 : 45] I would make sure that someone was appointed to hear your case, to make sure that you had the justice you deserved. And all of a sudden, the Bible tells us that he began to steal the people's hearts.

They began to follow him. They began to long after him. He won the hearts of the people. Which then led to him leading a revolt where King David was fleeing for his life.

In fact, King David, it says, was in such a hurry to flee for his life that he went barefoot. He didn't even have time to put shoes on or sandals on.

And so in David's desperation, in this moment where his world is collapsing in on him, in this moment is when he writes the words to Psalm chapter 3.

And so if you've got a Bible this morning, I want to encourage you to take that out and follow along as we read these words from King David. It says this, Oh Lord, how many are my foes?

[6 : 49] Many are rising against me. Many are saying of my soul, There is no salvation for him in God. Selah. But you, O Lord, Are a shield about me, My glory and the lifter of my head.

I cried aloud to the Lord, And he answered me from his holy hill. Selah. I lay down and slept. I woke again, For the Lord sustained me. I will not be afraid of many thousands of people Who have set themselves against me all around. Arise, O Lord.

Save me, O my God. For you strike all my enemies on the cheek. You break the teeth of the wicked. Salvation belongs to the Lord.

Your blessing be on your people. Selah. What we're going to see this morning as we look at this passage of scripture Is several things that are taking place in David's life.

[7 : 54] Several things that are evident in his life, But I think are often times can be evident in our lives as well. To begin with, We're going to look at this first stanza And see what David saw and heard.

And so as we look at this, I want us to consider what David saw and heard. It says, O Lord, how many are my foes? Many are rising against me.

Many are saying of my soul, There is no salvation for him in God. Selah. You may have noted the word selah Being used several times here in this passage.

And the truth is, We don't exactly know what this word means. It's most likely a musical notation That is calling for the singers of this song To pause for a second, Take some time, Reflect on what was just said before moving on.

And so most likely what we have here Is a pause and think about what was just said. And so that's what I hope that we can do today. So what are we reflecting on?

[8 : 57] Well, David saw his kingdom being taken away Right in front of him. He saw the people turning away from his leadership And following after Absalom.

What was right in front of his face Was overwhelming. The voice of everyone around him was crushing. Just listen to how many times It repeats many in these first few verses.

How many are my foes? Many are rising against me. Many are saying this of my soul. What are the many people saying of his soul? Many people are saying that there is no salvation For him in God.

And this is what David is seeing. This is what he's hearing. All around him that many people Are turning away from him. This is what is taking place here. Not only are many rising against him, But one in particular is rising against him. And that is his son, Absalom. He's the one who's leading the charge. Have you ever noticed how the betrayal of somebody close to you Is oftentimes the hardest betrayal to overcome? [10:08] When everybody is against you, As long as you have your corner, As long as you have your family, Your friends, Those that you're closest to, Well, then everybody else, We can put that in perspective at times.

But when everybody's turning against you, And then those who are closest to you Begin to turn against you, Then that oftentimes starts a spiral That we just let ourselves go down. And then we start listening to other people. Then we start listening and giving credit To other people more than we should. And so this is what is taking place here. Back in 2 Samuel 16, We're introduced to a really nasty character Named Shimei. Now Shimei was of the house of Saul And he hated David. And really anyone that was associated with David, He hated them.

So while David is fleeing from Absalom, Shimei sees what is going, What is taking place And begins to harass David By yelling all of these curses at him, By throwing things at him. [11:11] You see, he was of the house of Saul And so he was upset that David was now king Because that means Saul is no longer And Saul's house is no longer in the monarchy. But David is the new king.

And he was bitter for this. But for much of his life, He wasn't able to do anything about it. But now, everybody is standing up against David. Everybody's pushing up against him. And so he jumps on the bandwagon. And whereas before, David would probably say, Well, this is just some crazy guy. I'm not even going to pay him any attention. All of a sudden, When the many voices are saying, There's no hope for you.

There's no salvation for you. God's done with you. When everybody's saying this, It begins to be a lot easier to believe. It begins to be a lot easier to believe What people are saying. And it makes you wonder If David is starting to believe the words himself. Think about what is happening in the king's life here. This is Psalm chapter 3, At the very beginning of this altar.

[12:10] But this is not the beginning of David's life. This is not the beginning of his monarchy. Many things have taken place at this point When Psalm 3 was written. In fact, much of David's life Has begun to already spiral.

He has failed as a leader. He's failed morally. His home, his life is falling apart. At this point in David's life, He has already stayed home When the troops went to battle. And while he was staying home When the troops went to battle Is when he committed adultery with Bathsheba. And then after Bathsheba was pregnant, He had Uriah killed. Nathan has confronted him About this sin at this point.

He's had a child that has died right now. He had a son that raped his daughter Tamar. And then Absalom killed that son. And so what you see Is much of David's life Is falling apart. And in many ways, He's very likely Could begin to believe What everybody's saying. He's afraid of losing his life here. So it would be pretty easy To believe the many When they start saying things like There's no salvation for you.

[13:19] There's no hope for you. God is done with you. This is what David sees and hears. And at this point in his life, It would be incredibly easy To believe that.

Have you ever been in a situation like this before? Now I'm not talking about Where you're the king And your son is trying to overthrow you And become king And now you're fleeing for your life. I'm not talking about that. But how many of us have been in a situation Where either everyone is telling us That God is done with us. Or maybe the ones that we're closest to Are telling us That not only are they done, But God is done.

Or maybe Very few people know What is going on in your life Except you and God And you're telling yourself Well I'm just going down this road too far. There's no hope for me returning. There's no way that I can turn My life around. Well before we see what David believes Let me share this with you this morning.

[14:23] You may think that because of your disobedience That God can't use you anymore. This is where we need to clearly see God's mercy and his patience with us.

The patience of God In relation to God's mercy Is often hard for us to wrap our minds around. Without saying it We often think Well I know that God loves me But I'm sure that he's just so fed up with me That he wants nothing to do with me At this point. However, that's not the picture That we see in scripture. I find the words of Dane Orland Particularly comforting As we think about this. As he closes out one of his chapters In a book of his called The chapter was called Rich and Mercy.

This is what he says About God's mercy In the midst of those times. He says Perhaps you have difficulty Receiving the mercy The rich mercy of God in Christ. Not because of what others have done to you But because of what you have done To torpedo your own life. Maybe through one big stupid decision Or maybe through 10,000 little ones You have squandered his mercy And you know it.

[15 : 35] To you I say Do you know what Jesus does With those who squander his mercy? He pours out more mercy. God is rich in mercy.

That's the whole point That God is rich in mercy Means that the regions Of your deepest shame and regret Are not hotels through which The divine mercy passes But they're homes in which Divine mercy abides.

When we understand the scope Of God's love and mercy for us It is overwhelming And life-giving to us. Now this is not to say That we continue in sin So that grace may abound. Paul speaks very clearly And directly about this in Romans When he says By no means. It doesn't mean that we continue Living in sin and saying Well God's mercy is going to cover it. Well then that means that We don't understand God's mercy.

But at the same time It is to say That God There's nothing that can keep us from him. There's no sin in my life That is going to keep me from God.

[16 : 36] There's no matter what anybody says This sin is not going to keep me from God. As long as there is breath in our lungs What Jesus accomplished on the cross Is enough.

What he accomplished on the cross Is enough. When he says it is finished He means that it's done. That means there's nothing to add to it. That means there's nothing that we can do To take away from it.

Our sins past, present and future Are bought and paid for on the cross When we place our faith and our trust In him. So when somebody says There's no hope for you There's no salvation for you in God We know that that is a lie.

In the next couple of verses We are about to see How life-giving it is For David to understand this. David reminds himself of God's truth And so the next thing that we see Is what David believed. To begin with We saw what David saw and heard But now we see What David believed. But you, O Lord Are a shield about me My glory and the lifter of my head I cried aloud to the Lord And he answered me From his holy hill Selah Again, pause Think about what was just said Think about the truth That was communicated here From the tone and nature Of these words We see a pretty stark difference Between verses 1 and 2 And verses 3 and 4 We see a big difference Between the first stanza And the second stanza When it comes to the tone of this But also in just the words themselves We see that there's hope in here So what's the difference?

[18 : 21] What's the difference Between the first stanza And the second stanza? Well, what happened? What's the difference? James Montgomery Boyce He notes this He says The answer is That he has turned his attention From his enemies To God When a believer gazes Too long at his enemies The forces arrayed against him Seem to grow in size Until it appears to be overwhelming But when he turns his thoughts to God God is seen In the true great stature And the enemies shrink To manageable proportions In other words His eyes have shifted From his circumstances To his Savior He stopped looking At just what was around him What everybody else was saying And turned his gaze To God Turned his gaze To what he believed What he knew Was true His heart is no longer Overwhelmed By what is in front of him But it is now Overflowing With the assurance That God is with him

I think part of Growing and maturing As a believer Is understanding Truth has a greater weight In our life Than our feelings do The Lord The truth is That the Lord Is a shield about David And was greater Than the feelings Of abandonment And betrayal Everyone is telling David There's no salvation for you But the truth Has greater weight Than that feeling Sometimes what we're going through Is incredibly difficult It is painful It is scary It is overwhelming And the truth That we need to hold on to In the midst of those things Is that we have a God Who is greater Who is bigger Who is

more powerful Than our circumstances And the comfort That we cling to Is that God Is with us In the midst of it That God is with us In the midst of it Not that he's removing it always But that he is going to

Walk through it with us He has not abandoned us No one is better at mourning With those who mourn Than Jesus Often times We unintentionally think That just because Jesus knows All of the events That are going to happen In our lives That he's somehow Indifferent to our sorrow That he's somehow Indifferent to our pain But nothing could be further From the truth Jesus sees our suffering And heartache And deeply feels our pain And is moved by compassion To comfort as only he can In reading a book About the heart of Christ It says It is a heart that throbs With desire for the destitute It is a heart that floods The suffering with the deep solace Of shared solidarity In that suffering It is a heart That is gentle and lowly You see not only do we serve A God who is powerful enough To be with us

Every step of the way But we also serve a God Whose desire is to be with us Every step of the way Not only is he powerful enough To walk through this life with us But his desire is to walk Through this life with us This is why he sent his son To pay the payment So that a relationship Could be restored You see not only do we serve That God who is powerful enough But he desires to So what do you do With this kind of promise?

Well let's see what David did We see what he saw and heard We see what he believed But what David did Is what we're going to take A look at next He says I lay down and slept I woke again For the Lord sustained me I will not be afraid Of many thousands of people Who have set themselves Against me all around Arise oh Lord Save me oh my God For you strike All my enemies on the cheek You break the teeth of the wicked Salvation belongs to the Lord Your blessing be on your people Selah As we look at these last few verses here There are several things That we see David do To begin with David rested And David had courage He rested And he had courage Many of these phrases Many note that this phrase I lay down and slept Is one of the most telling And encouraging parts of this psalm It's telling because

[22 : 56] When are you able to lay down and sleep? When all is at well in your life? When you are able to rest and relax Is when you can sleep And so what we see here Is in the midst of this David is able to lay down and sleep It's a beautiful picture Of someone that has such confidence in God That they can lay down and sleep In such overwhelming circumstances What it does is it shows us Such a deep level of trust in God This is one of the beautiful things That our earthly fathers can teach our children About their heavenly father You see Charlotte is at an age now Where most of the night Most of the time She sleeps all throughout the night We put her to bed And she wakes up in the morning It is a great place to be as a parent And thinking about going back To waking up every hour Is a little overwhelming But most nights We put Charlotte to bed And she sleeps all throughout the night But occasionally She'll have a bad dream Occasionally she'll hear something

That wakes her up And then all of a sudden She's scared And so where does she come? She comes to mine and Catherine's room For us to comfort her And I've tried all kinds of things To try to get her to go back to bed By simply dismissing Whatever it is she's saying And says, well you know what?

There's nothing to it Just go back to bed Well I don't know why I would think that would work with Charlotte Because it doesn't work with anybody else But I try to tell her There's nothing to worry about Just go back to bed Doesn't work And in that moment Me explaining all the ins and outs Of what's going on in her life And how she really doesn't have anything To worry about And there's nothing in her room When the lights go out That's in there when the lights are on So we can look around her room See nothing's in it Turn the lights out And think logically about this And say there's nothing here Well that doesn't work in the moment What she needs in the moment Is to know that her daddy's in the room And when she knows that her daddy's in the room Either laying beside her in the bed Or laying in the floor Then she can rest You see nothing about her circumstances Have changed I haven't taken anything out Or put anything in Or explained anything I'm simply there And knowing that daddy is there Allows her to rest

And what a beautiful picture this is Of our lives so many times Of knowing and understanding That we serve a God Who is with us This reminder is what allows us To rest and have courage In the midst of life's greatest challenges Because many times Those challenges aren't removed But what gives us rest Is knowing that we have a father Who is going to be there with us Every step of the way The next thing that we see Is David prayed And he praised David is praying for salvation From

his enemies In the midst of this great problem He finds himself in He knows that the only place He can turn for deliverance Is God He says for salvation Belongs to the Lord If salvation belongs to God Then God is free to give it In this prayer That is also praise to God King David ends with Your blessing Be on your people I want you to think about The significance of that It's easy to read right over this And without understanding the context We would just read right over this Your blessing be with your people Well if you remember It's his people It's the people of Israel Who are now standing against David Who are the ones who are Calling Absalom their new king And pushing David out And so what David is saying In the midst of this He's saying that salvation belongs to the Lord Your blessing be on your people In the midst of everybody Turning their backs on him David is saying Your blessing be on your people What we're seeing here Is the heart of a true king A true king who loves his people What a beautiful picture Of the heart of a king That looks out for his people One commentator noted He says this prayer reveals The noble heart of the true king To whom the welfare of his people Is more important Than his own personal safety Like him Of whom he was the type

[27 : 18] In other words Like Jesus He intercedes On behalf of the rebels You see one day Out of the house of David There would be an even greater king A king who was willing To lay down his life To give blessing to those Who put him on the cross You'll remember last week We talked about how Chapters one and two Are really an introduction Into the whole Psalter Chapters one and two Are really common And the rest of the book Is commentary Based on these two chapters And we're seeing That this is pointing Towards Jesus And so what we're able to see Is these psalms Are paving the way Toward the coming king To the coming Messiah Who was going to intercede On people's behalf And so what we're able to see now Is this clearly Is pointing us to Jesus James Johnson and many others Make the connection Very clear in this Jesus was also Rejected as king His family thought That he was insane His hometown Would not believe him

As Jesus hung on the cross The chief priest Complained to Pilate Remember what Pilate Put above Jesus' name Above him on the cross King of the Jews But the chief priest Complained to Pilate Says Don't put king of the Jews On there But Pilate's like It's already written It's done But they're complaining So the people of Israel Don't see Jesus As their king They don't want him To be their king And so we see Throughout this Of what all is taking place That he is going to end up Being this greatest king And so we're able to see that David's enemies Taunted him And saying There is no salvation For him and God When Christ hung on the cross His enemies taunted him He said He trusts in God Let God deliver him now If he desires for him For he said I am the son of God You see David's enemies Were telling him Saying there's no hope For you There's no salvation For you As Jesus is hanging On the cross People around him Are saying There's no hope For you God can't save you

Now God saved David His anointed From physical death God saved Jesus His great anointed one Through physical death Finally David's love For the people Who turned against him Anticipates Christ's love For those who rejected him David said Your blessing Be on your people You remember What Jesus said On the cross Father forgive them As he was being crucified The only hope For rebellious people Like you and me Is through the very king We have betrayed This psalm Is pointing forward To a greater king A king who salvation A king and a greater salvation This makes all the difference For us as Christians Because psalm 3 Strengthens us Through the gospel We look to Christ The author and perfecter Of our life And in this psalm

We see the pattern Of his life His suffering Led to glory Because God sustained him Listen to this You see God may not save you From shame and death In this life Like he did David here But Our hope Is that he will save us Through shame And death Ultimately Like he did Jesus Christ This is our hope today So as we think About this psalm Let us look to Jesus And not our circumstances As we think about this psalm Let us look to truth And not what everyone else Is saying about us As we look at this psalm Let us experience salvation Found in Jesus And praise him for it You see there are many In this world That will gladly put you down In order to build themselves up There may be even some truth To the things that they're saying About you But what is not true Is when someone says There's no hope for you There's no salvation for you

God's done with you Let me tell you this That if there is breath In your lungs God's not done with you There is still hope for you As long as we have breath In our lungs And what Jesus accomplished On the cross Can count for each And every one of us Who place our faith And our trust In him And so for many of us We may have already done this At some point in our life And so

