

# There Is A Hope

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[ 0 : 00 ] There's two common features to the Psalms that were absent in the first two Psalms that we covered, but are now introduced to us here in the third. Both of these features are helpful guides for proper interpretation, also for worshipful reflection.

So as we start, I want to just note these two features and show you how it is that they are significant to this particular Psalm. The first feature is in what we would call a superscription.

That's that little title just underneath Psalm 3, but before you get to verse 1, it's called a superscription, which is an inscription or a subtitle or title that exists outside of the main body of the Psalm.

Most Psalms have them. In fact, the vast majority of them have them. And we need to be careful not to diminish their significance, not just to our study, but to the interpretation of the Psalms themselves.

Some have viewed these more like supplemental materials. You know, there may even be one in your Bible now. Perhaps in my Bible, the translators have supplied their own title.

[ 1 : 15 ] If you look just above the Psalm itself, in my Bible, it says, Save Me, Oh My God. Anybody else have a title like that? That's actually supplied by the translators.

There are some people who have kind of reduced the significance of the superscriptions to really just kind of an ancient editor who has done essentially the same thing that modern Bible translators have done and given us some type of title to just guide us along the way.

But really, we shouldn't think of it as anything more than that. It's just supplemental materials. But I want to push actually against that. These superscriptions are part of the canonical text, meaning that they exist in all of the ancient manuscript witnesses that we have of the book of Psalms.

So there's no reason for us outside of just pure conjecture and speculation to accept them as anything other than inspired Scripture.

Historically, that's how the church has viewed them. That's how ancient Jews had viewed them as well. Again, all of our ancient manuscript witnesses, they testify to that.

[ 2 : 29 ] Many of them actually even include the superscription as the first verse of the Psalm. And you'll find that in some older copies of the Scriptures.

So we ought not to quickly look past them. God has given them to us in order to help us better understand His Word. And in the case of Psalm 3, the superscription alerts us to some key features that we need to understand.

First, it alerts us to David's authorship. And it tells us that he wrote this on reflection of the events that are recorded for us in 2 Samuel 15-18, which we'll reference here in just a little bit.

Now, I'm going to have to leave it to you to maybe go back this afternoon. In fact, I think you would actually enjoy doing it. If you like stories at all, you should go back this afternoon, maybe after your Sunday nap, and open up to 2 Samuel 15 and just read through to chapter 18.

It's a fascinating story. It's a tragic story as well. I think you will be served by it. But I'll have to leave it to you to go back and do that. But perhaps just a brief summary would help us here.

[ 3 : 46 ] You'll recall David's grievous sin with Bathsheba. You read about that a little bit earlier in 2 Samuel. And perhaps you'll remember that terrible consequences came as a result of that particular sin.

They weren't only immediate consequences. They were ongoing consequences that did not leave David's life until his death. For the rest of his life, he would suffer the discipline of the Lord in relation to that particular sin.

And through the prophet Nathan, God said that the sword would never depart from David's house. And that the Lord intentionally would raise up from within David's house an enemy against him.

You can read about that in 2 Samuel chapter 12. Years later, many years later, we find out in 2 Samuel that David's son Absalom proved to be the fulfillment of Nathan's prophecy.

But it wasn't absent of David's own sinfulness that was ongoing in his life. It was as a result of David's failure as a father, as a leader, as a king, that Absalom, his son, turned against him.

[ 5 : 10 ] And he spent years, years, very shrewdly actually, winning the hearts of the people of Israel away from David, the king. And now I just want to tell a story.

Just one part. This just tells you the shrewdness of Absalom. He believes David's leadership to be so weak that Absalom, after coming back to Jerusalem, he was banished at one point.

But he's brought back. But his father still doesn't want to have anything to do with him. And you can read about that. You can read about why in your own study. Absalom sets himself up at the gates of the city for four years.

And for four years, people would come from Israel in order that the king would weigh in for them on issues pertaining to legal things or things that were happening in their lives, in their family, and in their communities.

Before they could get to where David was, Absalom would stop them at the gates of Jerusalem.

And they would know that he was the son of the king. And he would speak as if he was speaking on behalf of the king.

[ 6 : 12 ] And he would ask them their name. And he would ask, why are you here? And then he would say, oh, that there was someone in Jerusalem who would actually give you the time of day to listen to you.

And he would say, oh, that I was king. And then I would hear all of your problems. And I would deal with all of your problems in a way that I'll just be honest with you. My dad's just not going to deal with it.

You're not going to see him today. But you'll see me. And if I was king, I'm telling you, I would help you. I would help you. For four years he does this. For four years.

And to just show the weakness of David's leadership at that point in his life. David is aware of it.

And he does nothing about it. And we're told that Absalom wins the hearts of the people to himself and away from David, the king.

Which sets up a dramatic coup. Eventually, Absalom gained enough support that he chased his dad out of the kingdom.

[ 7 : 14 ] David was forced to flee the throne. To flee Jerusalem. Running for his life from his own son. Just like years before as he ran from King Saul.

Now he's running in the same way. Probably in his 50s at this point. Except it's his son that's chasing him. Psalm 3 in the superscription tells us that the psalm itself is a later reflection of David's.

On the events particular to his fleeing Jerusalem. Now that's helpful for us, isn't it? Especially when we look and we say, oh, the Lord has actually given us the details, the context of this story.

So we can look at Psalm 3. And then we can reflect back on 2 Samuel 15 to 18. And we can see, okay, this is what was happening. That helps us to understand and rightly interpret the meaning of the text here in Psalm 3.

Okay? So that's the first common feature of the psalms that's introduced to us in Psalm 3. It's a superscription. That's what this superscription is really all about. There's a second feature, though, that I want to point out to you. It's the use of this term.

[ 8 : 22 ] We saw it three times. The use of this term, *selah*. *Selah*. Now, various suggestions have been made about its precise meaning.

The fact of the matter is we just don't know. We don't know exactly what this means. We can narrow it down to a couple of possibilities, though. It seems to have been some type of musical directive that probably accomplished one of two things, or perhaps both things in certain context.

It could have just been a musical note to dramatize the song itself. So think of both songs that we've sung so far in our service today.

When we got to the fourth verse, the music had a modulation, and it had a key change. And the purpose of that key change was to break up any potential monotony in the song and then to dramatize the final verse as we come into the last verse of the song.

Like, take, for instance, Ferris, Lord Jesus. It opens up beautiful Savior. So after reflecting on all of these things about Jesus, there is this modulation in the key that dramatizes the opening line as we

come in and just sing out beautiful Savior.

[ 9 : 36 ] That's what he is to us, right? Now, *selah* could just simply be that. It could be a notation musically to dramatize the song. It could also be kind of a liturgical note indicating a pause in the song for intentional reflection.

You'll notice that in the case of Psalm 3, it comes at the end of certain stanzas, even at the very end of the psalm. Well, there would be no reason to dramatize music at the end of the psalm, right? So what is the *selah* there for? Probably to force us to pause intentionally in a moment of corporate worship to reflect on what it was that we just sang or what it was that we just read or recited together.

In either case, *selah* is undoubtedly a liturgical note meant to add emphasis to corporate worship. And in Psalm 3, the *selahs* provide a helpful structure for study. Think of them as presenting us with three different movements in David's prayer, each movement reflecting on a different part of his remembrance of the day that he fled from Absalom in Jerusalem.

[ 10 : 54 ] Now, third thing to note before we dive into the text itself, and that is that David's authorship always, always adds a layer of significance to our interpretation, doesn't it?

Who is David in the Psalms? In some cases, David is the king who represents the people of God. In some cases, David is the crafter of liturgy and of worship among the people of God. But most importantly, David is an Old Testament figure who points us to Jesus, the greater Davidic king. So as we come to the Psalms of David, we have to determine, well, what exactly is the primary emphasis in view with the Psalms that David wrote? And in this Psalm, it's an individual lament. He's crying out to God because of some type of suffering in his life, right? We can relate to that as individuals. We can pray Psalm 3 as a lament to the Lord in the way that David lamented to the Lord as a representative example of God's people, okay?

[ 12 : 12 ] So this is an individual lament, but there's an added feature here that I think we can't forget. It's a lament that is ultimately fulfilled in the experience of Jesus Christ on the cross.

And I want to make those notes for you as we go along. Hope is the theme here. While the world insists that there is no salvation in God, David reminds us that actually God himself is the real source of hope in our lives.

That's what I hope that you'll walk away understanding from this Psalm. Let's just look at the three sections. Number one, I want you to see hope denounced. Hope denounced.

Look at the first two verses again. Oh 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*. Think about that. Pause on that. Reflect on what he's saying. David's opening reflection, it recalls this increasing number of enemies who were multiplying against him, not the least of which is his own son, Absalom, who was not only attempting to steal the throne, he was attempting to murder his own father and family.

[ 13 : 41 ] And as David is weighing the decision of whether or not to stay in Jerusalem and fight against Absalom or to actually leave Jerusalem, those who were once loyal to him very quickly began to change their allegiances to Absalom.

Three times David cries in the psalm, many, many are my foes, O Lord. Many are they who rise up against me.

Many are they who are saying, there is no salvation for me. And among the increasing number of enemies were some of David's closest friends.

His most trusted counselor was in this group who had betrayed him. Have you ever experienced that before? Of course you have.

Absalom had shrewdly stolen the hearts of the people, and David was keenly aware of how quickly the nation was turning against him. You've got your finger in 2 Samuel, right?

[ 14 : 46 ] Look at chapter 15 and verse 12. Chapter 15 and verse 12. Absalom has gone. There is this feigned attempt to spiritualize his conspiracy.

So he's offering sacrifices. And here's what it says is happening. While Absalom was offering sacrifices, he sent for Ahithophel, the Gilanite, David's counselor from his city, Gilo.

And the conspiracy grew strong, and the people with Absalom kept increasing. And we come to Psalm 3, and what is it that David's crying out to the Lord?

Many, many, many. They keep coming. They keep turning. They're against me. And here's the thing. Their frustration with David's leadership was not unwarranted.

This is not about trying to make David out to be innocent or unworthy of confrontation. Neither one of those things is actually true. David was not faithfully leading the nation in this moment.

[15:53] He was not faithfully leading his family at this moment. He had taken a weak position as the king. There was plenty there for him to be confronted about. That's not really the issue.

His circumstances resulted as his failures as a believer and as a father and as a king. Still, Absalom and his companions were acting against God in this moment.

They're acting against God's anointed in this conspiracy. And it's what they said of David that gives us insight to the heart of the problem. Notice it again in verse 2.

Here's what they say. It's a taunt. They're taunting him. There is no salvation for him in God. Were they aware of God's covenant with David?

Yeah. Of course they were. Were they concerned about God's covenant with David? Absolutely not. They mocked it.

[16:54] They taunted David. God makes covenant with you. Where is your God now? There is no salvation. He won't help you, David.

Your sins are too great. They declare that their attempt to overthrow David would not be hindered either by God's love for him or by the promises that he made to him.

This is such a stark contrast to David's own behavior, isn't it? Do you remember earlier in his life? He had been completely justified in man's eyes to take the life of King Saul on many occasions, who himself was trying to kill David.

And over and over and over, what does David do? He refuses to kill Saul. Not because Saul wasn't a legitimate enemy. It's not that. It's because David recognized that in that moment, Saul was God's king.

David knew his time was coming. He was entrusting himself to the Lord in that. He wasn't going to step in the way of the Lord. He was going to let God deal with Saul in the way that God needed to deal with Saul. And now we see the opposite with Absalom, don't we?

[18:05] Absalom does not act like his father in this moment. He does the opposite. He rejects the covenant of God. He rejects the promises of God. And if we step back and consider the larger storyline of the Bible, Absalom proves himself to be part of the seed of the serpent that we see prophesied in Genesis chapter 3.

And he's fighting against David, the seed of the woman. That is prophesied in Genesis 3. They denounced his hope.

They cursed and taunted him as God's king. And in so doing, they set themselves up as enemies of God, not merely enemies of David.

Now, David's cry is a lament that certainly we can relate to, can we not? Amen. Spend any time at all living publicly as a committed Christian, and you will soon find that the many foes are increasing around you.

Even potentially the loss of those who are closest to you. Family, friends, trusted coworkers and colleagues and friendships that you've had maybe for your entire life turn against you.

[19:28] I've had enough conversations with many of you to know that you know this experience well. Isn't this what Jesus told us to expect? Matthew chapter 10, Jesus says, Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth.

I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.

That probably didn't take a whole lot of work. And a person's enemies will be those of his own household, Jesus said. Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me.

Whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And whoever does not take up his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. Whoever finds his life will lose it.

And whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. This is exactly what Jesus told us to expect. What does he mean here? He means that faithfulness to him is going to make a lot of enemies that you never thought you would have.

[20:37] That to repent truly and follow after Christ will cost you everything. It might cost you your relationship with your parents.

It might cost you your relationship with your children. It might cost you your relationship with your friends. It might cost you your job. It might cost you your stand in the community. It might very well cost you everything that right now you hold dear.

And the question then becomes, is Jesus worth all of that? Is he worth all of that? Paul judged that he was.

In fact, losing everything is exactly what Paul experienced. He tells us about it in Philippians chapter 3. He says, all of those things I once counted as gain. I count them as trash.

As rubbish. That I might know Christ. The treasure. The pearl of great price. Certainly, some of what we experience really just reflects the consequences of our own sin.

[ 21 : 43 ] There is a piece of that with David here we can't ignore. But the truth is we have a fierce spiritual enemy. The seed of the serpent is all around us.

And they taunt us. They taunt our faith in the way that David's enemies taunted his. And here, David reminds us that this is not something new.

And he shows us an example of how to properly respond when it happens. That brings us to the second point. We not only see hope denounced.

But now we see from David's perspective, hope determined. Hope determined. Look at verse 3. But you, O Lord, are a shield about me. My glory and the lifter up of my head.

I cried aloud to the Lord. And he answered me from his holy hill. Selah, think about it. Pause.

Reflect. David is boldly determining the nature of true hope here.

[ 22 : 51 ] In his prayer here, he argues against the enemies before God. He essentially says, God, many are saying that I have no salvation in you. I have no hope in you.

But, O Lord, you are my shield. You are my glory. Anything good of my reputation, that's you, God. You are the one who lifts up my head in my suffering and in my discouragements.

And in determining where his hope was rooted, notice, David does not appeal to his own ingenuity. He doesn't appeal to personal grit.

He doesn't appeal to the power to persuade others in the way Absalom had persuaded them. His hope, ultimately, did not rest in himself or in any other human strategy.

His hope and his confidence was in God, his shield, his glory, his sustainer. And this confident hope in God, it was not only part of his reflections in Psalm 3.

[ 23 : 54 ] It shines in the heat of the moment as we reflect on 2 Samuel chapter 16. As he fled from Jerusalem, there was a man named Shammai who walked alongside of David's convoy.

And as they're walking, this man, Shammai, was a Benjamite. He was from perhaps maybe the line of Saul. And he's yelling curses at David. Cursing David as he goes, rejoicing in the fact that David is having to leave and that Absalom is coming in behind him to take over the throne.

And David, in the midst of that, continues to entrust himself and his circumstances to God's judgment. Look at chapter 16, verse 9. This is after, as Shammai is doing this, this is the response of David's servants.

Then Abishai, the son of Zeruah, said to the king, Why should this dead dog curse my lord, the king? Let me go over and take off his head.

Now, you're thankful for friends like this, right? Andy said of Amy one time that she is a fierce friend and a fierce foe.

[ 25 : 07 ] And that's very true. We want friends like this. We want friends that when enemies are coming against us, stand in the gap in between us and say, Jared, just let me take their head off, right?

That's what Abishai is doing for David. Notice what David says. But the king said, What have I to do with you, you sons of Zeruah? If he's cursing because the Lord has said to him, curse David, who then shall say, why have you done so?

Do you see what David's doing here? He's committing his entire circumstance to the Lord. David said to Abishai and to all his servants now.

It's like he gathers them all around now so he can just make it clear. Behold, my own son seeks my life. How much more now may this Benjamite?

Leave him alone. Let him curse, for the Lord has told him to. It may be that the Lord will look on the wrong done to me and that the Lord will repay me with good for his cursing today.

[ 26 : 15 ] So David and his men went on the road while Shimei went along on the hillside opposite him and cursed as he went and threw stones at him and flung dust at him. He endures the taunting of his enemy and submits himself and his circumstance entirely to the Lord.

That's pretty amazing, isn't it? Put yourself in the context of ancient Israel. In that culture, it would have been completely justifiable for David to have this man killed.

He doesn't do that. It's within his power to do it. He doesn't do it. He says, we'll let God decide who's right and who's wrong here. That's quite amazing.

Absalom and his co-conspirators, they denounced God's covenant, but still David's hope rested on God's promises. And he entrusted his life to the one who had always protected him and blessed him and sustained him.

Now, David's cry in verse 4 refers to a particular situation that's unfolding in 2 Samuel. While fleeing from Jerusalem, David was told about a close confidant who had changed his allegiances to Absalom.

[ 27 : 39 ] And what David cries to the Lord here in verse 4 is a reflection of his cry in that chapter. Look at chapter 15 now and verse 31. Chapter 15 and verse 31.

Now, David is leaving Jerusalem now. And it was told David, Ahithophel is among the conspirators with Absalom.

And then David immediately goes to the Lord. Oh Lord, please turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness.

Or as it's stated in Psalm 3 and verse 4, I cried to the Lord. This is the cry. Now, Ahithophel had been David's trusted counselor.

He was highly regarded for his wisdom. In fact, if you look at chapter 16 and verse 23, notice how the people viewed Ahithophel's counsel. Now, in those days, this is chapter 16 and verse 23.

[ 28 : 40 ] Now, in those days, the counsel that Ahithophel gave was as if one consulted the word of God. So was all the counsel of Ahithophel esteemed by both David and by Absalom.

You've met people before that are always right. They at least think they're always right. Talk as if they're always right. Ahithophel was always right. That's the thing. God had so blessed his counsel that the people looked at it as if it was on par with the scriptures, as if he was a prophet of God. Because everything that he counseled, it just worked out. And David knew it. And now that Ahithophel was loyal to Absalom, David knew he was in grave danger here.

Ahithophel would counsel Absalom to do precisely what was necessary to defeat David and take the throne. So what does David do? He cast his hope on the Lord.

And what is it that he cries to the Lord? Lord, let Ahithophel's counsel seem like foolishness to Absalom. Turn it against him, Lord.

[ 29 : 45 ] Don't let them listen to Ahithophel. Now, just as a side note here as we're thinking about this, trusting God in the way that David did here, it does not negate the necessity of action on our part.

Trusting God doesn't mean that you don't do anything. David proves it. I'll show you in just a second. There are times when we must, as we would quote, be still and know that he's the Lord and just let the Lord deal with everything.

There are times when that's all that you can do. David shows us here, though, that deep faith does not preclude personal action.

His trust was in the Lord, not in his own plan, but that didn't mean he had to sit idly by. Think of the one who has lost his job and he knows that he needs a new job and so he prays, he gets on his knees before the Lord and he prays, Lord, will you please give me a job?

Will you please allow me to have some kind of income so that I might care for my family? And then he gets up off of his knees and he sits on the couch very quietly by the phone and he just waits for the phone to ring.

[ 31 : 05 ] And the phone never rings. Why does the phone never ring? Because he never filled out an application for a job. He never updated his resume and sent it out anywhere.

He never even opened the classifieds on the newspaper, if you can even still do that, and looked to see what might actually be available out there. He trusts the Lord, but he does nothing.

Now, can God just give you a job out of nowhere? Of course he can. Does God often work that way? Almost never. Almost never. David proves it.

He trusted God's promises. He cast himself wholly on the Lord. And then he acted in accordance with those promises. After praying for God to turn Ahithophel's counsel, David sent another friend, Hushai is his name, to spy and to counsel opposite of Ahithophel.

Look at chapter 15, verse 32. While David was coming to the summit where God was worshipped, behold, Hushai the archite came to meet him with his coat torn and dirt on his head.

[ 32 : 16 ] That's a sign of he's identifying with David's suffering. He's mourning. David said to him, If you go with me, you'll be a burden to me. But if you go back 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 now I will be your servant.

Then you will defeat for me the counsel of Ahithophel. Are not Zadok and Abiathar the priest with you there? So whatever you hear from the king's house, tell it to Zadok and Abiathar the priest. Behold, their two sons are with them there. Ahimah, Zadok's son, Jonathan, Abiathar's son, and by them you shall send to me everything you hear. So Hushai, David's friend, came into the city just as Absalom was entering Jerusalem.

So Absalom's unaware of Hushai's plan. Now, when does David put this action into place? Immediately after, he cries out to the Lord and says, Lord, would you please turn Ahithophel's counsel against him?

David trusts, he prays, and then he acts in accordance with that. And his hope is not in the plan itself. His hope is in God using that plan to save him.

[ 33 : 31 ] So David's cry was for God to turn Ahithophel's counsel, and that's exactly what God used Hushai to do. As he says in Psalm 3 and verse 4, the Lord answered David from his holy hill.

We were introduced to this holy hill in Psalm 2. It's the place where God rules and reigns. He's appealing to God as the righteous judge here. Oh, God, do this.

And what does God do? Chapter 17, 2 Samuel, and verse 14. After this back and forth between Ahithophel and Hushai in the presence of Absalom, here's what they do.

Absalom and all the men of Israel, all of his advisors, they said this, the counsel of Hushai the archite is better than the counsel of Hithophel. If you read the story, you'll realize that's not true. Ahithophel's counsel would have been much more successful. But why did he not take it? Look at verse 14. The Lord had ordained to defeat the good counsel of Ahithophel so that the Lord might bring harm upon Absalom.

[ 34 : 46 ] Now, that's a long time to get to this point. But the point is this. All of David's enemies are saying, he has no hope in God. What does David say? No, my hope is God.

He is my hope. He is my shield. He is my glory. And upon reflection of this moment in his life, he thinks back and he says, I can prove it. The very moment they told me that Ahithophel was against me, I cried to the Lord and I sent Hushai.

And this is exactly what God did for me. He heard me out of his holy hill. They trust God's promises and then he acts in accordance with them.

And God proved himself to be faithful. You know that the God that was so faithful to David is also the God who will be faithful to you.

The kind of confidence that David had in Yahweh is the same confidence that you should have in him.

[ 35 : 55 ] The world says the only real hope that any of us can have, if there is hope to have, it's going to have to be found from somewhere deep within ourselves.

That it certainly wouldn't be from some celestial being who may or may not be there. But that's a lie. That's the way of the wicked.

That's described for us in Psalm 1 and Psalm 2. That's the way that Absalom walked. But the truth is that God himself is our shield and our glory.

He's the one that lifts our heads in our suffering. And you can trust his promises. And if you act according to his promises, in obedience with his word, he will always prove faithful.

Number three, hope declared. So there's hope denounced in the first two verses. There's hope determined. David determines, no, God is my hope. In verses three and four, and then finally hope is declared by David in verses five through eight.

[ 37 : 07 ] He says, I laid 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. 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. Think about that. Let it marinate, David says. What I just said. This final movement of the psalm, really what we see David doing is bursting into praise.

It's a lament that ends really in quite astounding worship, doesn't it? In verse five, he declares to his enemies that the Lord sustained him.

If you're still in second Samuel, look at chapter 17 and verse 21. After they had gone, the men came up out of the well. You'll have to go back and read it yourself to figure out why there were men hiding in a well.

[ 38 : 15 ] And they went and they told King David and they said to David, Arise and go quickly over the water for thus and so has Ahithophel counseled against you. Then David arose and all the people who were with him and they crossed the Jordan.

And here's the sentence that I love so much. By daybreak, not one was left who had not crossed the Jordan. Not one. The Lord sustained him.

I laid down. I went to sleep. I woke again. The Lord sustained us. Not one of us was lost. Look down at verses 27 and 20 through 29.

Same chapter. When David came to Mahanaim, that's where he went from that moment, Shobbi the son of Nahash from Rabbah of the Ammonites and Machir the son of Amiel from Lodabar and Barzillai the Gileadite from Rogalim brought beds and basins and earthen vessels, wheat, barley, flour, parched grain, beans, lentils, honey, and curds and sheep and cheese from the herd for David and the people with him so that they might eat for they said the people are hungry and weary and thirsty in the wilderness.

And what does David say upon reflection? I went to bed. I woke up. The Lord sustained me. Was that a difficult season? Yep.

[ 39 : 36 ] My own son was trying to kill me. I had to leave the city that I love. I had to flee the throne that God had given me.

Everyone around me, my wives, my children, my servants, they're all starving. It was one of the most difficult times of David's life. But what is it that he says upon reflection?

The Lord sustained me. He was there for me. He helped me. In verse 6, David declares that because of God's goodness, no amount of enemies can overthrow those who belong to God.

He so trusted God's promises that he did not fear the many thousands of people who had turned against him. In the opening verses of the psalm, many foes rise against David.

But in verse 7, he confidently calls on the Lord to rise against his enemies, acknowledging that God always defeats those who reject him.

[ 40 : 45 ] And then finally in verse 8, David reminds us that it is the decision of the Lord, not the enemy, that ultimately matters. What does he say?

Salvation belongs to the Lord. And the opposite of that is true. judgment belongs to the Lord as well. Let's just take a moment and let the weight of that last sentence burden us.

What is it that David prays? Your blessing be on your people, God. Your salvation, your help, come to your people.

To pray for God's blessing on his people is to also ask for God's judgment on his enemies. You can't have one without the other.

In this case, that enemy is David's own son, whom he loved, by the way.

[ 42 : 02 ] Many of us, we know the complex array of emotions in a prayer like this. to affirm and even desire for God's blessing on the faithful requires that we also recognize the inevitability of God's judgment against those that we actually care very deeply about.

Some of you have people that you love more than anybody else on this planet. And if they died today, they'd spend an eternity in hell. And it's hard for you to pray prayers like this because you know that a prayer for God's faithfulness on his own people is a prayer for God's judgment on those who are not his people.

And the conflict of this in our emotions, it's really an emotional conflict more than an intellectual conflict. The conflict of our emotions, it leads us to temptation.

On one hand, it tempts us to soften the sting of truth by altering the gospel message or diminishing in some way the reality of God's wrath.

That's one side of the temptation. We love our family so much, we love our friends so much, and so we don't burden them with thoughts of judgment. We leave out parts of the gospel that are not as palatable as other parts.

[ 43 : 32 ] We diminish in our theology the fact that God, while loving, is also wrathful. There's a second temptation, though.

We may also be tempted, even in ourselves, to reject the truth of the gospel based on anger, maybe dissatisfaction with the way that God has chosen to work.

It's not that we deny what the scripture says, it's just we say, wait, I can't accept a God who would act like that. I prefer a God who would act in the way that I want Him to act, and we push against it. We push against it. Can I just remind you that the burden of this kind of prayer was familiar to our Lord? We talked about it in Psalm 2 briefly last week, that God's holiness makes His judgment necessary.

If God didn't judge sin, then He wouldn't be holy, He wouldn't be perfect, He wouldn't be God. But God doesn't delight in the destruction of the wicked.

[ 44 : 38 ] We see that in Ezekiel 33, 11. He plainly says it. I take no pleasure in the destruction of the wicked, He says. Rather, He tells us in Jeremiah chapter 9, He delights in steadfast love and mercy.

He judges because He must judge in His holiness, and He is glorified in that judgment. His delight, though, is in mercy.

We see it in Jesus, don't we? This Jesus who stands overlooking the people of Israel, and the Scripture tells us in Matthew chapter 9.

It tells us that He was moved with compassion. He weeps. Why? Because of their lostness.

Knowing that He is the judge who will finally judge them to eternity in hell if they do not repent.

And yet He mourns their lostness. This is the same Jesus who on the cross cries out in prayer for the very people who are crucifying Him.

[ 45 : 48 ] This is not a prayer or a conflict or an emotion or a burden that the Lord does not Himself know. As long as there is salvation, there will also be judgment.

And it is true, God's glory in salvation shines brightest against the backdrop of His justice. But what we find here in this psalm is that it's entirely possible and necessary to both rejoice in God's blessing on the faithful and worship Him for His judgment against the wicked, though we do that with grief for those that we love.

Do you understand? David tells us this is possible, this is necessary, and he shows us how. At the end of the day, Absalom made his bed.

He made himself God's enemy. He faced the consequences of rejecting God's covenant. And then David shows us how we might praise God for His holiness while still grieving over the loss of those that we love.

And if you go to chapter 18, we won't read it now, I'll read it later, but if you go to chapter 18 of 2 Samuel, you'll see that David experienced tremendous grief at the death of Absalom.

[ 47 : 08 ] so much so that the people around him had to correct him as if everyone was going to turn away from him again because of the depth of his grief.

Now, final thing and we'll be finished. I said at the beginning that when we look at Psalms that are attributed to David, there are various ways for us to think about them.

We have to determine what the primary emphasis is, and through careful study, we can do that.

This is an individual lament that certainly we relate to, but this is a lament that is fulfilled in the person of Christ, and I want to show you how.

How Jesus is actually our true and eternal hope. How He is the fulfillment of Psalm 3, okay? Jesus had enemies seeking His life from the very moment He was born in Bethlehem, didn't He?

Herod tried to kill Him, and in trying to kill Him, He killed a bunch of children in the process of it. Just terrible tragedy. The number of Jesus' foes grew steadily throughout His ministry.

[ 48 : 11 ] We see it especially in the days leading to His crucifixion. The one who rode in to Jerusalem on a donkey to cries of Hosanna, God save us, finishes the week having His friends run away in fear, one of His closest confidences, betray Him, and His own people cry out now, crucify Him.

Crucify Him. Many are my foes, Lord, He could have prayed. Many are they that rise up against me. But then we get to verse 2, and we see that as Jesus hung on the cross, many actually reviled Him in the way that they were reviling David. They mocked Him, saying in Matthew chapter 27, He trusts in God?

Let God deliver Him now if He desires Him. That's a testimony of all four of the Gospels. They show us this, that the people around Him, this was not like a sincere statement of, oh, let's see if God really delivers Him.

No, this is a taunt. As He hangs naked on a cross, dying, they walk by and they wag their heads and they gnash their teeth, the Scripture says, and they said, look at you now.

[ 49 : 31 ] There is no salvation for you in God. You said that God is, that you're from God. Let God save you now. Let's see what happens to you now, Jesus of Nazareth. He knew David's situation well, didn't He?

We get to verse 3. What is it that we see of David? We see that David entrusts himself to the Lord even as his enemies cursed him. Is this not exactly what Peter says Jesus did?

That in the midst of that mockery, Jesus just continually entrusted Himself to the Father. 1 Peter 2, 23, when He was reviled, He did not revile in return.

When He suffered, He did not threaten, but continued entrusting Himself to Him who judges justly. Jesus does exactly as David did.

Verse 4. What is David doing? He's crying to the Lord to save Him, to help Him. Jesus cries to the Lord, but it's not the same cry.

[ 50 : 33 ] David cries for the Lord to save Him. Jesus cries for the Lord to save those for whom He came to die. David says, save me. Jesus says, save them.

John chapter 12. Now is my soul troubled, Jesus says, and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour. No, Jesus says, but for this purpose I have come to this hour.

And then He turns His attention to the Lord, and He says, Father, glorify Thy name. How will the Father glorify His name? Through the atonement that Jesus made on the cross for us.

Jesus didn't come to be saved. He came to save through His own death. Verse 5. David says, I laid down and slept.

I awoke. The Lord sustained me. Did Jesus understand that? Oh, yes, He did. Jesus slept in a grave for three days.

[ 51 : 38 ] Dead as dead can be. And on the third day, He awoke again. For the Lord sustained Him. Acts chapter 2, verse 23.

This Jesus delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God. You crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men. God raised Him up, loosing the pangs of death because it was not possible for Him to be held by it.

And then we get to verses 6 through 8. Jesus is the Lord to whom salvation and judgment belongs. He is the serpent crusher who conquers all the wicked in their waves.

It is through His incarnation and His crucifixion and His resurrection and His exaltation to the throne that God's people received the blessing for which David prayed at the end of this psalm.

Jesus is the true and better David who did not suffer as a result of his own sin but in order to take God's wrath for our sin.

[ 52 : 46 ] David suffers because he was a sinner. Jesus suffered because we are sinners and He gives His life in order that we may have ours back.

David trusted fully in God's covenant regarding the future king from his life. and we must trust fully in God's covenant because that king has been revealed to be Jesus of Nazareth and there is salvation in no other name under heaven than the name of Jesus.

We can pray David's prayer with confidence because Jesus has fulfilled that prayer to perfection. salvation. Selah. Think about that.

Let that marinate. How are we supposed to respond to a psalm like this? On one hand don't allow the enemy to lure you into despondency into such despair that you feel like there is actually no hope in God.

Where you cast off all faith and just submit yourself to the way of the wicked. God is your hope. Trust in Him.

[ 54 : 18 ] We must also recognize that since salvation belongs to God again so does judgment. Blessing is on His people while the curse of sin rests on those who will not receive Him.

and the question then just becomes are you His? Do you belong to Him? Come to Jesus.

That's the invitation Jesus gives isn't it? Over and over again. He says just come to me. You say there's just too many things that I don't understand.

Too many questions that I have. I'm not satisfied with the answers that I have. Jesus doesn't say you have to put it all together. He just says come to me. Trust me. Believe me. Look at what I've done.

And I've done it for you. Won't you just come to Him? The truth is that like David if you do come to Christ and if you live publicly as a committed Christian you will gain many enemies maybe even those that you love but you'll also gain eternal salvation and the truth is He is worth it.

[ 55 : 42 ] He's worth it.NING