

God Will Never Let Go

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[0 : 00] many are rising against me many are saying of my soul there is no salvation for him in God and so on I think one of the most painful experiences that any family can go through is where there becomes division and where there was deep love it now has turned to to hatred and that's what we find in in the the experience of David where we read there in second Samuel and also what this psalm is about and that has been an incredibly difficult experience for David where within his own family and here's this son a son whom he loved and we do know that if we were to carry on reading through in second Samuel and eventually see how Absalom is killed the incredible grief the fearful display of anguish and brokenness in the heart of David even though Absalom was trying to kill him kill David yet when Absalom is killed David is absolutely devastated and broken-hearted so we can see that Absalom was a son that that David loved but we know that Absalom was a schemer we read about that he was the most two-faced person on the that we could ever meet he pretended to his father that he was a loving loyal son and yet on the other hand he was working behind his father's back all the time for years he was scheming and he was trying to win the hearts of the people which he was doing and in fact it tells us that he stole the hearts of the people we read there of how he would when any person came and had a dispute he would meet him and say if I was in charge I would sort this dispute there's nobody ready to listen and when people are going to bow to him to salute him because he was a royal prince he would take them by the hand and he would kiss them and people would say we've never seen the like of this and so Absalom by deceit he had no interest in these people all he was doing was trying to take the hearts of the people away from his father so that they would eventually when that's right when he felt the time was ripe that they would come and they would follow him and so we find that this is the background to what has taken place here but we know that

Absalom's scheming and his deceitfulness is never ultimately going to win it never does it cannot because God sees everything God knows everything and these are the injustice and the deceitfulness that is so often and we see it at all levels even in our own society today and people think they're going to get away with it people think that they can what God is not mocked and there will always come a time when there is a when God will will deal with this and so often in life we have seen this happening well it was going to be so for Absalom as well so Absalom leads this revolution against his father and what is incredible really to to read is that here is this king king David a man that the that Israel really as a as a nation they loved him as a king and yet Absalom manages to take their hearts after himself and turn their hearts against his father and well let us be quite clear this was not going to be a bloodless revolution because Absalom was David knew that that's why David says we've got to get out of Jerusalem as fast as we can because everybody will die by the edge of the sword if we stay here he knew that Absalom wasn't going to just say well we've got the numbers we've got the people it's up it's over he knew that Absalom wouldn't rest till he had killed all the opposition and so these were these were dangerous these were were were frightening times and we see how quickly the people switched loyalty and you know that happens so often in life I suppose the great example the greatest example of all is in the time of Christ because remember when Jesus rode into Jerusalem the crowds were crying Hosanna Hosanna and they were throwing the palm branches down and there were there was this great sense of adoration and adulation of King Jesus and yet in a matter of days the crowd are no longer shouting Hosanna they're crying crucify her crucify her that's where the mob were and that's the clearest picture I think we've ever seen of the fickleness and the changeableness of human nature of how one moment they can be going this way another moment going that way we see it in

John's gospel they were going to in John chapter 6 they were going to make Jesus king there was nobody like Jesus by the end of the chapter they're leaving him in droves to the point where Jesus turns and he says to his own are you going away as well and that just shows us how fickle human nature really is now this must have been an excruciating painful experience David went through highs and lows in his life but I reckon this must have been one of the most painful of all because David knew you see deep down that he in many ways had brought this upon himself you see on in a previous occasion when David was on the run and he was on the run for years David was on the run purely because of the jealousy of Saul Saul was determined to get him but at that time we could almost say that the slate was clean and in David's life of course he was a sinner in such life but this what has happened here has come on the back if we had gone a wee bit further back we were reading in chapter 15 of 2nd Samuel but if we had gone to 2nd Samuel chapter 12 after David sinned with Bathsheba and then subsequently what he did what he murdered had Bathsheba's husband murdered Uriah we find the prophet Nathan saying this to David now therefore the sword shall never depart from your house because you have despised me and I've taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife thus says the Lord behold I will raise up evil against you out of your own house and David knows full well as he's on the run that this is part of God's judgment on him God told him at the time that he was going to forgive him his sin because David repented we see of that in Psalm 51 and probably part of Psalm 32 as well we see that God forgave him the sin but God said because of what he had done how he had so dishonored his name before him and the people that that this is what was going to happen so here we have David and you can imagine the fear and the pain that's in his heart as he's as he's on the run and thousands have joined up with him that's what it says at the beginning oh Lord how many are my foes many are rising against me and then when we go to verse 6 it tells us I will not be afraid of many thousands of people so at this point in time there are thousands and thousands and thousands that are up against David now you and I know that the moment that we become Christians straight away we face enemies it is impossible to be a Christian and not to face opposition in this world one way or another sometimes our enemies are external in the face of by that I mean the world other times the enemies are internal by the flesh by what is within us and then we have one that is external but works internally within us the devil so the world the flesh and the devil the moment you become a Christian these forces are against you and you have all experienced these things at different levels different degrees but you all have one way or another sometimes you feel flattened by them sometimes you feel overcome by them but still you go on but they are powerful enemies so Satan is of no doubt he is speaking through David's enemies trying to undermine David's faith

because that's what he's saying what are the enemies saying many are saying of my soul there is no salvation salvation for him in God now that's what they were saying that was a word that's a word that that's a temptation that's what they were saying of David David you're finished you're washed up you're a has-been your history yes you were God's man once but you're no longer you're you're you're a finished man your end is here and God is not there for you anymore you have dishonored God can you imagine the field day Satan is having with David at this moment if you had been can you put yourself in David's shoes and what you've done and you've heard God's word against you it would be very easy to say and agree with what's being said and say I'm finished there's no way back I've had it that this is it and what an awful way for me to end my life being put to death by my own son and that there we are it'd be a fearful the temptations would be powerful but you know the wonderful thing is that David actually didn't sink as low as that he knew that what was happening was as a result of what God had said but he didn't for one moment really believe that God was finished with him he exercised hope that one day he'd be back in

Jerusalem to see the ark and to see the God's dwelling place but if not but I know that David from this psalm that he believed God was not done with him that God hadn't washed his hands of him and you know it's the same for you and me tonight and I'll tell you something you have not gone as low as David you have not been you may have done many things wrong in your life but I'm all I can say you have not been where David was what David did is really quite extraordinary how he murdered that man in order to try and cover his guilt and we find that God God spoke so powerfully against him for that that that added which was which made the whole thing 10 times worse and yet David knew God wasn't finished with him and wherever you've been and whatever you've done and however low you sometimes feel and however much you might be battered by that by Satan God isn't finished with you either tonight and he is still with you he's still for you he's still upholding you and I'm sure enemies often come and say the very same thing to you many are saying of my soul there's no salvation for him or for her now you and I know it would be the most awful thing that could happen to us if we really felt that God was finished with us can you imagine if a messenger came from an angel came from heaven and said by the way I know it says in the words all that it does say but here's a message from God he's given up on you how would you feel you'd be distraught you would be on you you feel you would feel your life was over why this is a mark of grace because you know you say to yourself to whom else can we go because you have the words of eternal life whom have I in the heavens I but the O Lord alone and in the earth whom I desire besides thee there is none that's where you've come to as a Christian and that's why there is nobody when push comes to shove you know that there is nobody who fills your heart like the Lord and so here is David and the the great thing with David as he has shown over and over and over again irrespective of how low the situation appears to be David always turns eventually to the Lord and that's a lesson to us we're hearing about that on on Sunday of just how important it is to have the Lord as our focus so often we're not our focus is shifted off the Lord and that's why it is that's what David does here he he turns his focus upon the Lord and that's what he says but you oh Lord are a shield about me my glory and the lifted up of my head and then he says I cried aloud to the Lord and he answered me from his holy hill it's not wonderful that's what the Lord did he answered him David cried aloud to the Lord and he answered and I am sure all of you here could could tell about times when you cried to the Lord cried aloud I don't know how good we are at actually crying aloud it's interesting how often in the Psalms and the Word of God we find this that both praising and prayer it's often loud that there is a loud cry given well David David cried aloud to the Lord and you know God hears and answers prayer and God was in control of David's life and David knew that in fact very interestingly David says but you oh Lord are a shield about me and my glory and the lifted up of my head a shield the idea here is one who covers and that's what the Lord does as we sang in Psalm 91 that they are about

[14 : 49] how he is a shield and how he is a shield and he covers us with faithfulness covers us like like a hen gathers her brood and there's the warmth of the love there's the protection the tenderness of the wing and yet the strength in it and so the Lord the Lord covers us and he covers us in different ways because there's a triune covering by God to every believer we're covered by God the Father's decrees God is a decree there's an eternal decree for your life and mine and we mustn't lose sight of that God has a purpose for your life and he's going to fulfill his purposes through you there is a decree governing your life and you're also covered by the imputed righteousness of Christ that cannot be taken from you and sometimes we forget what an absolutely incredible covering that is that Christ's righteousness is covering us all the time wherever we go day or night as long as we live all our lives into death and beyond covered by Christ and we're covered by the Holy Spirit who is ministering within us working within us so we have the triune God covering us and David is aware of this and so David cries to the Lord because he knows the Lord is the deliverer and protector I read of a man in America John Bethune and he stayed in Buffalo this was a long long time ago he was a sailor and he was on the boats on the lakes see long long long time ago and he was a really fine Christian and he lived amongst a crew who were anything but they were hard very very religious men but he did over the period lead two or three of them to Christ because he lived in such a wonderful Christ like way and although there were many of the sailors despised him because he was a Christian every single one of them respected him and the captain was amongst those captain was a very religious man and he kind of despised John but he also hugely respected him because they knew that there was something about him and they were traveling in the winter and the ice the wind had dropped it was a day of sails the wind had dropped and the ice was beginning to come around the boat and they knew that if they got trapped by the ice the ice would crush them and they would be they'd be lost that would be it and so the the the were the the there was a narrow straight going through but it was getting less and less as if the ice was closing in and John said to the captain could I get permission to go down to my cabin to pray and the captain said all right because he knew the kind of man John was so John went to his cabin and a few people joined him including the captain who was still an irreligious man and John prayed and John pleaded and he said to the Lord Lord we're in a terrible situation and we're all going to die but I'm asking you Lord that you will change that you will bring a wind that you will bring even a warm wind a wind that will enable us to catch the sail and that we'll be able to make our way through that the ice will begin to part for us and he prayed and prayed like that and they went back and as they went out on the boat they could all of a sudden out from the cabin they could feel that the wind had started up and when they got to the wheel the man said at the wheel boy I said don't know what's happened here but there's a warm wind has come and he said we're going

to make it and he said will I order that more canvas will go out so the sails will be inferred more and the captain said no he said for the first time ever I realize I'm not in control someone else is in control and we'll leave it to him because he's going to take this ship through of course that was the Lord and that's these stories are multiplied over and over and over again God hears and God answers prayer and David's life was a constant reminder to us of that very thing and so we find that David is here saying but you oh Lord are a shield about me my glory and the lifter up of my head and David knew by saying that the Lord was that David was a servant of the Lord he was king but he was a servant king and David was always conscious that he was serving the Lord here on earth wish that all our leaders would think likewise but he knew that he was serving the Lord and he knew that while he was still on the run he believed that he was serving the Lord and so we find David it also says that he is the lifter up of my head isn't that wonderful you see God God lifts us up again and then we find that David he says my glory lift it up of my head because when you think about it David is looking there's a lot of faith in this psalm because remember how David we read about how David left and he's going up the

Mount of Olives and he's crying and his head is covered he's barefoot that that doesn't count the Lord is going to lift him up and then we see in verse five 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 you know sleep is one of the great blessings that's given to us and so often we we're at no more that's the most helpless moment in our experience is when we're asleep every night we go to sleep and we're utterly helpless in these hours while we're asleep because we can't do in these moments as we're out of it we can't do anything for ourselves we are utterly vulnerable and there's so often we remember us as a child being who and I'm sure so many of you but as I lay me down to sleep I pray the Lord my soul to keep if I should die before I wake I pray the Lord my soul to take we used to pray used to pray that as a as a little child and I'm sure a lot of you have done done the same because you knew that in sleep you're out of control and you know sleep of course as we know is so therapeutic but the one thing that we find difficult to do is to sleep when we're absolutely beside ourselves with worry well here's David thousands thousands chasing him to put him to death what does he do he lies down and he goes to sleep why because it says in scripture so he gives his beloved sleep what a token for good that must have been to David to find that that he was able to able to sleep that's what he says in verse 8 of of of the next psalm in peace I will both lie down and sleep for you alone oh Lord make me dwell in safety and so David here he's surrounded by the thousands but he's in perfect peace why because his focus is back on the Lord and that's what the Lord says those who have their minds stayed upon the Lord will experience perfect peace I will not be afraid though of many thousands of people it's like Elisha remember when he Elisha and the city was surrounded and the servant was so anxious and oh he says master we're done look look at the huge army all around us and Elisha says oh it's okay there's more with us than with them and probably at that moment the servant thought oh Elisha's losing it here but

Elisha said Lord open the young man's eyes that he may see and he prayed that's what he prayed and the servant's eyes were open to see that the whole hillside was covered was surrounded by horses chariots there was a fire there was a huge angelic presence all around them that's why we need not be afraid even though the though there are forces of thousands against you as has often been said one with the Lord if you have the Lord on your side you have a majority even supposing the whole world is against you if you have the Lord you're in a majority arise oh Lord says David verse 7 save me oh my God for you strike all my enemies on the cheek and break the teeth of the wicked David often looks on his enemies like animals and I think this is kind of that idea because if you're a wild animal and you get hold of it and break its cheek and break its teeth you're more or less taking away what's going to do you the damage because you you you take it take the whether it's a lion or a tiger or whatever whatever you take out the teeth break the teeth and break the cheek and all of a sudden they won't pose the same threat and I think this is what the idea that David has in in his thinking and then finally he says salvation belongs to the Lord your people your blessing be on your people David moves all the time it's personal it's me it's my but then he goes beyond as he so often does Lord all your people not just me but all your people your blessing the blessing of privilege you know this you and I tonight are the most privileged people in the world to have the Lord sometimes we look around and say oh I wish I had this wish I had that we have the Lord we have we have all we really need we have protection that you read this psalm again and again sometimes it's good when the when things come on top of you and you're under the cosh and the pressures grow and things because life life is so uncertain sometimes sometimes all kinds of difficulties coming away that's why I keep going back and I love the psalms because it doesn't matter where you are you find something there well here's David and what a predicament and yet his faith shines through we pray that this will be an encouragement to ourselves as well let us pray Lord our God we give thanks for reflecting just for a few moments in your word we pray that that word will be a blessing to us we all have our own issues and needs and worries whether they're within the family whether they're with regard to financial things but whatever it is whether it's illnesses the salvation of people's souls there's a thousand and one things that can weigh down upon us oh Lord be near to us Lord help us Lord do us good part us with your blessing we pray for giving your sin in Jesus name amen we conclude singing in this actual psalm itself you