

# Salvation Belongs to the Lord

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[ 0 : 00 ] Psalm 3, verses 1 to 8, I'll read it out loud for us. 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. 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.

[ 1 : 04 ] Your blessing be on your people. Selah. So this psalm has what we call a superscription. It has kind of a context for when this psalm was composed.

So it says at the top there, before verse 1, a psalm of David when he fled from Absalom, his son. So that could mean that David actually wrote the psalm when he was fleeing from his son Absalom, or it could be that it's a psalm that was written in the style of David, reflecting on the time when he fled from Absalom.

But regardless of what the actual story is, the psalm closely mirrors the events in 2 Samuel 16-19 when he's fleeing from his son Absalom.

And that's the very lowest point of David's life and his reign as king. So if you look at 2 Samuel in verses 11-12, he had just committed adultery with Bathsheba.

That was kind of his spiritual fall. And in the subsequent chapter, he's rebuked by prophet Nathan. He's punished by God. But then in the following chapter, 2 Samuel 13, his son Amnon rapes his daughter, who was basically Amnon's half-sister, Tamar.

[ 2 : 34 ] So his son rapes his daughter. And then Tamar's full brother Absalom is infuriated. So he murders Amnon. And so after that, because of his murder, Absalom is alienated from his father.

So he's kind of exiled. And later David brings him back. And after he brings him back, Absalom conspires against David and basically overthrows him and takes over Jerusalem. So I mean, this is really, really bad, right?

So he's committed adultery. He's fallen spiritually. His son's raping his own daughter. His son is killing his other son. And then now he's losing his kingdom.

And so as he's departing from Jerusalem, crestfallen and covering his head in shame, fleeing from Absalom, a worthless man named Shimei comes to him to curse him.

And then he says, he throws stones at him. And then this is what he says. Actually, a servant of David's offers to just go and cut his head off to make him stop cursing David. And then David says, no, this is what, he says, behold, my own son seeks my life.

[ 3 : 40 ] How much more now may this Benjaminite leave him alone and let him curse, for the Lord has told him to. So this is the absolute, like the lowest point, really, of David's life that we see in the Bible.

And it is in that place this psalm comes to life. Psalm comes to be composed. And so even though many of us probably are not in that kind of a place, that kind of desperation, it offers us a lot of encouragement and hope.

And it first points us to this desperate situation, David's desperation, and then it talks to us about the salvation that comes from the Lord after that. So if you look with me in verses 1 to 2, it begins by saying, 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. So there's a threefold repetition of the word many to emphasize how many things and people are against David.

He's feeling overwhelmed, and he's being tempted to despair, and his enemies are taunting him, saying there is no salvation for him in God. And this is typical of the era in the Near East, when they had warfare in the Near Eastern context.

[ 5 : 03 ] Nations taunted one another, saying your God or your gods have left you, because they believed that gods had a very significant role in warfare and the victory.

And so that was a standard way of taunting their enemies at the onset of the battle, saying your God has left you. So that's basically what they're doing here. There is no salvation for him in God. And it's even with us, when we have a difficult situation or when we're opposed by people or enemies, when we look at, when we stare at the problems and the enemies, and we fixate on them, the problems seem to bloom larger, and we become more desperate, and we despair. It's kind of like when the Israelites spite out the promised land that God had promised them. They come back and say, oh, these people are huge. They have huge walls up, and the people of the Anakim are there.

But then Moses has to remind them, but the Lord is going to fight for you. Because when we look at the problem, we lose hope. But when we look at the Lord and what he has done, then we gain hope.

That's precisely what David does next, if you look at verses 4 to 5. He says, I cried aloud to the Lord, and he answered me from his holy hill, Selah.

[ 6 : 22 ] I lay down and slept. I woke again, for the Lord sustained me. So, the two verses. In verse 4, at night, David is crying out to God for help.

And he hears the Lord's answer. And the answer comes from his holy hill, which is the place where the Israelite kings were enthroned. I mean, they were crowned king from the holy hill.

So, it's a place that reminds them of God's faithfulness and promise of the kingdom. So, I mean, if we think about people trying to kill us, I mean, that's a very natural, naturally, you know, insomnia-inducing circumstance.

I mean, you can't sleep when you think that people are trying to kill you, people are after you. But even in that context, David, after crying out to him, he's able to sleep because he's placing his trust in him.

So, he sleeps, and he wakes again, knowing that the Lord sustained me. And if you look at the psalm, there's a beautiful symmetry here where it's a chiasmic structure.

[ 7 : 29 ] So, that verses 1 to 2 correspond with verses 7 to 8, 3 with 6, and then 4 with 5. And you can see this. So, for example, verses 1 to 2, it says, many foes rise.

It says they rise up. And it says there's no salvation. And then if you look at the corresponding verses at the end, verse 7 and 8, it says, the one Lord rises, right?

And then salvation belongs to him. So, same language, same word rise, same word salvation. And then, verse 3, it says, the Lord is the shield about him. And then for that reason, in verse 6, it says, he's not afraid when enemies are arrayed around him.

And the reason why he doesn't fear when the enemies surround him is because the Lord is the shield about him. And then verses 4 and 5, he cries out to the Lord in verse 4, and because of that, because of God's answer in verse 5, he's able to sleep and awake.

So, there's a beautiful symmetry here of the desperation of David crying out to God and the answer that comes from the Lord. He's the one that is able to deliver him, save him, rise on his behalf to fight off the many foes that he has.

[ 8 : 42 ] And no matter how many they may be, the one Lord that he has, the one Lord that rises on his behalf, is able to take care of him. There is no deficiency in the Lord's help.

And this phrase, too, in verse 7 and 9, when he says, arise, O Lord, that's also warfare. It's a war cry. Because when Israelites went to battle against the nations, they took the ark of the Lord with them, and the ark of the Lord represented the presence of God, and so the ark would go before them, and then they would say, rise up, O Lord, and let your enemies be scattered.

Let them that hate you flee before you. So, that was a typical war cry that Israelites had. So, this language of calling on the Lord to rise up, to go before him, again, is that warfare language.

And the Lord does deliver. He comes, and it says, it says in verses 7 and 8, that he will strike all my enemies on the cheek.

You break the teeth of the wicked. It's pretty graphic, right? But the word cheek is also the same word for jaw.

[ 9 : 51 ] In other parts, for example, Book of Judges, it's translated jaw, the same word. And so, what it's really referring to is it's just a graphic way, a metaphorical way of talking about God silencing his enemies.

because you break their teeth, you hit their jaw, they're not able to speak anymore. The mouth, where their taunting came, the mouth from which they mocked and scorned God's king and God himself, they're going to be silenced.

They're going to be unable to speak anymore. It's the Lord delivering David. And then, the final verse, salvation belongs to the Lord. The enemies have taunted them, saying, there is no salvation for him in God, but God is, but he's able to declare in faith again at verse 8.

Salvation belongs to the Lord, your blessing be on your people. And, of course, most of us are not dealing with physical enemies at this point, people who are after us.

But, all of us are dealing with spiritual enemies. And, the New Testament consistently transforms the warfare language in the Old Testament to refer to spiritual warfare.

[ 10 : 59 ] And, not only in the New Testament, but even in the Old Testament itself, this psalm was adopted for the spiritual, the daily spiritual needs of the people. And, that's why it's a psalm.

It's called a psalm, right? That means it was accompanied by music. It was used in the worship of Israel. And, not only that, you also see the kind of the Selah. You've seen that three times. Most, we don't know exactly what that means, but most people agree that it's some kind of a musical notation, referring to an interlude or great. Or, it could come from a Hebrew word that says Salah, which means to raise up.

So, it could mean something like raise up the volume or sing louder or something like that. So, that again shows the fact that it's not just a psalm that David himself used for his personal purposes when he was fleeing from Absalom, but Israel, the people of God adopted it for themselves, adapted it for their worship, remembering that in their daily battles, in their spiritual life, that the Lord fights for them, that salvation comes from him.

And so, maybe some of you feel grieved by the sins that you see in your own life, maybe the sins of others around you, maybe you're overwhelmed by the temptations you face, maybe a besetting sin that you've been dealing with for a long time, or maybe you're just weighed down with guilt, the accusations of the devil, saying that you are not good enough, you are, the Lord does not love you, you do not have his favor because of what you have done.

[ 12 : 35 ] But when these doubts come, these accusations come, when the taunting of the enemy, our enemy of our soul never comes, saying there is no salvation for us, remember the verse, there is, the salvation belongs to the Lord.

And salvation is the word, it's Yeshua, it's the word that we get the name Joshua and Jesus from. And of course, the ultimate salvation that we have, it's far more than a military deliverance, it's redemption, salvation that comes through Jesus Christ.

Because he decisively and finally crushes our enemy, the enemies of our soul, the world of flesh, and the devil. So he rescues us from our guilt, he delivers us from death, he reassures us by his spirit when we are accused and weighed down with guilt.

And so salvation belongs to the Lord and I hope that you guys all remember this. And remember this truth and rest in God when you feel that you're being assailed by the enemy, knowing that salvation belongs ultimately to our God.

So with that, let's pray. Let's pray. Let's pray. Let's pray.