

# Salvation Belongs to the LORD

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- [ 0 : 0 0 ]     You can open with me in your Bibles to Psalm 3. Maybe you're noticing a pattern here. Psalm 1 last Sunday, Psalm 2 this Sunday, Psalm 3 now. It's very creative, out-of-the-box thinking on my part, I know. But this psalm, Psalm 3, is a very appropriate psalm for us to consider as we approach the Lord's table this evening.
- There are two truths in this psalm that David confesses, and the same two truths we confess as we prepare to share in the Lord's Supper tonight.
- We are threatened by many foes, and yet we are saved by our mighty God. Just those two truths from Psalm 3, but such important truths for us to consider.
- So let's look at the first together. We are threatened by many foes. And we'll read the first two verses. This is the word of the Lord. A psalm of David, when he fled from Absalom, his son.
- [ 1 : 1 3 ]     O Lord, how many are my foes! Many are rising up against me. Many are saying of my soul, there is no salvation for him in God.
- Selah. David knew what it was like to have many foes. David often lived his life with his enemies pursuing him, hunting him like wild game, seeking to snuff out his life.
- And these weren't just any enemies. These weren't nations necessarily only seeking his life, though they did. These weren't kings from afar who wanted to ruin and destroy David's life.
- These were men who were close to him. These were men that he knew and loved dearly. We read in the scriptures of Saul, his own father-in-law, pursuing David's life.
- And we read of his own son, Absalom, also pursuing David's life. In 2 Samuel, we learn that Absalom betrayed David.
- [ 2 : 1 9 ]     That for a time, David and Absalom had been estranged for two years. They had gone without seeing each other. They had gone without speaking to each other. Even though during that time, Absalom was living right there in Jerusalem where David was.
- When they are finally reunited. In 2 Samuel 14, that chapter ends by saying, Absalom bowed himself on his face to the ground before the king.
- Much like Psalm 2. Kissed the son. Bows himself to the ground before the king. And the king kissed Absalom. But in the very next chapter of 2 Samuel, what does Absalom do?
- He conspires against David, wanting to take the throne of Israel from his father. And how did he do that? Well, chapter 15 tells us.
- Verse 1, 2 Samuel 15. After this, Absalom got himself a chariot and horses and 50 men to run before him. And Absalom used to rise early and stand beside the way of the gate.
- [ 3 : 2 2 ]     And when any man had a dispute to come before the king for judgment, Absalom would call to him and say, From what city are you? And when he said, Your servant is of such and such a tribe in Israel, Absalom would say to him, See, your claims are good and right, but there is no man designated by the king to hear you.

Then Absalom would say, Oh, that I were judge in the land. Then every man with a dispute or cause might come to me, and I would give him justice. And whenever a man came near to pay homage to him, he would put out his hand and take hold of him and kiss him.

Thus Absalom did to all of Israel who came to the king for judgment. So Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel. So the reconciliation that David had extended to Absalom with a kiss was then rejected by Absalom with a kiss as well.

And behind his father's back, Absalom was secretly campaigning to make himself king. And he was successful. Absalom's following grew, and word got back to David about what was happening.

And it became such a problem, David was forced to flee from Jerusalem. And so he was a man on the run. His life sought by his very own son. David knew what it was like to have enemies.

[ 4 : 47 ] But we know what it is like to have enemies as well. Satan has taken his flaming arrows, and he's pointed them at our hearts, seeking to discourage us, to tempt us to believe that God is not for us.

He schemes against us. He lies to us, saying, God is against you. Your sins could never be forgiven. No hope of salvation for you.

Give up and give in. We fight against remaining sin. So often saying with Paul, I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out.

For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing. Striving to put sin to death in our lives, but still failing and struggling at times to see the progress and sanctification that we want, or that we expect should be taking place.

And the world continues to seduce us with the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and the pride of life, as 1 John 2 says.

[ 6 : 00 ] Like the adulterous woman of Proverbs 9 that we saw last Sunday morning, wooing us with the pleasures of life, saying stolen water is sweet, bread eaten in secret is pleasant.

Or the world treats us in the opposite way. Not with enticement, but with enmity. The world isn't necessarily trying to woo us. Perhaps we experience more the opposition of it.

We experience more so what David was going through in Psalm 3. The world hates us. Our physical lives may not be threatened to the same degree as David.

We aren't fleeing our enemies as they hunt us, but we still have many foes. Perhaps people in our lives who hate God and shun us, or they mock us, saying similar things that David would have heard.

You're a fool. You're crazy. You're backwards. Your Christianity is offensive. There is no salvation for you in God. So we have very real enemies all around us, and even still within.

[ 7 : 08 ] You know who else had enemies? Jesus did. Many foes rising up against Him. None from within, but still many all around. Those seeking to thwart His mission.

Even His own disciples. Those who followed Him and loved Him. They even rose up against Him. We've seen in Mark, Peter rebuking Jesus, and trying to talk some sense into Jesus to stop Him from completing the mission and going to His death.

Jesus, though, rebuked Peter. And what did He say? Get behind me, Satan. Peter had the mind of Satan, God's ancient foe. The crowds rose up against Jesus, too, in His very hometown of Nazareth.

What did they try to do to Him after He taught there that He was the Christ, the fulfillment of Old Testament expectation? Well, Luke 4, beginning in verse 28, tells us, When they heard these things, all in the synagogue were filled with wrath, and they rose up.

They rose up. Just like Psalm 3, O Lord, how many are my foes! Many are rising up against me. Here they are, rising against Jesus. And they drove Him out of the town and brought Him to the brow of the hill on which their town was built so they could throw Him down the cliff.

[ 8 : 33 ] But passing through their midst, He went away. So they desperately wanted to kill Him. Many foes! But the time was not yet, and so they couldn't.

Jesus was not to die in Nazareth, but Jesus was to die in Jerusalem, where His many enemies lie in wait for Him. They were ready there to ambush Him with their words, hoping to catch Him in something He might say, so that they could then ambush Him with their hands and deliver Him to the authorities.

Those foes awaited Jesus, and yet He was undeterred. What have we seen in Mark? What have we seen in Luke? that His face was set to go to Jerusalem.

Remember how Luke says that to remind us of Isaiah. Those words very intentionally given to us by Luke. Isaiah 50, the suffering servant of Isaiah, who is Jesus.

He's speaking in Isaiah 50, and He says that He's set His face like flint. Just before those words, this is what Jesus, the suffering servant of Isaiah 50 says, beginning in verse 5, The Lord has opened my ear, and I was not rebellious.

[ 9 : 54 ] I turned not backward. I gave my back to those who strike, and my cheeks to those who pull out the beard. I hid not my face from disgrace and spitting.

Those words so clearly fulfilled in Jesus. His face was covered, and He was beaten and spit upon by the Jewish authorities. And with His face covered, they're mocking Him with the question, Who was it that struck you?

He hid not His face. The Roman soldiers, they struck His head with a reed. They too spit on Him and disgraced Him as well, putting that purple cloak on Him like a royal robe and twisting together that crown of thorns that they thrust upon His head, saluting Him and saying as they knelt down in homage to Him, kissing His feet, you might say, Hail, King of the Jews!

How many were His foes all around Him? The religious leaders, the crowds, the Roman authorities, Jews, Gentiles, Satan and his legion of demons rising up all around.

And so He was delivered into their hands. His enemies led Him up that hill and they nailed Him to that cross. And in the end, what did His foes shout at Him?

[ 11 : 25 ] Save yourself! If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross! And they mocked Him, saying to one another, He saved others.

He cannot save Himself. And then they uttered these words in Matthew 27, verse 43. But if you didn't know it, you would think they're just reading straight from Psalm 3.

They said, He trusts in God. Let God deliver Him now if He desires. There is no salvation for you in God, Jesus of Nazareth.

God will not save you. God does not desire to save you. The chief priests, the scribes, all the religious leaders standing there just watching gleefully as Jesus bled and died.

So they were saying things to one another, but surely close enough for Jesus to hear. surely loud enough for Jesus to hear.

[ 12 : 32 ] They wanted Him to hear. They relished Him hearing these words. There is no salvation for Him in God. His many foes rising up and saying, Jesus, you are defeated.

And so Jesus was struck down upon that cross. But not because His foes had overwhelmed Him. And not because His foes had risen up and He couldn't have thwarted them.

Not as though He couldn't resist them. No, He was struck down only because He laid down His life. He gave it up of His own accord for them.

He did not cry out as David did in Psalm 3. Arise, O Lord. Save me, O my God. Just the opposite.

Just the opposite. Over and over again. When Jesus was on trial, when He was challenged by the religious leaders, Jesus did not open His mouth to plead for deliverance.

[ 13 : 35 ] When He stood before Pilate, He made no defense. When He hung on the cross, He didn't ask God to save Him. Willingly, He gave up His life to His foes.

And though it was His foes who nailed Him to the cross, who pierced His hands and feet, it was all according to plan. All according to God's eternal plan that His wrath might be poured out upon His Son.

Punished in our place for our sins. So it is true, God did not save Jesus from the cross. God struck Him down.

The fury of His wrath, Jesus bore in full that God's justice might be satisfied. That our sins might be forgiven.

No deliverance for Jesus as He hung upon that cross. And so His many foes were looking on. And they're misunderstanding all of it. And they're rubbing their hands together with these satisfied, smug smiles, concluding, seeing, see, no salvation for Him in God.

[ 14 : 47 ] No salvation. So the first truth we must confess from Psalm 3, we are threatened by many foes. And yet, here is the second truth, we are saved by our mighty God.

We are saved by our mighty God and we see this in Psalm 3. Beginning in verse 3. 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. So David hoped in God. David trusted in God.

[ 15 : 55 ] You are my shield, O God. You sustain me, though thousands come up against me. David never wavered in his trust in God. Even as he fled from Jerusalem and endured such hostility, a striking example is given to us yet again in 2 Samuel chapter 16.

Go ahead and turn there. Turn with me to 2 Samuel chapter 16. We're going to read a passage from there. A man named Shimei from the house of Saul.

He's still bitter about the death of Saul and the rise of David. So he sees here David's apparent demise as this just retribution.

He's saying, David, you deserved this. So Shimei comes out of his house and he's cursing David continually. And in 2 Samuel 16, beginning in verse 6, this is what we read.

And he threw stones at David and at all the servants of King David and all the people and all the mighty men who were on his right hand and on his left.

[ 17 : 06 ] And Shimei said as he cursed, Get out! Get out, you man of blood, you worthless man! The Lord has avenged on you all the blood of the house of Saul in whose place you have reigned.

And the Lord has given the kingdom into the hand of your son Absalom. See, your evil is on you for you are a man of blood. Then Abishai, the son of Zerui, Zerui, said to the king, Why should this dead dog curse my lord the king?

Let me go over and take off his head. But the king said, What have I to do with you, you sons of Zerui? If he is cursing because the Lord has said to him, Curse David, who then shall say, Why have you done so?

And David said to Abishai and to all his servants, 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. So David and his men went on the road while Shammai went along on the hillside opposite him and cursed as he went and threw stones at him and flung dust.

[ 18 : 26 ] And the king and all the people who were with him arrived weary at the Jordan and there he refreshed himself. We see here David's enemy, Shammai.

He's echoing the words of Psalm 3 when he says, See, your evil is on you for you are a man of blood. He's saying, See, David, there is no salvation for you in God.

Even as David's enemies revile him and belittle him, they curse him, he has literally rocks thrown at him. Even so, David entrusts himself to the Lord.

He says, 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. And then what does he do? Once he arrives weary at the Jordan, he refreshed himself.

Just as we have here in Psalm 3, verse 5, I lay down and slept. I woke again for the Lord sustained me. David could refresh himself because he entrusted himself to God.

[ 19 : 37 ] He was confident, though threatened by his enemies, his many enemies around. God would be his salvation. And he was. David's son, Absalom, eventually failed in his coup.

In a battle with David's men, Absalom is killed to the great sadness of David. Though this man had threatened David's life, he was a foe who rose up against David.

This was also David's son. He loved him. He mourned him. But it was through the death of Absalom that God brought salvation for David.

No longer a hunted man, David was welcomed back to Jerusalem. He was joyfully escorted back to Jerusalem by the tribe of Judah.

It was this great victorious procession. And once again, he was seated upon his throne. All of David's enemies struck by God on the cheek, Psalm 3 told us.

[ 20 : 37 ] The wicked who were after David, God broke their teeth. God punched them in the mouth. He arose and saved David. He did not abandon him to his enemies as his enemies had assumed.

And God did not abandon his son either. Just as David said in Psalm 16, pointing forward to Christ, for you will not abandon my soul to Sheol or let your Holy One see corruption.

God raised Jesus from the dead. And then what did he do? Psalm 1, or Ephesians 1.20 says that he seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion and above every name that is named, not only in this age, but also in the one to come.

The Lord Jesus was not abandoned by his Father. Far from it. He was exalted to the highest place, given the name above every name, so that at the name of Jesus, every knee should bow, kiss the Son, in heaven and on earth and under the earth.

And every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father. And so we know God has not abandoned us.

[ 22 : 08 ] He has saved us. He has delivered us from our sins through the death of his Son. He punched sin in the mouth. He broke Satan's teeth. And so we too can say with David, salvation belongs to the Lord.

Your blessing be on your people. We say that tonight as we gather around the table of the Lord. We are a blessed people enjoying sweet fellowship and communion with our God.

This is just a foretaste of a far greater meal to come and a far sweeter communion in the age to come. It's a glimpse of that here as we share in this meal tonight, welcomed by our God as guests at his table, invited in, beloved sons and daughters that we are because our sins have been forgiven and Christ's righteousness credited to us.

So we are a blessed people. As David says in another psalm that he wrote, Psalm 32, blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.

Blessed is the man against whom the Lord counts no iniquity and in whose spirit there is no deceit. That's us this evening. Our transgressions forgiven, our sins covered, our iniquity not counted against us because all of it, every sinful thought, every evil deed was counted against Jesus Christ upon the cross.

[ 23 : 46 ] The Lord laid on him the iniquity of us all. Isaiah 53, 6. He was pierced for our transgressions. He was crushed for our iniquities so that salvation which belongs to the Lord would be granted to us.

God's wrath, we were spared because it was poured out on him. And now God's favor poured out upon us because Christ opened not his mouth and made no defense because he refused to call down the angels to save him because he refused to prove he was the son of God by coming down from the cross because he kept silent.

Now when we cry aloud, arise, O Lord, save me, O God, we can be sure he will for salvation belongs to the Lord.

Let's pray together. Father, we thank you that we can come this evening a people rejoicing, a blessed people, saying indeed salvation belongs to you.

We thank you, Father, that you have granted salvation to so many of us gathered here tonight. We pray even at this hour that you would save the lost, that they would turn to Christ now, seeing the enemies all around and within, seeing their sin laid bare, that they would turn to Christ in repentance and faith and find life in him.

[ 25 : 23 ] We thank you, Father, for this meal that we can share in. We pray that you would bless us as we partake of it together, that we would remember Christ's death for us. It's in his name that we pray.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.