

Psalm 3 The Blessings of Salvation (Version #2 preached on 8-22-2021)

Prov. 24:10 says, **“If you faint in the day of adversity, your strength is small.”** Is. 40:31 says, **“But they who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.”** In this Psalm we see a man, at probably the absolute lowest time of his life, who does not give in, whose faith does not falter. Instead of throwing in the towel, instead of giving up and blaming God for his circumstances, he praises God for his salvation saying in v. 3: **“But you, O Lord, are a shield about me, my glory, and the lifter of my head.”** I believe this Psalm is about God’s salvation. We see it in v. 2: **“many are saying of my soul, there is no salvation for him in God,”** v. 7: **“Arise, O Lord! Save me, O my God,”** and in v. 8: **“Salvation belongs to the Lord . . .”** And, v. 3 gives us 3 apparent blessings that accompany God’s salvation of his people.

1. God protects his people. Here we see the great power of God to protect his people. David calls God his shield of protection from his enemies. Let’s consider the context of this Psalm. These words were written at possibly the lowest time of his life. You see, King David was fleeing from one of his sons (Absalom) who was heading up a revolution in Israel. We aren’t simply talking about a small family conflict where a teen age son is being a little rebellious. We are talking about a full-fledged revolution where David’s own son is trying to kill him and take his throne. And, he wasn’t doing it alone. In vv. 1-2 David says, **“O Lord, How many are my foes. Many are rising against me. Many are saying . . .”**

The once exalted King of Israel, is now fleeing for his life. 2 Sam. 15:30 says David fled Jerusalem and headed out of town up the Mount of Olives, **“weeping as he went, barefoot and with his head covered.”** And there was a man named Shimei who cursed David and threw rocks at him as he passed by, saying, **“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.”** Right after this, his rebellious son, Absalom entered Jerusalem, took his palace, and even his concubines and wives who stayed behind, all of this in the presence of all Israel. Oh, what a fall for David! He left; not knowing if he would ever see Jerusalem again. And, we need to remember, David surely thought what was happening to him was caused by HIS OWN SIN. Remember Bathsheba? He took another man’s wife, lied about it, and then had her husband put to death. He probably thought, **“I am getting what I deserve. God is bringing this about in my life.”**

But, in the midst of this trial, the worst of his life, he praises God for his salvation, namely, God’s protection. He says, **“God you are my shield.”** In v. 5-6 he says, **“I lay down and slept; I woke again, for the Lord sustained me. I will not be afraid of many thousands of people who have set themselves against me all around.”** In the same way, God protects his people.

Listen to these verses: Ps. 28:7: **“The LORD is my strength and my shield; in him my heart trusts, and I am helped; my heart exults, and with my song I give thanks to him.”** Ps. 119:114: **“You are my hiding place and my shield; I hope in your word.”** Ps. 7:10: **“My shield is with God, who saves the upright in heart.”** Ps. 18:2: **“The LORD is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, my God, my rock, in whom I take refuge, my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.”**

Now, let's pause for a moment and ask, "*From what does God protect you from?*" Does he protect you from the myriads of people who do not call upon the name of the Lord? Does God protect you from all danger? Does he protect you from sickness? Paul prayed 3 times that God would heal him. But, in the end, God did not heal him. But, Paul said, "***His grace is sufficient for me***" (2 Cor. 12). Does he protect you from the consequences of sin? No! Because David sinned against God by numbering the people, God sent sickness that killed 70,000 people. Does he protect you from physical death, even death as a martyr? No! Eleven of Jesus' closest disciples were killed for their faith. So what does he protect us from? He protects us from eternal danger: spiritual death and separation from Him. And, he protects us from the evil one. If you are a Christian, if you have believed on the Lord Jesus, if you are united to Him by the Spirit, you are protected. God is a shield about you. No matter what happens in this life, God cannot deny you eternal protection because he cannot deny himself. If you are in Christ, you are safe. And there is no better place to be!

2. God is the glory of his people. In v. 3 David says: "**YOU are my GLORY.**" What does this mean? Glory is an interesting concept with a big meaning. In Is. 48:11 God says, "**My glory I will not give to another.**" This verse is in the context of idol worship. Israel was worshipping idols. And God says, "*I am going to tell you some things that will happen and I will do them. But, I am telling you what is going to happen so you will not give credit to your idols. For I will not share my glory with another. I am your great and mighty creator. There are none like Me.*" (see Is. 48:1-14). So glory is a picture word. It pictures someone else. If we consider the expanse of the universe and look at God's creation we see the glory of God displayed. We say, "*Glorious is our God!*"

So when we come to David, HE was God's king. God's royal stamp of approval was upon HIM. It was a position of glory given to HIM by God. And his kingship was meant to display the greatness of God. Do you remember 2:2 "***As for me, I have set my King on Zion, on my holy hill.***" Well, when David fled Jerusalem as king, SO WENT HIS GLORY. So went his name as king. So went his fame. He was being overthrown by his own son, fleeing God's holy city, leaving behind the Ark of the Covenant, the very place where God met with his people. He was embarrassed, humiliated, and heading up the Mount of Olives weeping, barefoot, with his head covered. Where is the glory?

But, in the midst of this great trial (unlike ANYTHING I have gone through), he says, "**God, YOU are my glory.**" Not, the kingship, the authority, not the power, not the wealth, not the political position in the world, but GOD. David was saying, "*God I trust in YOU. NOTHING ELSE MATTERS!*" You see, David didn't know if he would be killed, or if he would be exiled forever. And, very importantly, he didn't know if he would ever see the Ark of the Covenant or the place where God with his people in Zion. If EVERYTHING were taken away, God would be his glory.

Do you remember when Abraham rescued Lot after some kings banded together to overthrow Sodom and Gomorrah? Abraham joined forces and recaptured the cities and rescued Lot and his family. And instead of taking all the spoils of war, he gave them to the kings of Sodom, Gomorrah, and the kings of the surrounding cities. And God appeared to him and said in Gen. 15:1: "*Abram, Fear not, I AM your shield. I AM your reward.*" Let me ask you, "*What is your*

goal in this life? What do you want?" It must be GOD Himself. HE must be our glory! But how does this happen? You see, David looked to God himself to be his glory. His heart said, ***"One thing have I asked of the LORD, that will I seek after: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the LORD and to inquire in his temple"*** (Ps. 27:4). ***"For a day in your courts is better than a thousand elsewhere. I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of wickedness"*** (Ps. 84:10). David's faith was in God! But, he looked forward to a greater day when God's glory would be displayed.

Let me read some words from Isaiah about the coming glory of God. Is. 60:1-4: ***"Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you. ² For behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the LORD will arise upon you, and his glory will be seen upon you. ³ And nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising. ⁴ Lift up your eyes all around, and see; they all gather together, they come to you; your sons shall come from afar, and your daughters shall be carried on the hip."*** These words speak of a time when the glory of the Lord will spread throughout the earth. And the peoples will come to his glory. Verse 7: ***"they shall come up with acceptance on my altar, and I will beautify my beautiful house . . ."*** Verse 16: ***"You shall suck the milk of nations; you shall nurse at the breast of kings; and you shall know that I, the LORD, am your Savior and your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob."*** Verse 19: ***"The sun shall be no more your light by day, nor for brightness shall the moon give you light; but the LORD will be your everlasting light, and your God will be your glory."***

Now, how do we interpret these verses? Of WOM do they speak? Jesus said, ***"If you've seen me, you've seen the Father."*** Today, the glory of God is displayed in the person and work of Jesus Christ. ***"Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, ² but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. ³ He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, ⁴ having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs."*** (Heb. 1:1-4).

Today, if you have believed in Christ, by the Spirit, the glory of God has come upon you, and you display the glory of God in your life. 2 Cor. 3:18: ***"And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit."*** This is why Paul, despite all his trials and tribulations, says, ***"I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ (Phil. 3:8).*** Over 30 times in the NT we see "glory" used in reference to Christ. Today Jesus Christ is the glory of God. And if you want God, you must find the Son. For that is where his glory is displayed! And this is why Jesus came; to display the glory of God and give this glory to his people. Let me end this point with the most beautiful words about Jesus mission here on earth. It is a prayer for his people. John 17:22-24 ***"The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, ²³ I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly***

one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me. Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world.”

3. God Comforts His People. The final blessing of salvation in this passage is comfort. Look at v. 5: **“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.”** David’s spirit was not broken even in that trying time. But instead, he lifted up his head and gave thanks to God for helping him and giving him comfort.

Children, are you ever scared at night. Look to Christ, the glory of God who will bring you comfort and help you through the night. Today, no matter what you are going through, in Christ, God will sustain you and lift your heart to praise and thanksgiving. We see this throughout the Scriptures. And we see very little unrighteous complaining. From Adam to Noah to Abraham to David, Job, the prophets, the disciples in the NT, we see a people whose heads are lifted up because God is their God!

Let me ask, *“Which would you rather have? The comfort of God in the midst of trials? Or physical safety with an empty heart?”* Go ahead and choose! Oh the blessings of salvation upon the people of God! He protects us! In Christ, He is our glory! And he sustains us with great comfort, no matter what!

Let me end with a few applications.

App. How can a person say such things in the midst of trials and tribulations? It is only by the Spirit. And the Spirit comes as a gift from Christ. If you look at your life, and all you do is complain, I would ask you to trust Christ. Now, we may still complain (for we do). But, at the end of the day, God’s people trust Christ. For this is what the Spirit does in our lives.

App. Let’s take this a step further. What if the circumstances of your life are the result of the direct discipline of God? In other words, God is the one who has allowed these things. Again, repent, fall upon the mercies of Christ. Remember a broken reed he will not break and a smoldering flax he will not put out. We don’t simply need him for salvation in the beginning. We need him every day!

App. The blessings of salvation come through repentance, both at the beginning of spiritual life and throughout. An unrepentant person will not see the blessings of salvation in this life or the life to come. Remember, David’s problems were because of his own sin. But, through it all, He was repentant. In v. 4 we read: **“I cried out to the Lord and he answered me from his holy hill.”** This is a prayer of repentance.

App. David teaches us by his own example, that although the whole world, with one voice, should attempt to bring us to despair, instead of listening to it, we must listen to God alone, and always cherish within us the hope of salvation which God has promised. As the ungodly try to

destroy our souls, we should remember God's salvation and pray words such as these. After all, this Psalm was meant as a morning prayer.

Let's end with the Gospel: King David is a picture of Christ. Jesus was dethroned (from one perspective), was forsaken by all men, even his own friends and family, even God. But, because of his death and resurrection God has given him the name of all names to whom every creature on heaven and on earth will bow at his feet to the glory of God the Father.

Oh how beautiful is King Jesus and the salvation he brings: He is our protection. He is our glory. He is our sustainer! Trust him today!