

## Psalm 3

### Relocating our Glory

**Introduction:** Notice the expression of raw emotions in vs.7 It is intense anger. **“strike all my enemies on the cheek; break the teeth of the wicked.”** We moderns have this idea that we are emotionally honest, much more than eastern conservative cultures.. Yet verses like this make modern people very uncomfortable...You shouldn't say things like that, they say..it's not politically correct, they say

But the Psalms are very honest, much more honest than we are.

There are two main views about emotions -

Stuff them down, pretend that there not there - conservative religious view..  
“I'm angry at God... you shouldn't say such things...”

Just vent them, expressing our emotions as a good in itself - liberal secular view. To be emotionally honest and unapologetic.

But we shouldn't stuff our emotions, we also shouldn't just vent our emotions, we are to pray our emotions -not perfect prayers (theological or grammatical), but honest prayers, we are to pray our raw emotions, to pray our fears, to pray our joys and thanksgivings. We are to pray and seek to be formed by God and his Word, to be corrected and redirected. This is the purpose of the book of Psalms to teach us to pray to form our heads and our hearts to want what God wants, to see how God sees, to Love what God loves.

This is what we are seeking to do here on Sunday Mornings and in our lives personally.

#### 1. The Title

#### 2. A Psalm of David, when he fled from Absalom his son.

**“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*”**

##### 1. The title of this Psalm is very important for our understanding.

Because this prayer is a personal prayer that comes out of a story. Now that's true for most of us... we pray a prayer of healing for our mother because she is stricken with cancer... our care, our concern, our bringing this need before God comes out of a story.. But in

particular these titles within the book of Psalms help us understand the context of the prayer in order to locate ourselves in the story and help us enter into prayer with the Psalmist.

2. The title of this psalm is A Psalm of David, when he fled from Absalom his son.
  1. We don't have time to go into all the details now - but the reason David is fleeing from his son is because David has failed to be a righteous man personally and in his judgments as king. He has failed to uphold justice in regards to his own sins and it has crippled him, he has not been able exact justice in the life of his own family... what comes about is that David's son Absalom forms a coup to take over David's kingdom by gathering the army and all those who are disillusioned with David on his side.... David literally has to flee for his life.. if he stayed in Jerusalem he will probably be killed and it will most likely mean massive bloodshed for the people of the city. So David goes on the run.

### 3. A Personal Attack

1. When you take this Psalm at face value you might take the same approach as last week. Yes, there are many things to fear, many powerful enemies, many who are against me. But God is for me. God has the final word over my life and over history. I will trust in him. This is slightly different though.
2. David is personally being attacked. His kingship, His identity, God's anointing over his life. You see, what had happened to the king before David, King Saul, was that he rebelled, he sinned against God, and God took away the kingdom from him and gave it to David. Now many were saying that this is what was now happening to David - **"There is no salvation for him in God."** David has gone too far, God will not deliver him this time. This is the killing blow.
3. Not only that but David's whole identity as king is being attacked and called into question. His identity as a father is no doubt being attacked and called into question - Absalom, his son, is trying to kill him. His own righteousness is being called into question - Adulterer, murderer, sinner, unfit to rule, unfit to receive God's deliverance.... Not even God can help or will help David now -

This is the killing blow. David's whole career, his whole life, is one continual testimony of God's deliverance -Goliath, the Philistines, Saul... the list goes on. But now its dried up. wow!

1. It's one thing to fear for your physical person. You are in danger. There is something actual to fear - losing your life, being physically harmed. This can be healthy. Healthy fear can keep you from real danger. But anxiety takes place when fear has no physical form, it's a deeper form of fear. Imagine the rush of adrenaline that you have when you jump out of the way of being hit by a car as you step off the curb. That is a good reaction. But imagine that rush never going away, your senses being in overdrive all the time. This is anxiety. This is what is happening to David... the voices keep going through his head, the accusations..when you experience an attack on your character, and your identity it has this way of draining your very soul. He has no rest....Fear is everywhere and nowhere. Maybe you've had times in your life where you would go to bed thinking about situations where your motives or your person were being called into question. You go to sleep looking for some relief, or desire to get some rest for some mental clarity yet you would spend the whole night dreaming you were in conversation with these people defending yourself, going back and forth. What happens? You wake up more tired. Sleeping was exhausting...this is a form of anxiety. Imagine what David felt.

### 3. Contemplation # 1

1. What are the judgments or the despairing words or thoughts, the condemnations that you feel from the world, from the devil, or from your own self? How has your identity been attacked? **“There is no help for you in God”**.. Do you feel this now? Do you believe this, that you are too far gone? That God's grace has run out for you?
2. **Confession** - Confess your despair to the Lord. Confess your fear of being forsaken. Confess your deep seeded anxieties to the Lord whether they are grounded or ungrounded, they need to be confessed.... “The devil loves unspoken secrets; especially those

that fester in a man's soul." (Take a few minutes to confess to the Lord)

3. **Scripture** - "There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death." - Romans 8:28 ... "But Zion said, "The Lord has forsaken me; my Lord has forgotten me." "Can a woman forget her nursing child, that she should have no compassion on the son of her womb? Even these may forget, yet I will not forget you. Behold, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands." - Isaiah 49

4. **Prayer** - (Pray Aloud Together) Almighty and everlasting God, you are always more ready to hear than we to pray, and to give more than we either desire or deserve: Pour upon us the abundance of your mercy, forgiving us those things of which our conscience is afraid, and giving us those good things for which we are not worthy to ask, except through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ our Savior; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

4. "But you, O Lord, are a shield about me,  
my glory, and the lifter of my head.  
4 I cried aloud to the Lord,  
and he answered me from his holy hill. 5 I lay down and slept;  
I woke again, for the Lord sustained me.  
6 I will not be afraid of many thousands of people  
who have set themselves against me all around. 7 Arise, O Lord!  
Save me, O my God!  
For you strike all my enemies on the cheek;  
you break the teeth of the wicked.8 Salvation belongs to  
the Lord; your blessing be on your people! *Selah*

## 5. Relocating Our Glory

1. The word "But" is used frequently in the book of Psalms and signals a kind of transition, turning point, or major contrast in the prayer.

2. Here at this point - David realizes God's protection over him - He is a shield about or around him. Now this is not the normal shield that we think of that you would use in hand to hand combat. This shield was the size of a door- this is a shield that you can hide your whole body behind. One commentator pointed out though that this shield was only used for taking ground in battle, it was used for storming the fortress. It protected from arrows, hot oil, tar, or falling rocks... but this shield was absolutely useless in retreat. The moment you turn to run, to flee, your shield gives you no protection... You're dead.
3. It seems that David realizes that he had been locating his worth and his identity in his kingship, or his moral uprightness, or maybe his pride in being a good Father.... but now that he has failed in every single one of these his whole identity, his whole person is being challenged... where is the protection? I think David is saying that he lost his protection, whether spiritually, emotionally or even physically, because he stopped following the Lord. He, at some point, started to locate his worth, his value in things -kingship, fatherhood, moral record, religiosity and not in God alone. - The outcome of all of that was anxiety as we saw...an identity crisis restlessness.
4. Anytime, we as people, especially Christians locate our identity and worth in anything but God alone we are setting ourselves up for disaster.
  1. "God made us: invented us as a man invents an engine. A car is made to run on petrol, and it would not run properly on anything else. Now God designed the human machine to run on Himself. He Himself is the fuel our spirits were designed to burn, or the food our spirits were designed to feed on. There is no other. That is why it is just no good asking God to make us happy in our own way without bothering about religion. God cannot give us a happiness and peace apart from Himself, because it is not there." - C.S Lewis
  2. No wonder we worry. No wonder we are full of fear, that our lives our full of anxiety. No wonder we're so confused about our identity - Because we are locating it somewhere other than in God.

5. I know I quote this all the time but this is a truth that is so vital to daily christian living - "You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you." -Augustine
6. The moment we move from that place we have no basis for comfort, peace.. it is only a matter of time until it leaves us exposed, fearful, and anxious.
7. So what does David do? He relocated his glory (Your identity and worth) and the one who lifts up his head (The one who is proud of you, the one who lifts you up) and he called and God answered from his holy hill.
  1. God was his true glory (his only reason for confidence or boasting), God was the one who had given David an approval that he did not earn and he could not lose. How did David know this? God answered from his holy hill, the place where sacrifice for sin was made. If David was confident in God's love, grace, and forgiveness of sins- how much more should we be. We know the Cross of Jesus Christ. We know the the greatest demonstration of God's never stopping, never giving up, un-breaking, always and forever love.
    1. **We cannot earn it - "For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, 9 not a result of works, so that no one may boast."** -Ephesians 2:8-9
    2. **We cannot lose it - "I am absolutely sure that not even death or life can separate us from God's love. Not even angels or demons, the present or the future, or any powers can separate us. 39 Not even the highest places or the lowest, or anything else in all creation can separate us. Nothing at all can ever separate us from God's love. That's because of what Christ Jesus our Lord has done."** - Romans 8:38-39
  2. David calls God the lifter of his head - You lift your head because you are proud - but if someone lifts your head up it's because they are proud of you... Think about that. God is proud of you, he is not ashamed to be called your God (Hebrews 11:16). Because of what Christ has done - living the life we should, dying the death

we deserve, he has secured our place as sons and daughters of God. God looks at each one of us and says, I am the lifter of your head - "You are my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased."

1. If God gives you approval, if your identity is hidden in him, what can touch that? who cares what people say, and think. That's true freedom -"Real freedom is freedom from the opinions of others. Above all, freedom from your opinions about yourself. " God's opinion about you is the only one that matters.

## 6. Contemplation #2

1. **Confession** -Where are you locating your glory and worth? In your accomplishments; in your looks; in your mental or physical capabilities; in your religious moral efforts? Confess your self justifications to the Lord. Take a moment to confess those to the Lord!
2. **Thought** - "Cast your deadly "doing" down—Down at Jesus' feet; Stand in Him, in Him alone, Gloriously complete."
3. **Scripture** - "**For God alone my soul waits in silence; from him comes my salvation. He only is my rock and my salvation, my fortress; I shall not be greatly shaken. How long will all of you attack a man to batter him, like a leaning wall, a tottering fence? They only plan to thrust him down from his high position. They take pleasure in falsehood. They bless with their mouths, but inwardly they curse. *Selah* For God alone, O my soul, wait in silence, for my hope is from him. He only is my rock and my salvation, my fortress; I shall not be shaken. On God rests my salvation and my glory; my mighty rock, my refuge is God. Trust in him at all times, O people; pour out your heart before him; God is a refuge for us. *Selah* Those of low estate are but a breath; those of high estate are a delusion; in the balances they go up; they are together lighter than a breath. Put no trust in extortion; set no vain hopes on robbery; if riches increase, set not your heart on them. Once God has spoken;**

**twice have I heard this: that power belongs to God, and that to you, O Lord, belongs steadfast love. Psalm 62**

4. **Scripture** - “Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom, let not the mighty man boast in his might, let not the rich man boast in his riches, 24 but let him who boasts boast in this, that he understands and knows me, that I am the Lord who practices steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth. For in these things I delight, declares the Lord.” Jeremiah 9:23-24
5. **Thought** - “Define yourself radically as one beloved by God. This is the true self. Every other identity is illusion.” –Brennan Manning
6. **Prayer** - (Pray Aloud Together) Gracious and steadfast God, you come to us with news of hope, freedom, and restoration. We confess that we have not believed your word or trusted your promise. Forgive us Lord for not locating our glory and self worth in you and you alone. Lord the world’s words seem so powerful in determining our identity and self worth. May they be nothing to us in comparison with the word that you have spoken over us...Free us from all fear and anxiety and guide our feet into the way of peace, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

**Closing Prayer** -Father, now may our sincere worship now be directed toward you, not only in words, but in deed and in truth. For Jesus’ sake. Amen