

Bibles???

The Word of God is the Absolute Truth and the Final Authority

We are going to continue our study through the Psalms.

I originally was planning on doing Psalm 3-5, but we are only going to do Psalm 3 and 4 this evening.

In Psalm three, David cries out to the Lord because of the physical attacks against him and in Psalm four, David cries out to the Lord because of the attacks upon his character.

Let's pray...

[Psa 3:1-8 NKJV] 1 A Psalm of David when he fled from Absalom his son. LORD, how they have increased who trouble me! Many [are] they who rise up against me.

Psalm 3 is the first Psalm where we see a title.

And by the title of the Psalm we know that David was the one who wrote it and we also know that he wrote it during the period that we just covered a few weeks ago in 2 Samuel 15-18 when Absalom betrayed David by first stealing the heart of the people of Israel and then making himself king over them.

You might remember that when David got word that Absalom was approaching Jerusalem, he fled Jerusalem along with a few loyal followers instead of fighting Absalom because he understood that God was sovereign (he was going to put it in God's hands) and he also wanted to save Jerusalem from the consequences of an invasion.

So in our study through 2 Samuel, we studied the account of David fleeing –

However, Psalm 3 is different in that it provides us a glimpse into the heart of David during this time period.

Ask yourself –

How would you feel if your own son or daughter, your own flesh and blood, just betrayed you and now wants to kill you and has no mercy over your life?

Especially after you were gracious to him or her.

This is what David is experiencing as he writes this Psalm.

So we find David crying out to - notice capital "LORD" – he is crying out to Yahweh.

Remember, Yahweh is the personal covenant name of God.

We saw this in the book of Exodus at the burning bush, God told Moses, I AM WHO I AM – that is the name Yahweh.

It would be like a New Testament believer addressing God as Abba Father (Daddy).

It is an intimate personal cry for help.

Church, when we come to the Lord, He wants an intimate conversation – that is what prayer is.

It is not repeating yourself over and over again.

Maybe if I say enough times, God will give it to me.

He wants us to come to Him and express our feelings and emotions and our heart to Him.

Just like David.

So David is crying out because things are starting snowball against him.

Not only has his son rebelled against him.

But also, many people that were loyal to him before have turned their back on him and joined Absalom.

**2 Many [are] they who say of me, "[There is] no help for him in God." Selah**

Things are getting so bad that scoffers are now saying that even God can't help him.

Turn with me to 2 Sam 16 -

**[2Sa 16:5-8 NKJV] 5 Now when King David came to Bahurim, there was a man from the family of the house of Saul, whose name [was] Shimei the son of Gera,**

coming from there. He came out, cursing continuously as he came. 6 And he threw stones at David and at all the servants of King David. And all the people and all the mighty men [were] on his right hand and on his left. 7 Also Shimei said thus when he cursed: "Come out! Come out! You bloodthirsty man, you rogue! 8 "The LORD has brought upon you all the blood of the house of Saul, in whose place you have reigned; and the LORD has delivered the kingdom into the hand of Absalom your son. So now you [are caught] in your own evil, because you are a bloodthirsty man!"

Shimei knew how to kick someone when they were down.

He never approached David with his concerns before – but now that he sees David down – he takes full advantage of the situation.

Notice what the scoffers were telling David – God can't help you / God can't deliver you.

After what you did with Bathsheba, after what you did to Uriah – David you are getting everything you deserve.

I had you make a note of the word Selah because we find it 74 different times in the Psalms and three times here in chapter three.

And many theologians agree that it is a call to pause or meditate on the words that have just been spoken.

**3 But You, O LORD, [are] a shield for me, **My glory** and the One who lifts up my head.**

As David is crying to the LORD, notice that his attention shifts from his enemies to the Lord.

Notice that David isn't praying for God to become a shield to him.

This was a strong declaration of fact –

God is our protector and our defender.

And David personalizes it here – “You, O Lord are a shield for me”

Despite the accusations that were being brought against him, nothing was going to shake David's confidence in a God of love and help.

Church, in our walk, whenever we fall, the enemy is going to try to condemn us for what we did.

And they will say things that will try to drive a wedge between our relationship with God.

“You call yourself a Christian – after what you did”

But God is our shield who turns our shame and defeat into victory and glory.

I had you make a note of My glory.

Because men find glory in all sorts of things – fame, power, prestige and possessions.

But David found his glory in the Lord!!!

It didn't matter whether God restored him back on the throne, God was his glory.

**4 I cried to the LORD with my voice, And He heard me from His holy hill. Selah**

There are times in our lives where we cry out to the Lord silently.

Maybe our heart is overwhelmed with pain and difficulty – and it appears that all we can do is groan before God.

First of all, God does hear those prayers.

And like I said, there is a time for those types of prayers.

However, I have found in my Christian walk that I want to pray more than just in my mind. I want to pray with my voice – just like David said.

And God heard David from on top of His holy hill – Jerusalem.

Remember, that initially the priests, who were carrying the Ark of the Covenant, followed David, but David tells them to return to Jerusalem.

Although Absalom forced David to flee Jerusalem, David knew that Absalom wasn't enthroned on God's holy hill – The LORD himself still had that ground and would hear and help David from His holy hill.

**5 I lay down and slept; I awoke, for the LORD sustained me.**

Two robins were sitting on a branch high in a tree.

One looked down and saw a field full of worms.

Turning to the second bird he said, "We ought to go down there and eat."

"Good idea," said his friend. The two of them flew down to the field and gorged themselves.

When he couldn't eat anymore one said to the other, "You know, we ought to stop eating and fly back to our branch." Rubbing his belly the second responded, "Yep."

With that they tried to fly to their branch in the tree, but they had eaten too much to get off the ground. The second one said, "Maybe we should just stay here and relax in the sun."

Before long the two birds slept, basking in the afternoon sun. As they slept, a cat happened upon the field.

Seeing the birds, sleeping, and unaware to his presence, the cat pounced. As feathers settled around him, the cat rubbed his belly, and said, "There is nothing better than bask in robbins."

Here is the point –

Sometimes we fool ourselves like those robins into thinking that everything is going to be okay and go to sleep with a false sense of security, trusting everything is going to be ok when we wake up.

Then there are other times when we can't sleep because we are too worried that something might happen.

David was at a point in his life where he would have been in a vulnerable position if he went to sleep. One of Absalom's men could have easily walked into his tent and killed him while he slept.

Yet, David was able to sleep because he trusted in the Lord.

Truly putting things into God's hands results in God's peace.

**(Philippians 4:6–7 NKJV) —6 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; 7 and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.**

**6 I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people Who have set [themselves] against me all around.**

Absalom had turned most of Israel against David.

Yet because God sustained David, it didn't matter how big the opposing army was –

A thousand years before Paul wrote the book of Romans, David grasped the truth that if God is for us, who can be against us?"

**7 Arise, O LORD; Save me, O my God! For You have struck all my enemies on the cheekbone; You have broken the teeth of the ungodly.** 8 **Salvation [belongs] to the LORD. Your blessing [is] upon Your people. Selah**

"Salvation belongs to the Lord," shows that David was not depending on his troops, or his counselors that he had planted to mislead Absalom, or on any military strategy.

Rather, he acknowledges that any victory would come from God alone.

Church, when we cast ourselves on God alone for deliverance, He gets all the praise when He answers our prayers.

Also notice that David's prayer wasn't simply a prayer of preservation for his own sake – he prayed this psalm because it was best for the nation.

[Psa 4:1-8 NKJV] 1 To the Chief Musician. With stringed instruments. A Psalm of David. Hear me when I call, **O God of my righteousness!** You have relieved me in [my] distress; Have mercy on me, and hear my prayer.

Once again, we see a title to this Psalm.

This Psalm is addressed to the Chief Musician.

And as we read the book of Psalms we will find that many of the Psalms are addressed or directed to the Chief Musician.

Some people say that the Chief Musician was the leader of the choirs of the kingdom of Israel— 1 Chronicles 6 and 1 Chronicles 16 provide the names Heman and Asaph

Other people believe that the Chief Musician is God Himself.

The title also tells us that the song was deliberately written to be accompanied with stringed instruments.

Psalm 4 is thought to have been written around the same as Psalm 3 – as David is fleeing for his life from Absalom.

So Psalm 4 begins with David once again passionately calling upon the Lord.

This is a prayer of desperation.

David knows that he is in over his head and if God doesn't answer, he is in big trouble.

And so he begins by appealing to God's justice.

I asked you to make note where David addresses the Lord as O God of my righteousness.

David knew that his righteousness came from God, and not from himself.

He calls upon the God who made him righteous.

Church, that is something that you and I as believers in Jesus Christ can pray – we can call out to God because truly He is the God of our righteousness.

And then notice how David uses God's past mercies as a ground for His future help.

It's like David is praying the following prayer -

"Lord, you have blessed me and shown mercy towards before, show me Your mercy again."

And we can pray boldly in the same way.

"God, you delivered me from adversity in the past and I know You will do it again."

One of the worship songs that we sing –

Your promise still stands

Great is Your faithfulness, faithfulness

I'm still in Your hands

This is my confidence, You've never failed me yet

So we have David's prayer in verse 1

Now, starting in verse 2, David is going to be speaking to men -

**2 How long, O you sons of men, [Will you turn] my glory to shame? [How long]  
will you love worthlessness [And] seek falsehood? Selah**

There were men – who were saying things to bring him shame.

They were slandering David.

Bringing up falsehoods against him.

Making up things.

Mocking him.

We just looked at Shemei earlier.

Even though David was God's anointed, these individuals would take everything that he did and they would twist it around to bring him shame.

Many years later, it was the same thing that some of the people and the religious rulers did to Jesus during His ministry here on earth.

They accused him of being a drunkard, of being possessed and even as He hung on the cross, people were trying to bring Him shame.

Matthew tells us in chapter 27

**[Mat 27:39-43 NKJV] 39 And those who passed by blasphemed Him, wagging their heads 40 and saying, "You who destroy the temple and build [it] in three days, save Yourself! If You are the Son of God, come down from the cross." 41 Likewise the chief priests also, mocking with the scribes and elders, said, 42 "He saved others; Himself He cannot save. If He is the King of Israel, let Him now**

**come down from the cross, and we will believe Him. 43 "He trusted in God; let Him deliver Him now if He will have Him; for He said, 'I am the Son of God.' "**

**3 But know that the LORD has set apart for Himself him who is godly; The LORD will hear when I call to Him.**

As believers, we have been set apart – we have the assurance that God hears our prayers.

We might not like the answer. But God hears our prayers.

However, there may be times when it appears that our prayers appear to be ineffective.

We keep praying for the same thing over and over again but it appears that God had not answered our prayer.

The Bible tells us there are several possible reasons why prayer may not be answered.

- Not abiding in Jesus (John 15:7).

[Jhn 15:7 NKJV] **7 "If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you.**

- Unbelief (Matthew 17:20-21).

- Failure to fast (Matthew 17:21).

**[Mat 17:20-21 NKJV] 20 So Jesus said to them, "Because of your unbelief; for assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you. 21 "However, this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting."**

- A Bad marriage relationship (1 Peter 3:7).

**[1Pe 3:7 NKJV] 7 Husbands, likewise, dwell with [them] with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as [being] heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered.**

- Unconfessed sin (James 5:16).

- Lying and deceitfulness (Psalm 17:1).

**[Psa 17:1 NKJV] 1 A Prayer of David. Hear a just cause, O LORD, Attend to my cry; Give ear to my prayer [which is] not from deceitful lips.**

- Lack of Bible reading and Bible teaching (Proverbs 28:9).

**[Proverbs 28:9 NKJV] 9 One who turns away his ear from hearing the law, Even his prayer [is] an abomination.**

- Trusting in the length or form of prayer (Matthew 6:7).

**[Mat 6:7 NKJV] 7 "And when you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen [do]. For they think that they will be heard for their many words.**

**Back to Psalm 4 -**

**4 Be angry, and do not sin. Meditate within your heart on your bed, and be still.**

**Selah 5 Offer the sacrifices of righteousness, And put your trust in the LORD.**

Apostle Paul quotes this verse in Ephesians 4:26 – when he says - do not let the sun go down on your wrath.

Some people like to justify their anger and say that they are just angry like God is angry.

The difference is that God's anger is a righteous anger -

The problem we have is that we rarely get angry without sinning.

**(James 1:19–20 NKJV) —19 So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; 20 for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God.**

David has to remind himself not to get angry at those that were slandering him.

And the way to do it was going to be by serving the Lord and trusting the Lord.

**6 [There are] many who say, "Who will show us [any] good?" LORD, lift up the light of Your countenance upon us.**

The people in the time of David ask the same question that the world asks now.

Who will show us any good?

Who will lead us in a time of prosperity?

Who will guide us?

The answer of course is the Lord –

The problem is that people want those things but they don't want to surrender to God's will.

I want to continue to live my life the way I want to and be blessed at the same time.

That is the mindset of the world. ☹

**7 You have put gladness in my heart, More than in the season that their grain and wine increased.**

David is comparing the gladness/joy that God has put in his heart and he is saying that it is a superior gladness to those that are experiencing physical prosperity.

There may be gladness as a result of a bountiful harvest – because that means that one will have enough food that will last them through the year –

The problem is that type of gladness is temporal.

Next year might be totally different – there might be drought or an infestation.

What happened to the gladness from the previous year – it's gone.

Circumstances change.

But the joy that God puts in our heart is eternal.

**8 I will both lie down in peace, and sleep; For You alone, O LORD, make me dwell in safety.**

How many sleepless nights do we experience because we are worried, upset or concerned about something?

David had plenty of things to be upset and concerned about.

People are slandering him, his own son wanted to kill him and had made himself king over Israel.

But because David had the gladness that God put in his heart – not only was he able to lay down at night, he was able to have a good night's sleep.

Because he understood that his safety was bound up in the Lord.

Amen

**Let's pray...**