

Psalm 3

In the first two Psalms we saw how God was giving David wisdom for the people of Israel regarding counsel.

Counsel about how they should order their lives at every level, from the fundamental level to the little things.

And counsel, not just about personal matters, but in general terms. Counsel about national concerns, about what they should do, as a nation, as a people, as well.

And on the one hand these Psalms talked about how the people who delight in the law of the LORD would be blessed. But those who walked in the counsel of the ungodly would perish.

Their counsel needed to come, not from men, and certainly not from ungodly men, but from them meditating daily in the word of God.

That if they want to stand in the judgement, if they want to see justice done, if they want to be a part of making that happen, then they need to meditate in the law of the LORD, and not follow the ungodly's counsel.

Because the ungodly won't be a part of that. The way of the ungodly will perish. Only the way of the LORD, declared in his word, will place you there, and give you blessing, and will cause you to endure.

In Psalm 1 we can see how that related to Israel generally. How the law of the LORD for them was the law of the land. How their judicial system was set up by God to have men standing in the judgement before the congregation of the righteous. That's how God commanded them to do things. And he told them that if they did, they would be blessed.

And so Psalm 1 there really hearkened back to the Mosaic law. This is who they were. This was their identity. This judicial system is what defined them as a nation.

And so in order to be blessed in Israel, you needed to follow the law of the LORD. You needed to ensure that those around you followed the law of the LORD, that justice was done. Because if it wasn't God had promised to bring judgement on them all himself.

And so this was their duty. This was the duty of every man in Israel.

And God is telling them here that in order to carry out that duty faithfully, and receive that blessing that he has promised them, they need to not walk in the counsel of the ungodly, but instead meditate in his law day and night.

And so in many ways Psalm 1 reiterated to them the covenant that God made with them through Moses. That they'd be blessed if they keep his law, and do justice.

But here in these Psalms what he is doing is giving them a deeper, fuller understanding, of how to put that into practice in daily life. Of how they can insure that they receive that blessing, what stumbling blocks they need to take out of their way. What it is that ultimately prevents that: the counsel of the ungodly. And how to avoid it: meditate in the law of the LORD.

And so in Psalm 1 he gave them wisdom about how to keep the covenant that he made with them at mount Sinai.

And in Psalm 2 he continues to talk about those same things, that they need to keep in mind, and do in order receive blessing.

But he does so in regard to a different covenant. Not the Mosaic covenant, but a new covenant. One that he has made with David and his seed.

Psalms 2:7 I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.

And so last time we talked about how God had told David that it was through his seed, through his son, that God would bring peace to Israel. That the kingdom would be given to the seed of David for ever.

And so God would take Solomon as his own son.

And so what we're going to see here is that Psalm 1 set the stage, by relating these concepts to the Mosaic covenant. The importance of counsel, and getting it from God's word and not from ungodly men.

And by doing that it related these concepts to something that already existed, that Israel was already familiar with.

They could look at in their history, and see in their daily life, that what it said in Psalm 1 was true, that that was what the law said, and that that was good wisdom.

And then once he gets the hearer to acknowledge that, he's going to relate that to the current and coming circumstances.

What these first two Psalms really are is like a deft use of bait-and-switch.

God hooked the zealous Israelite on Psalm 1, so that he could apply those same concepts that he had introduced, to this new work that he is doing, to this new covenant that he is making, that he speaks about in Psalm 2.

You see God is asserting his authority over this kingdom that is in the process of being established over Israel under David. That this is His work.

And he knows that not all of Israel is on board.

And so he's warning them, that if they are walking in the counsel of the ungodly, instead of His counsel, they won't be blessed.

That that is true under this new covenant that he is making with David, just as it was true under the Mosaic covenant that he made with them at mount Sinai.

And so that now that he is adding this covenant to that one, now that he is adding the kingdom to the law and the priesthood, God is warning them that they need to keep these things in mind. They need to be careful about the counsel that they are walking in, in regard to both covenants. Not just the Mosaic covenant.

Now that there are two covenants they need to honor both of them. Now that this additional one as been added.

If they keep the Mosaic covenant but despise David, that won't be enough for them to be blessed, they need to honor both covenants. Just one won't cut it anymore.

They need to reject the counsel of the ungodly, and instead follow God's word in regard to both covenants, if they want to be blessed.

So that is the historical perspective here. That is what is going on here, that is what God was trying to convey to the very first readers of these Psalms.

And we'll see that continue to unfold today.

Title

The first two Psalms didn't have a title. But Psalm 3 does: "A Psalm of David, when he fled from Absalom his son."

So this Psalm tells us explicitly that David wrote it, and even tells us when he wrote it: when he was fleeing from Absalom his son.

Now if you don't know the story of Absalom, that is recorded in 2 Samuel 13-19. If you aren't familiar with that you might want to take some time and read through that. I'm not going to go through all of it here, I'm just going to give you a brief summary of the events that took place.

Psalm 2 spoke of those who took counsel against the LORD's anointed. And that's what the story of Absalom is about. We even mentioned it when we were studying counsel as we went through Psalm 1.

So this is a story of some people who took counsel against David, the LORD's anointed.

The story of Absalom really began with David and Bathsheba.

David committed adultery with Bathsheba, and so because of that God was very angry with him.

Leviticus 20:10 And the man that committeth adultery with another man's wife, even he that committeth adultery with his neighbour's wife, the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death.

And so under the law of Moses, both David and Bathsheba were guilty of death. (David could have gotten two counts, because he murdered Bathsheba's husband.)

But of course David was the king of the land, he was the LORD's anointed. Who is going to judge him and condemn him and put him to death? He's the most powerful man in the kingdom. And so no man could have done that. It was left up to God.

And so God did condemn David, and call him out for his sin. But God didn't kill David.

Instead, there was a child born from that adulterous relationship, and instead of killing David, God killed that child.

He told David, "I'm not going to kill you, but I'm going to judge you by letting the child die."

And so the son of David, the heir, died, in David's place.

And in addition, God told David that something else evil would come upon him from among his own house.

And so that's not the end of the story, that's just the beginning. That's the beginning of the story of Absalom.

It was after that that one of David's sons, named Amnon, forced Absalom's sister Tamar.

So these are all step-siblings, but Amnon has a different mother than Absalom and Tamar do, because David had several wives.

And so Amnon raped Tamar, his step-sister.

And that made David very angry.

Under the law, that was punishable by death. If Tamar had been betrothed, Amnon would definitely have been worthy of death.

But she wasn't, and so there was a way out:

Deuteronomy 22:28 If a man find a damsel that is a virgin, which is not betrothed, and lay hold on her, and lie with her, and they be found;

29 Then the man that lay with her shall give unto the damsel's father fifty shekels of silver, and she shall be his wife; because he hath humbled her, he may not put her away all his days.

And so Amnon, under the law, had to take Tamar to be his wife, and give David 50 shekels of silver.

But the Bible tells us that Amnon hated Tamar after he had forced her, even more than he had loved her to start with.

And so Amnon refused to take Tamar as his wife. After he forced her he just sent her away.

And so that made David very displeased.

But you know, David was in a difficult position here, because of his adultery with Bathsheba.

I mean, under the law, David was just as guilty of death as Amnon was, arguably more-so.

And so David wasn't in a position to take any kind of action against Amnon.

And nobody else was in a position to do that either, I mean, this is the son of the king after all. If he isn't going to take action against him, then you are going up against power forces. I mean how can you condemn Amnon without calling David into question as well, that'd be like challenging the throne itself.

And so nothing was done to Amnon. David was grieved, but there was nothing he could do about it.

But you know, Absalom, Tamar's brother, was not going to allow the man who raped his sister to get off scot-free.

So Absalom set a trap, and had his servants kill Amnon.

And so Absalom saw to it that Amnon was put to death, and then fled for his life and was in exile for some years.

And the Bible tells us that David was comforted concerning Amnon, now that he was dead. So David was pleased with that, but his son Absalom is in exile, and David didn't like that.

Now in killing Amnon, Absalom had gone outside the law, outside the courts, outside the judgment. He'd taken matters into his own hands.

And so, I don't know if there is any clear precedent in the law for what to do in such a case, but it is very possible that Absalom would have been considered guilty of murder. In which case he would have been worthy of death, under the law.

But that's not what David wanted to see happen. David felt that justice had been achieved, of sorts, and he wanted Absalom to be able to return in peace.

But he didn't trust that Absalom wouldn't be held accountable, that there wouldn't be those that would call for his blood.

And so it took some time for David to be convinced that it was safe to bring Absalom back from banishment.

But eventually he did, he told Absalom to return to Israel, and so Absalom came back.

And so eventually Absalom worked his way back into things in Israel.

In fact, after a while, Absalom stole the hearts of the people. Stole them away from David his father, and convinced them that he would be a better ruler.

And so ultimately Absalom would declare himself king.

And then David had to flee from Jerusalem, with his guard, and some of the men of war and army that were loyal to him. They had to flee away.

And so that is when Absalom took counsel against him.

But when he went out to battle against the men that were with David, his army was defeated, and Absalom himself was killed.

So that is the story of Absalom.

He is a man who slew his step-brother that had forced his sister, fled into exile for many years, returned back to Israel, and worked treason against his father David.

And in that battle between him and his father, he ended up getting killed, and David retained the kingdom.

And so that's what was taking place when this Psalm was written. David was fleeing away from the son that he had rescued from exile, who was now trying to steal his throne. So that's the background for this Psalm.

Now keep in mind that even then, David still loved Absalom. He didn't want him to be killed in the battle, they did that against his orders. And so David apparently harbored no ill-will toward Absalom. He was very grieved when he found out that he was dead. And so this is a sad story about what happened to some of David's children in consequence of his own infidelity. Because of David's sin with Bathsheba, his family had to go through all this turmoil.

But you know, through all of it God was with David, because David repented and continue to follow God.

And so even when God told him of this judgment that was going to come on him, he didn't break that covenant that he made with David, that it would be David and his seed who would judge Israel. And so God rescued David out of that situation and restored his kingdom.

Now let's look at the prophetic aspect of this Psalm.

We saw how Psalms 1 and 2 were prophetic of Christ. Of things relating to his first coming, and then also of things that will be fulfilled at his return.

Psalm 1 was more on the first coming, Psalm 2 was more focused on the second coming.

In Psalm 3 we're going to see it go back and begin focussing more on his first coming again. It's going to kind of start over and go through the whole story all over again. Except we're going to see it in more depth.

This is what it is going to do, again and again, through the book of Psalms.

Now when were going through Psalms 1 and 2, it was talking about counsel. And we related that to those who took counsel against Christ.

And from the historical perspective we could see that Absalom was one person who took counsel against David, against the LORD's anointed.

And so in Psalm 2 we've already begun to relate people like Absalom to those who would take counsel against Christ.

And Absalom in this third Psalm continues to represent a picture of those who took counsel against Christ.

Israel's religious leaders took counsel against Christ, just as Absalom took counsel against David.

And so this is a Psalm that Jesus could have prayed. He certainly could have felt many of these same things on the night that he was betrayed.

And so this Psalm is going to contain many elements in it that were prophetic of what would happen at the end of Christ's earthly ministry.

Now I just happened to mention before how even during this time, David was not against the one who was trying to destroy him. He still loved Absalom, and mourned his eventual death. And I think that is an interesting picture of how Christ, when he was betrayed, was not filled with hate for Israel, or those that had conspired against him.

Even on the cross he said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

And so that love that David still had toward Absalom is a picture of the love that Christ still showed toward those who were taking counsel against him, when he died in their place.

But Christ's love surpassed the love of David.

You see what Christ did, was he actually changed places with the conspirators.

Because in the story of David and Absalom, David is delivered, and Absalom is the one who dies.

But in the story of Christ, Christ is the one who, like David, God had made a new covenant with. Christ was the Son. But also, like Absalom, Christ would be the one who died.

Christ changed places.

It was the Pharisees and the chief priests who should have died and been destroyed.

But instead Christ assumed the mantle of Absalom, in addition to the mantle of David.

And he could do that, because he could rise again. So that he could be the one who was killed in our place, and also be the one who was delivered to inherit an eternal kingdom.

And we're going to see that start to unfold here today.

Here today in Psalm 3, we're going to continue to see ways that Christ was like David, when David was going through this.

But eventually we're also going to see how Christ took the punishment for Absalom, as well.

Verse 1

TROUBLE

Now, if Psalms was a devotional book, we'd say that David was going through some tough times in his life. That his neighbor was rude to him the other day, and his car got dinged in the shopping mall parking lot, and he's just going through a time of trouble in his life.

"LORD, how are they increased that trouble me!"

But if we really want to know what it is talking about then we need to pay attention to what it actually says. What the context is.

You see when it is talking about trouble in the Bible, it usually talking about something that is a physical threat, even often life-threatening. That's usually the kind of stuff that it is talking about, not being down because life isn't going your way.

Just to give you one other example of that:

Joshua 7:25 And Joshua said, Why hast thou **troubled** us? the LORD shall **trouble** thee this day. And all Israel stoned him with stones, and burned them with fire, after they had stoned them with stones.

And so, they troubled Achan. They stoned him to death.

They troubled him because he'd troubled them. He'd stolen something, and 30 men had died over it.

And so that's the kind of trouble the Bible is talking about a lot of times.

And that's the kind of trouble that David is lamenting about here.

His son Absalom is trying to kill him.

And Ahithophel, and many thousands of the tribes of Israel are helping him. They're going to form an army and come out against him.

And so David cries out:

"LORD, how are they increased that trouble me! many are they that rise up against me."

Christ could certainly have prayed this when he was betrayed. The Jewish leaders, and the Roman authorities, troubled him. They came out to capture him and put him to death. And so they were increased that troubled him.

Now, as I went through this Psalm from the NT perspective, I couldn't help but relate it to the church as well, in addition to the ways that it was prophetic of Christ.

Much of what it says here applies to us even today.

Now I know generally, when we apply the Psalms to our daily life, we do so in a very allegorical sense.

Like I was joking about how we might interpret this Psalm in a morning devotional book. David stubbed his toe the other day, and he's just feeling overwhelmed with life.

That's not the kind of application I'm talking about.

Not that that's always invalid, but that's not what was brought out to me as I was looking at NT passages that used some of these same terms we find in this Psalm. Like trouble.

It uses them in regard to the church in very much the same way that it was using them in regard to David.

For example, in 2 Thessalonians chapter 1 it talks about how sometimes the church is persecuted and troubled, and how one day God would trouble and destroy those that trouble us. Just as God destroyed those that troubled David.

2 Thessalonians 1:6 *Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense **tribulation** to them that **trouble** you;*

*7 And to you who are **troubled** rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels,*

8 In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:

9 Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;

And so like David, and like Christ, the church is often troubled. But one day Christ will return and those who were troubled will be given rest, just as David was delivered.

Just to give you another example of what it means in the NT when it is talking about trouble in this kind of context:

2 Timothy 2:9 *Wherein I suffer **trouble**, as an evil doer, even unto bonds; but the word of God is not bound.*

And so Paul told Timothy that he was suffering trouble, they'd even put him in prison.

And so he was being persecuted, but the word of God continued to go forth.

And so that's how it is sometimes in the church. We suffer trouble and persecution. But we, like David, have a hope of deliverance.

RISE UP AGAINST

Now when it says "rise up against me", you know what it means by that. You rise up against them to slay them.

We talked about sitting on the judgment seat. You sit on the judgment seat to judge somebody, and then you rise up to execute the sentence. To put the man to death.

You rise up against somebody to kill them.

That's what Absalom is trying to do. He wants to kill David, and he's got many of the armies of Israel helping him.

And you know, it used two phrases in this Psalm to describe those who troubled David.

He said, "LORD, how are they increased that trouble me! many are they that rise up against me."

And so he said that they were rising up against him, to try and slay him.

And that sometimes is the kind persecution that we experience. Not just unto bonds, but even unto death.

And you know Christ prophesied of that, using that same phrase:

Mark 13:12 *Now the brother shall betray the brother to death, and the father the son; and children shall **rise up against** their parents, and shall cause them to be put to death.*

And so just as they rose up against David to try to put him to death, just as they rose up against Christ and put him to death, so they will rise up against us and put us to death.

Christ warned of that. That just as he suffered, so often would we.

And so this is a good Psalm to remember, to remind the persecuted that salvation belongs to the LORD, and so we don't have to fear those that rise up against us.

Verse 2

David is the LORD's anointed, but Absalom thinks that he can overthrow him.

They must have thought that God was no longer with David.

That although he was the LORD's anointed, God wasn't going to help him. That he'd been rejected.

And David did sin, he did do wrong with Bathsheba. And God had said that he would judge David for that.

And so Absalom and those that follow him must have reasoned that David was now no longer under God's protection. That Absalom, as a son of David, could overthrow his father and take the throne, and thus fulfill God's promise.

I mean, Absalom was still David's seed, so couldn't he take the throne and then God's promise would be fulfilled through him, it would be his line that would rule Israel for ever?

So that's what they must have thought. That God was no longer with David, and wouldn't help him.

If they did think that God would help David then they wouldn't have tried to overthrow him, that would have been suicide.

So they didn't believe that there was any help for David in God.

And this also was true of Christ.

There were those that didn't believe that he was the Messiah. His persecutors, those who took counsel against him, didn't believe that God would help him.

They even mocked him about it. When he was on the cross the chief priests said:

Matthew 27:43 He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him: for he said, I am the Son of God.

And so they mocked him, saying that God wouldn't help him. He's not going to deliver him. They said, "He's not really the Messiah." Just as they said of David, "He's no longer God's chosen."

Verse 3

But David says, No, God is still with me.

SHIELD

And first he says that God is his shield.

God told Abraham:

Genesis 15:1 After these things the word of the LORD came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy **shield**, and thy exceeding great reward.

And so God told Abraham that he was his shield, when he came to him and promised him that he would bless him and give him a son, that would inherit the promised land.

And so God being a shield to David, like he was a shield to Abraham, implies that God is still with David, that his promise is still with David, that his covenant is still with David, that he doesn't need to fear because God is still with him and will still fulfill that promise.

Deuteronomy 33:29 Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the LORD, the **shield** of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency! and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee; and thou shalt tread upon their high places.

And so God was declared to be the shield of the people of Israel, so that they would defeat all their enemies.

And so if God is David's shield then he will defeat his enemies. They'll be found liars unto him, whoever says that there is no help for him in God.

And so by saying that God is his shield, David is claiming to be an heir of the promise and protection of God, that God is still with him.

That's a promise that God made to Abraham, and fulfilled. It is a promise that God made to Israel, and fulfilled. And God did that largely through David, treading down Israel's enemies.

And when he did that, God was his shield.

Listen to two verses from 1 Samuel 17:

1 Samuel 17:41 And the Philistine came on and drew near unto David; and the man that bare the **shield** went before him.

So when David went out against Goliath, Goliath had a man bearing a shield in front of him. But Goliath looked at David, and it looked like all he had was a sling. So the giant mocked him. But here was David's reply:

1 Samuel 17:45 Then said David to the Philistine, Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a **shield**: but I come to thee in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied.

And so Goliath had a shield, and so did David. His sword, and spear, and shield, was the name of the LORD of hosts.

And so the LORD was a shield to David, and delivered Israel from their enemies through him. And here David declares that God is still his shield.

No matter what his enemies might think or say, God is still with him, and they'll be found to be liars.

“But thou, O LORD, art a shield for me; my glory, and the lifter up of mine head.”

GLORY

So David says that God is his shield, and his glory.

Now what does that mean, that God is his glory?

Well, here are a couple examples of how the Bible uses the word glory in a similar context:

Genesis 45:13 And ye shall tell my father of all my **glory** in Egypt, and of all that ye have seen; and ye shall haste and bring down my father hither.

And so when Joseph was the ruler of Egypt, he spoke of all his glory. His wealth, his possessions, his power, his position. His glory.

Job 19:9 He hath stripped me of my **glory**, and taken the crown from my head.

And so Job lost everything he had. He was stripped of his glory. He no longer felt like a king worthy of a crown. He had nothing. No possessions, no prestige, all gone.

And so when David says that God is his glory, he's talking about his kingdom.

God is the one who gave David his glory. He is the one who gave David his kingdom.

And so all that David has, his power, his crown, his possessions and wealth, is from God.

And so again, those that are trying to take David's kingdom and glory from him, are going to have to deal with God first.

God gave all that to David, and he is still his shield, and will maintain David's glory, nobody is going to be able to take that away. God is still with David.

“thou, O LORD, art a shield for me; my glory, and the lifter up of mine head.”

So David said that God was his shield, and his glory.

And you know, Christ talked about how God had given him his glory, on the night of his betrayal. He prayed:

John 17:24 *Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my **glory**, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.*

And so just as God gave David his kingdom and glory, so God gave his son Jesus Christ a kingdom and glory.

And so he will one day possess all things.

And you know, just like God restored David's glory, so after his resurrection Christ's glory was also restored.

And so one day, when Christ returns, his prayer will be fulfilled and the whole world will see his glory arise upon Israel.

It talks about that in Isaiah 60:

Isaiah 60:1 *Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the **glory** of the LORD is risen upon thee.*

*2 For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and his **glory** shall be seen upon thee.*

3 And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.

And so one day God's glory will again be seen upon Israel, when Christ returns.

And it goes on to describe that glory, the great riches that will be brought from all the earth, and how the kingdom will reach even to the islands.

Isaiah 60:9 *Surely the isles shall wait for me, and the ships of Tarshish first, to bring thy sons from far, their silver and their gold with them, unto the name of the LORD thy God, and to the Holy One of Israel, because he hath glorified thee.*

10 And the sons of strangers shall build up thy walls, and their kings shall minister unto thee: for in my wrath I smote thee, but in my favour have I had mercy on thee.

11 Therefore thy gates shall be open continually; they shall not be shut day nor night; that men may bring unto thee the forces of the Gentiles, and that their kings may be brought.

12 For the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted.

And so God will glorify his people, but the ungodly will perish. Just as it talked about in Psalm 1 and 2.

LIFTER UP OF MINE HEAD

Now when it says that God is the lifter up of his head, what does it mean by that? Well, there are other places in the Bible that talk about that.

One place is Genesis chapter 40. That's when Joseph was in prison in Egypt, and the chief butler and the chief baker both had dreams, and Joseph interpreted them. And here is the interpretation of the chief butler's dream:

Genesis 40:13 *Yet within three days shall Pharaoh **lift up thine head**, and restore thee unto thy place: and thou shalt deliver Pharaoh's cup into his hand, after the former manner when thou wast his butler.*

And so Pharaoh would take the butler out of prison, and restore him to being the chief butler. He would lift his head back up from the dungeon to that high office.

A similar thing happened later to one of the kings of Judah during the Babylonian captivity:

2 Kings 25:27 *And it came to pass in the seven and thirtieth year of the captivity of Jehoiachin king of Judah, in the twelfth month, on the seven and twentieth day of the month, that*

Evilmerodach king of Babylon in the year that he began to reign did **lift up the head** of Jehoiachin king of Judah out of prison;

And so when he got taken from the prison and given honor, it says his head was lifted up.

And God's going to do this same thing for David.

He is going to lift up his head to once more sit upon the throne of Israel, after he has fled.

Because you see, it was always God that had lifted up the head of David.

Last time we read some from 2 Samuel 7, where God made the covenant with David to be a father to his son that would sit upon his throne.

And here's how God started out that revelation to David:

2 Samuel 7:8 Now therefore so shalt thou say unto my servant David, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, I took thee from the sheepcote, from following the sheep, to be ruler over my people, over Israel:

9 And I was with thee whithersoever thou wentest, and have cut off all thine enemies out of thy sight, and have made thee a great name, like unto the name of the great men that are in the earth.

And so you see it was God who took David from following the sheep to make him king. It was God who lifted up his head then, and would lift it up again, and restore him his kingdom. And so David calls God "the lifter up of mine head", because it is God who gave him his kingdom and his glory.

It is God who gave David that, and so nobody can take that away.

And so God is still with David, and Absalom and his men will not prevail in the end. God will again lift up David's head.

And so God gave Christ his glory.

And here David also said that God was the lifter up of his head. And that relates to Christ as well.

You remember that there was an OT passage that talked about that. How Joseph interpreted two of Pharaoh's servants' dreams, when he was in prison.

And he told the chief butler that his head would be lifted up, and he'd be restored to his place. But you know, he also said something similar to the chief baker:

Genesis 40:19 Yet within three days shall Pharaoh **lift up thy head** from off thee, and shall hang thee on a tree; and the birds shall eat thy flesh from off thee.

And so the baker's head would also be lifted up. But it would be lifted up from off him, he'd be killed, and hung on a tree.

And you know, this is really prophetic of Christ.

Do you remember how Christ told the Jews that he must be "lifted up"? And of course, that happened when he was lifted up and hanged on a tree, on the cross.

And you know what the baker's dream was? He had three baskets of bread on his head, and the birds came and ate them.

And Joseph said that the three baskets were three days, and that the birds would come and eat his flesh. So the bread represented his flesh.

And you know, Christ also said to the Jews how he was the manna that came down from heaven, and the bread that he would give was his flesh, that he would give for the life of the world.

And so just like the baker, Christ's flesh was hung on a tree.

And as the butler, after three days the head of Christ was lifted up again, from the grave, and given all dominion.

And just as the butler gave the cup into Pharaoh's hand, so Christ will give the cup of the fierceness of the wrath of God into the hand of all nations.

And so all of that was prophetic of Christ.

And so God is Christ's glory, and the lifter up of his head.

He was his glory from the foundation of the world, and he lifted up his head from the grave, and restored him to his place.

Verse 4

Now it tells us exactly how this happened in 2 Samuel 15.

This is as David is just beginning to flee Jerusalem, he's just heard about Absalom and his rebellion.

2 Samuel 15:30 And David went up by the ascent of mount Olivet, and wept as he went up, and had his head covered, and he went barefoot: and all the people that was with him covered every man his head, and they went up, weeping as they went up.

31 And one told David, saying, Ahithophel is among the conspirators with Absalom. And David said, O LORD, I pray thee, turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness.

And so David cried unto the LORD with his voice, at the mount of Olives, as he was leaving Jerusalem.

32 And it came to pass, that when David was come to the top of the mount, where he worshipped God, behold, Hushai the Archite came to meet him with his coat rent, and earth upon his head:

33 Unto whom David said, If thou passest on with me, then thou shalt be a burden unto me:

34 But if thou return to the city, and say unto Absalom, I will be thy servant, O king; as I have been thy father's servant hitherto, so will I now also be thy servant: then mayest thou for me defeat the counsel of Ahithophel.

35 And hast thou not there with thee Zadok and Abiathar the priests? therefore it shall be, that what thing soever thou shalt hear out of the king's house, thou shalt tell it to Zadok and Abiathar the priests.

36 Behold, they have there with them their two sons, Ahimaaz Zadok's son, and Jonathan Abiathar's son; and by them ye shall send unto me every thing that ye can hear.

37 So Hushai David's friend came into the city, and Absalom came into Jerusalem.

And so David cried unto God to defeat the counsel of Ahithophel, and just like that, here comes Hushai to meet him.

So David cried unto the LORD with his voice, and God heard him, from the mount of Olives, that holy hill, where David worshipped.

Do you see how the Psalms are filled with a bunch of figurative poetry that isn't supposed to be taken literally?

It's all just poetic imagery, you know?

This is once again something that happened on the night that Jesus was betrayed, and when he was crucified.

In 2 Samuel 15 it talked about how David was weeping at the ascent of the mount of Olives. And on the night that Jesus was betrayed, it says:

Luke 22:39 *And he came out, and went, as he was wont, to the mount of Olives; and his disciples also followed him.*

40 And when he was at the place, he said unto them, Pray that ye enter not into temptation.

41 And he was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast, and kneeled down, and prayed,

42 Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.

43 And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him.

44 And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

And so just like David, Jesus wept on the mount of Olives.

And it says here, "I cried unto the LORD with my voice, and he heard me out of his holy hill." And I think also that that is prophetic of Christ on the cross:

Matthew 27:46 *And about the ninth hour Jesus **cried** with a loud **voice**, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?*

And so Jesus cried unto the LORD with his voice.

And you know what? God heard him:

Matthew 27:50 *Jesus, when he had **cried** again with a loud **voice**, yielded up the ghost.*

51 And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom...

And so as soon as Christ cried out, asking God why he had forsaken him, then the veil in the temple was rent, and God's Spirit released to fill the whole earth.

Their sins had been pardoned, and his people would no more be forsaken, but they would be filled with the Spirit of God.

And so God heard Christ out of his holy hill, atop which the temple sat, in Jerusalem.

And so just as David cried and almost immediately received the answer, so Christ cried, and he also received God's immediate answer.

And so you know, it says:

Micah 6:9 *The LORD'S **voice crieth** unto the city, and the man of wisdom shall see thy name: hear ye the rod, and who hath appointed it.*

And so God heard Christ, and he would be raised again, to return as the rod who would beat the nations into shivers.

Just as it said in Psalm 2 that the Son would rule all nations with a rod of iron.

And so the men of wisdom saw, and understood, that this man who had just been put to death, was indeed the son of God, appointed to rule all nations.

Verses 5-6

And so David, when he saw that God had answered his prayer, knew that God was still with him. That he was still his shield, his glory, and the lifter up of his head. And so David didn't need to fear Absalom, or those that were with him.

Now these verses, like the last one, summarize actual events that took place as David was fleeing from Absalom.

And that's recorded in 2 Samuel 17, after he's fled Jerusalem.

2 Samuel 17:22 Then David arose, and all the people that were with him, and they passed over Jordan: by the morning light there lacked not one of them that was not gone over Jordan.

So David and his people are fleeing away, they are fleeing out to the coasts of Israel, so that it will take Absalom a little while to catch up to them. And Absalom will have to come out and meet them on open ground somewhere.

23 And when Ahithophel saw that his counsel was not followed, he saddled his ass, and arose, and gat him home to his house, to his city, and put his household in order, and hanged himself, and died, and was buried in the sepulchre of his father.

And so Ahithophel had told Absalom not to go out to battle himself, but Hushai had convinced him that he should lead the forces into battle in his own person.

And so Ahithophel was a wise man, he knew what was going to follow, he knew Absalom wouldn't have much chance of winning, so went home and hung himself.

So David didn't have to worry about the counsel of Ahithophel anymore. Not only was Ahithophel's counsel not followed, but Ahithophel was dead. He committed suicide.

24 Then David came to Mahanaim. And Absalom passed over Jordan, he and all the men of Israel with him.

So Absalom is following them, he's leading the army out after David, but he's still a way behind them.

25 And Absalom made Amasa captain of the host instead of Joab: which Amasa was a man's son, whose name was Ithra an Israelite, that went in to Abigail the daughter of Nahash, sister to Zeruiah Joab's mother.

26 So Israel and Absalom pitched in the land of Gilead.

So Absalom wasn't able to catch up to David while he was still fleeing away. He pitched someplace and David is going to pitch his tents someplace, and then they'll come out to battle.

27 And it came to pass, when David was come to Mahanaim, that Shobi the son of Nahash of Rabbah of the children of Ammon, and Machir the son of Ammiel of Lodebar, and Barzillai the Gileadite of Rogelim,

28 Brought beds, and basons, and earthen vessels, and wheat, and barley, and flour, and parched corn, and beans, and lentiles, and parched pulse,

29 And honey, and butter, and sheep, and cheese of kine, for David, and for the people that were with him, to eat: for they said, The people is hungry, and weary, and thirsty, in the wilderness.

And so while David is on the outskirts of Israel, these different guys from the area send relief supplies to him.

The people were hungry and weary, so they brought them food to eat. And it says that they also brought them beds.

And so what did David say here, in verses 5 and 6?

Psalms 3:5 I laid me down and slept; I awaked; for the LORD sustained me.

6 I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people, that have set themselves against me round about.

And so David did lay down and sleep, while he was compassed about with the armies of Absalom.

And it's interesting because some of these guys that helped David aren't Israelites, they are actually foreigners.

Remember, David has fled to the border of Israel. And so some of these guys who helped him were actually from across the border.

It says that one of the guys was Shobi the son of Nahash of Rabbah of the children of Ammon. Now, Rabbah was the capital of the nation of Ammon, and Nahash had been the king of Ammon.

And so Shobi the son of Nahash was a prince in Ammon.

At the time Ammon was under the control of Israel, David's army had conquered it.

And so, you wouldn't exactly say that they were friends, but clearly Shobi wanted to help David.

He seemed to believe that David was going to defeat Absalom, that God still was with David.

And so he was going to help him, and try to stay on his good side.

And it is kind of ironic, because this is actually where it all started.

It was when David's army was warring against the city of Rabbah in Ammon, and David was back in Jerusalem, that David and Bathsheba committed adultery.

And so, the roles have reversed here. Now David is out in the field with his army near Rabbah, and his son is committing adultery with his concubines back in Jerusalem.

And so I'm sure that David understood the irony of that, that God was hinting to him that, hey, this is why this is happening to you, this is the judgement that I said I would bring on you.

And yet God did not forsake him, and still delivered him.

This was true of Christ.

He laid him down and slept, in the grave.

But he awoke, for the LORD sustained him.

And so that's a picture of Christ's death and resurrection.

*And David also spoke there of how he was surrounded by his enemies.
And we read from 2 Samuel 17 where it talked about how while Absalom was camped against him, men brought him beds and food for him and his army.
And so in Psalm 23 David talks about a table being prepared for him in the presence of his enemies.
And that's also what happened to Christ. The Passover was prepared for him, and he would eat it in the presence of his enemy who would betray him.*

*And so Christ would be surrounded by his enemies, and crucified. But he would not be afraid, he'd lay him down and sleep.
He'd descend into hell where he would be surrounded by the powers of darkness. But he'd not be afraid, he'd overcome them, and arise, victorious.
Just as David returned victorious after being surrounded by his enemies.*

*And do you remember how some of the Gentiles, that had been enemies of David came to him in his time of trouble?
Well, through Christ's sufferings, the Gentiles were reconciled to God. Those that one time were enemies were made nigh by the blood of Christ.
So just as the Gentiles came to David when his son died, so the Gentiles would come to God through the death of his Son.*

Verse 7

And so David has recounted to God how he has been his shield, his glory, and the lifter up of his head. How God has heard his cry regarding Ahithophel, and sent him Hushai. David is recounting God's work, which demonstrates that the LORD is continuing to be with him and help him. And so David has told God that he will not fear, but even sleep while he is surrounded by his enemies, because God is taking care of him. And so based on what God has done for him, and promised him, and what he is doing for him now, David is confident that he doesn't need to fear, and that God will save him. And so in this verse, that is what David asks, that God would indeed deliver him from Absalom. "Arise, O LORD; save me, O my God: for thou hast smitten all mine enemies upon the cheek bone; thou hast broken the teeth of the ungodly." And so this is something that God has done for David before. He has saved him from his enemies before. And so David asks that he would do it again.

SMITTEN UPON THE CHEEK BONE

And one thing that David says that God has done for him before, is that God has smitten all his enemies upon the cheek bone. Now smiting somebody on the cheek in the Bible is considered a reproach. You don't let somebody hit you in the face. You protect your face. If somebody smites you on the face, that's an indication that you are totally powerless before them, that you can't even defend your face from being hit by them. And so that's a reproach to you.

Job 16:10 They have gaped upon me with their mouth; they have **smitten me upon the cheek reproachfully**; they have gathered themselves together against me.

Lamentations 3:30 He giveth his **cheek to him that smiteth** him: he is filled full with *reproach*.

So being hit on the cheek is to be reproached. It is to be powerless before someone, and unable to defend yourself.

And that's what God has done to David's enemies in the past. He's smitten them upon the cheek. They've been reproached. They've been totally powerless before David.

And he's not talking about just slapping somebody on cheek, he's talking about hitting them with your fist with all your might. He's talking about taking a baseball bat and whaling on the side of their head.

Look at what he says:

"thou hast smitten all mine enemies upon the cheek bone; thou hast *broken the teeth of the ungodly*."

And so he's talking about knocking the teeth out of somebody's head.

That's what God did to David's enemies. He beat 'em up. He knocked 'em down. He knocked their teeth out.

And so that's what God has done for David in the past, saving him from his enemies. And David is asking that he would do it again. That he will deliver him, as David knows he can.

UNGODLY

And note how David describes his enemies. He calls them "the ungodly".

So do you see how this also relates to what he's been saying in the last two Psalms?

In Psalm 1 he talked about how the way of the ungodly would perish.

And that's what David has experienced in his life. God has destroyed all of the ungodly who have fought against Israel. He's defended the covenant that he made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and given Israel the promised land, and delivered them from their enemies.

And so God fulfilled his word. He kept his promise to Israel. And the ungodly who stood against that word, perished.

And now there is a new covenant that God has made with David, that his seed is going to sit upon the throne of Israel for ever.

And so just as the ungodly who opposed the one covenant perished, so the ungodly who oppose this latter covenant will perish as well.

And that is what David is asking. That his enemies, not the enemies of Israel, but those that are seeking to take the throne from him, would perish. That God would defend the covenant that he has now made with him, and deliver him just as he has done before.

And he will.

"Arise, O LORD; save me, O my God."

And you know, he did, didn't he? He arose to save us.

But you know, it's talking about much more than that here.

Because one day Christ will arise to return and deliver Israel from their enemies, and smite them upon the cheek bone.

It talks in different places throughout scripture how an ungodly nation will come upon Israel, but God will destroy them.

And listen to how it describes them in Joel 1:

Joel 1:6 For a nation is come up upon my land, strong, and without number, whose teeth are the teeth of a lion, and he hath the **cheek teeth** of a great lion.

And just to show you that it is talking about the time of the end, in verse 15 it says:

Joel 1:15 Alas for the day! for the day of the LORD is at hand, and as a destruction from the Almighty shall it come.

And so it is talking about what will happen when the day of the LORD is near, and Christ is just about to return.

And so it says that at that time a nation will be coming up upon Israel, and it describes them there as having the teeth of a lion, and the cheek teeth of a great lion.

Why is that significant?

Well, remember what it says here in this Psalm:

“thou hast smitten all mine enemies upon the **cheek** bone; thou hast broken the **teeth** of the ungodly.”

And so it mentions the teeth and cheek teeth of his enemies there, because that’s where Christ will smite them. He’ll break out their teeth.

And you know how you would do that? break somebody’s cheek-bone, knock their teeth out? Well, if you hit them across the face with a rod, that will do it.

Psalms 2:9 Thou shalt **break** them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel.

And so when Christ come’s back he’ll use a rod to beat his enemies. He’ll break out their teeth, and dash their heads to pieces like a potter’s vessel.

Now, I realize that that may not fit your conception of who Christ is.

But I’m just telling you what the Bible says.

If you don’t like it, you don’t have to believe it.

But this is the only Christ that the Bible teaches: one that died to bring us forgiveness, and will one day return to bring judgement, and deliverance to his people, and to annihilate the wicked. You can take him or leave him, but that’s who he is. That’s why he died to save us. Because that’s what we’ve got to be saved from.

And if you think what it’s describing here is terrible, let me tell you, it’s nothing. What Christ does to his enemies will be over in a few moments.

But when they stand before God in judgement they’ll be damned to an eternity in the lake of fire, where they’ll be tormented day and night forever and ever.

God’s not a softy. He’s playing for keeps.

That’s why they had a fear of God.

If you rebel against him and reject his pardon, he’ll show you no mercy.

If you despise the one who died to save you, there’s coming a time when he won’t hold back his fury any longer, and he’s going to beat his enemies to pieces, and deliver his people.

Verse 8

Now, we have this thing, that we call theology.

And over time different biblical words get associated with particular NT theological concepts.

So that we begin to interpret the Bible everywhere that it uses that term according to our theology, instead of informing our understanding of that word, and our theology, from the way that the Bible uses the word.

And one of those words is “salvation”.

When we hear the word salvation, when we read it in the Bible, we immediately think of God saving us through Christ’s work on the cross. We immediately think of being saved from our sins by being born again.

But obviously salvation here in this passage is not being used in the theological sense that we’ve given to it today.

Especially in the OT, we find that salvation is used in a very general sense, of being saved from just about anything. Usually, being saved from your enemies. As David just said in the previous verse.

And so when David says salvation here, he is talking about a literal, physical, salvation of David from his enemies that are right now trying to kill him. That God is the one who can deliver him from that.

God is the one that delivered Israel from their enemies through David, in fulfillment of his covenant with Abraham, and God is the one who will save David from his enemies now, in fulfillment of the covenant that he has made with him and his seed.

And so that is the salvation that it is talking about.

David says it very well:

2 Samuel 22:3 The God of my rock; in him will I trust: he is my shield, and the horn of my **salvation**, my high tower, and my refuge, my **saviour**; thou **savest** me *from violence*.

And so when David is talking about God being his savior, about God saving him, about the LORD’s salvation, he’s talking about him saving him from violence.

And that is certainly the context here in this Psalm.

And so as David fled from Absalom his son, he had assurance that God was still with him, and he asked that he would deliver him. Because salvation belongs to the LORD.

And notice how he closes this:

“thy blessing is upon thy people.”

That also relates to the things that it talked about in the prior two Psalms, doesn’t it?

The book of Psalms started out talking about blessing.

And David has seen God’s blessing upon Israel, through the keeping of his covenant.

As they have kept God’s law, he’s kept his promise, and they’ve been blessed, and God has brought them salvation from their enemies.

And it is through David that God has chosen to bring that blessing and deliverance. And God has promised that he will continue to bring Israel salvation through David’s seed forever.

And so when David sees God’s blessing on Israel, on his people, he has confidence that God is going to bless him too.

That just as God has blessed Israel through the keeping of that Abrahamic covenant, through David, that so God will continue to bless Israel, and bless him, in the keeping of the covenant that he has made with David and his seed.

That just as those who were against the first covenant were destroyed by God, the ungodly, Israel’s enemies, so the enemies of the covenant that God has made with David will also be destroyed.

And just as those who kept the first covenant are being blessed by God, his people, that so those that keep this second covenant that God has made with David, will be blessed. And so David knows that salvation belongs to God, and that his blessing is upon his people. He knows that God kept that first covenant, and that he will keep the promise that he's made to David.

And so even at a difficult time in Davids life, when he is fleeing from his own son, David still had confidence that God was with him and would save him. He still trusted that it was God who decides who is blessed and who is reproached, who is saved, and who is destroyed. And so he trusted in God's promise.

And so next time we'll continue to see what happens as David goes through this time of extreme danger in his life, that God allowed to be brought on him for his sin.

Amen.

Now once again, when it is talking about salvation in the Bible, it isn't usually talking about the act of being cleansed from sin.

We almost never find the Bible using it that way. Only a few passages where you could maybe take it that way. Usually the Bible speaks of "cleansing" from sin, not "salvation" from sin.

When it is talking about salvation, it is talking about physical deliverance from something.

Sometimes it is talking about salvation from their enemies.

*And sometimes it **is** talking about deliverance from the physical judgment that will be inflicted by God on all the wicked at the end.*

And it is Christ's work on the cross that saves us from that.

But when it is talking about salvation in reference to an event in the Bible, it usually isn't talking about the point in time that we get cleansed from sin. It is talking about that point in time, that because of that, we'll be delivered from the destruction and judgement of God that is brought on the wicked.

And to demonstrate that to you, let's look at some examples of how it is used.

First let's look at some verses from the OT, that talk about how one day God is going to save Israel from their enemies, like we just talked about:

1 Chronicles 16:35 *And say ye, **Save** us, O God of our **salvation**, and gather us together, and deliver us from the heathen, that we may give thanks to thy holy name, and glory in thy praise.*

And so God is going to save them by delivering them from a heathen nation.

Isaiah 45:17 *But Israel shall be **saved** in the LORD with an everlasting **salvation**: ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end.*

And so at the end when Israel is delivered, that's when God will bring them everlasting salvation.

And so it is just as it says here, God's blessing will be upon his people.

So I think we've demonstrated today how in the OT salvation is in reference to them being delivered from their enemies. And how in the end God will save them.

But you see, it is also used very much the same way in the NT.

And I want you to see that, so let's look at some NT passages that talk about salvation:

1 Thessalonians 5:9 *For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain **salvation** by our Lord Jesus Christ,*

And so we will be saved from wrath. In the end, when God pours out his wrath, we'll be saved from it, we won't be destroyed.

Titus 2:11 *For the grace of God that bringeth **salvation** hath appeared to all men,
12 Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;
13 Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;*

And so God's grace through Christ will bring us salvation, when he appears. We'll be saved from the judgment of the wicked.

Hebrews 9:28 *So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto **salvation**.*

And so it is when Christ appears the second time that he'll bring us salvation. Salvation from our enemies.

And so:

Romans 13:11 *And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for **now is our salvation nearer than when we believed**.*

Our salvation is nearer than when we believed. When we believed it was far away, but now it is getting closer.

You see, he's not talking about getting born-again, that that is getting saved, that that is salvation.

That is the key to salvation, but that salvation hasn't come yet.

As we said earlier, we, like David, still sometimes suffer trouble and persecution.

But one day Christ will come and deliver all his people, and bring them salvation.

Revelation 12:10 *And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, **Now is come salvation**, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.*

And so it will be at the time of the end, when the kingdom of God is finally manifested, and Christ returns, that salvation will come.