TODAY'S ORDER OF WORSHIP

Welcome by: Don Taylor / Opening Prayer by: Daniel Balch
Morning Assembly Song Leader: Danny Balch

#867 To Canaan's Land I'm on My Way
#895 I'll Live in Glory

Scripture Reading by: Joseph Girard
#350 when My Love to Christ Grows Weak

Communion Devotional by:
Lord's Supper and Contribution

#869 We're Marching to Zion
Sermon: "Know Justice, Know Peace"
Ecclesiastes 3:16-4:3

#947 Jesus Is Tenderly Calling
#851 I'll Fly Away
Closing Prayer by: Gus Tristan

Our Small Groups meet tonight.
Bobby Rader's group will meet tonight at the building at 5:00 p.m.

Other Opportunities For Spiritual Growth

Sunday: 9:00am — Bible Study Classes, 10:00am — Worship, 5:00pm — Worship
Wednesday: 6:30pm — Bible Study Classes

Aug. 13, 2023

"Stand Firm in…Liberty"

Galatians 5:1

Salvation Belongs to the Lord

[1] O Lord, how many are my foes!
Many are rising against me;
[2] many are saying of my soul,
"There is no salvation for him in God." Selah
[3] 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. Selah
[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

Psalm 3

The Psalms have always been a popular source of devotional reading for Christians; in fact, we are about to study them in our small groups along those lines. But we can dig a bit deeper than that if we try. As an example, consider one of my favorites, Psalm 3; let's explore its context, classification, and structure, with a view toward applying the resulting insights to our own lives.

The first thing to note is that this is one of only thirteen Psalms that has a historical superscription: it is designated as "a Psalm of David, when he fled from Absalom his son." Now these are all written in the third person, pointing to them being later editorial additions; but they are present in both the canonical Hebrew text and the earliest translations, including the LXX. Their antiquity demonstrates that they should be considered historically valid, and thus they might help to inform our understanding of the text.

The most common way to classify psalms these days is based in form criticism, which categorizes it as a psalm of lament—more specifically, an "individual lament." Under this scheme, it exhibits the characteristic structure in an almost prototypical manner: an address to God (v. 1); a complaint (v. 1—2); a confession of trust (v. 3—6); a petition (v. 7a); words of assurance (v. 7b); and an exclamation of praise (v. 8). This makes sense when you consider its historical setting, too, as most of the psalms related to a particular occasion are individual laments, and all portray David as utterly reliant upon God, either in times of crisis or simply in praise.

Family News & Notes

WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH YOUR CHURCH FAMILY

Our Sick

Robert Modisette is on hospice care.

Lon Hobbs is in Liberty Health Care room 4

Cindy Sass, Gloria McKelroy's daughter has covid.

Brooke Ann Smith, Gloria McKelroy's granddaughter has covid.

Travis Smith, great grandson of Gloria McKelroy, is in the NICU.

Continued Prayers
(Need cards, phone calls & visits)

Steve Ward, Oscar Cantu, Caitlin Smith, Virginia Cole, Ken Coleman, Joe Edd Stifflemire, Donna Wilson, Bryan Senegal, Cynthis Deblanc, Patricia Prater, Richard Prater, Edna Semien, Wilson Semien, Gloria Moore, Betty Spencer, Willie Spencer, James Wilson, Jo Ella McKewen, Tony Fontenot, Winston Leifester, Kelly McCain

Shut Ins
(Need cards, phone calls & visits)

Jim Smith, Winona Angelle, Myrtle Sheffield, Catherine Parker, Peggy McIntosh, Lois Watts, Willo Dean Ellis

Upcoming Activities

Elders, Minister meet Monday, Aug. 14th at 5:30 p.m.

We will have a Houston Food Bank truck on Thursday, Aug. 17th at 8:00 a.m.

Men's Prayer Breakfast, Saturday, Aug. 19th at 8:00 a.m. in the family life center.

We will have a Blood Drive on Monday, Aug. 28th from 4-8 p.m. in the fellowship room. A sign up sheet is on the bulletin board.

Our Missionaries

Aaron & Marisa Bailey in Montepuez, Mozambique , Rod Kyle in the South Pacific

Elders	Deacons	Minister
Ken Coleman	Zach Arthur	Bryant Perkins
Bobby Rader	Daniel Balch	
Don Taylor	Danny Balch	
Robert Ward	Walden David	
	Gus Tristan	

"Stand Firm in…Liberty"
is the weekly bulletin of the Liberty Church of Christ 3201 North Main, Liberty Texas 77575
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The best way to outline the psalm is in three parts: v. 1—3, v. 4—6, and v. 7—8. For one, there is a link between v. 2 and v. 3, where the taunt of the enemies is answered by David's confidence in God. Additionally, the usage of YHWH commonly introduces or concludes a section of a psalm, as is the case in all but one of the relevant verses in Ps 3. Finally, there is the shift in voice between these three divisions, from direct speech to God, to "him-God-speech," before returning to direct address in the final section. So what does the text tell us?

The first section opens with an appeal to God characteristic of a psalm of lament and a clear example of synonymous parallelism. *O Lord, how many are my foes! Many are rising against me; many are saying of my soul…"* (v. 1-2a) This is clearly a threatening situation. The second half of v. 2 elaborates on the hostility of these enemies, who say, *there is no salvation for him in God* (v. 2b). In the eyes of his enemies, David has been deserted by God, perhaps reflecting the numerous calamities that befell in the aftermath of his adultery with Bathsheba. David, however, maintains his confidence in God's deliverance. *But you, O Lord, are a shield about me, my glory, and the lifter of my head* (v. 3). The martial imagery pictures YHWH as a warrior, offering his divine protection as with a shield, the "lifting of the head" probably making a comparison to a military victory: David will ultimately triumph through God's power.

Section two shifts the focus from the enemies to the psalmist. Again, there is a focus on speech, but the many hostile voices of the enemy have given way to the solitary voice of David in prayer: *I cried aloud to the Lord* (v. 4a). Far from being forsaken by God, there is a response to the cry, *and he answered me from his holy hill* (v. 4b). The confidence placed in the Lord's power and his response produces the remarkable imagery of v. 5, *I lay down and slept; I woke again, for the Lord sustained me.* In the midst of his enemies, where the natural, human reaction would be to remain watchful, the promise of God produces a surpassing serenity. Therefore, David says, *I will not be afraid of many thousands of people who have set themselves against me all around* (v. 6).

The final section sees a return to addressing God, *Arise, O Lord! Save me, O my God!* (v. 7a). These are the words of the prayer mentioned in v. 4. The next line marks a clear return to martial imagery, *"for you strike all my enemies on the cheek; you break the teeth of the wicked"* (v. 7b). The statement is actually made in the perfect tense, indicating David's complete confidence in God to the point that it is as if his deliverance has already occurred, a liberation so complete that the enemy will be utterly subjugated and humiliated. The synonymous parallelism of striking the cheek and breaking the teeth refers on one level to making his enemies completely powerless; there is perhaps also an allusion to speech here again, as they can now no longer utter wicked words. Just as their hostile tongues were silenced, David's final word of praise turns the content of their insult on its head; where they claimed there was no salvation in God, he exclaims emphatically, *salvation belongs to the Lord* (v. 8a). The victory is so all-encompassing that it moves beyond the personal level of the rest of the psalm, to a statement of complete confidence in God on behalf of all Israel, *"your blessing be on your people!"* (v. 8b).

I know this has been a rather technical exegesis of the psalm, but I wanted us to see how we can do serious study and then move to application, which is why it matters for us. Of course, on one level, we gain a better understanding of David's life and state of mind. More importantly, beyond the purely historical, Ps 3 speaks to the reader today on a personal level. It is a reminder that even God's greatest servants experience extreme trials in this life; no one, therefore, should feel that they are entitled to immunity. But it is a tremendous source of encouragement, as the same God who delivered David still has the power to sustain his people in any trial. It bolsters the strength of the discouraged, by powerfully reminding the faithful servant of God that, indeed, "salvation belongs to the Lord!"

Bryant Perkins