

“THE BOOK OF PSALMS”

Psalm 3 - A Morning Prayer for God's Protection

OBJECTIVES IN STUDYING THIS PSALM

- 1). To note how historical events often served as the impetus for the writing of particular psalms
- 2). To observe the use and possible meaning of the word "Selah"
- 3). To consider how David trusted in the Lord to deliver him from his enemies

SUMMARY

The heading attributes this psalm to David, composed as he was fleeing from his son Absalom (cf. **2 Sam 15-18**). It is commonly called "a morning hymn" (cf. v. **5**) in which the psalmist prays for God's protection.

David addresses his complaint to the Lord, how there be many who trouble him. They even taunt him by saying there is no help from God for him (cf. the curses of Shimei, **2 Sam 16:5-8**). In this psalm (and in many others) we find the word "**Selah**". The exact meaning is unknown, but it may have served the purpose of providing some musical notation. It seems to be inserted where a pause is desirable for the singer or reader of the psalm to reflect upon the thought or statement just made (**1-2**).

Following his complaint is an expression of comfort received from the Lord in the past. Such consolation prompts him to view the Lord as a shield and his glory, the One who is able to lift up his head. Indeed, the Lord has heard his earlier cry and enabled him to sleep and awake. This gives him renewed courage to face his many enemies (cf. **2 Sam 18:7**), even though they numbered in the thousands (**3-6**).

As he starts the new day, he yet again calls upon the Lord to save him, even as He has done in the past. His "morning hymn" ends with the acknowledgment of God as the source of salvation and blessing for His people (**7-8**).

OUTLINE

I. DAVID'S COMPLAINT (3:1-2)

A. Many trouble him (1)

B. Many rise up against him (2)

C. Many say there is no help from god for him (2)

II. DAVID'S COMFORT (3:3-6)

A. What god is to him (3)

1. His shield and glory
2. The One who lifts his head

B. What god has done for him (4-6)

1. Heard his cry from His holy hill
2. Sustained him during sleep
3. Given him courage against ten thousands of men

III. DAVID'S CRY (3:7-8)

A. For deliverance by god (7)

1. To arise and save him
2. As God has done in the past
 - a. Having struck his enemies on the cheekbone
 - b. Having broken the teeth of the ungodly

B. Of praise to god (8)

1. Salvation belongs to God
2. His blessing is upon His people

REVIEW QUESTIONS FOR THE PSALM

1) What are the main points of this psalm?

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2) Who is the author of this psalm, and what occasion led to its composition?

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3) What was David's complaint? (1)

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4) What were people saying about David? Who in particular said such things? (2)

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5) What is the meaning of the word "Selah"? (2)

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6) How did David view God? (3)

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7) What did David do, and what was God's response? (4)

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8) What was David able to do because of God's sustaining him? (5)

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9) What else did God make possible for David? (6)

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10) For what does David pray? (7)

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11) What had God done for David in the past? (7)

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13) What does David attribute to the Lord? (8)

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