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Lesson 3: Psalms 3-4

Psalm 3

Author: David

Background: Written during the time he fled from his son, Absalom (II Sam. 15-18)

Theme: Confidently trusting God for protection and peace (from the Life Application Bible)

Outline (All outlines are taken from Warren Wiersbe's *The Bible Exposition Commentary*)

Conflict: He Admits His Troubles (v.1-2)

Absalom, and many others, were the source of David's troubles in this season. The Lord allowed it as part of David's chastening because of his sins of adultery and murder (II Sam. 12:1-12). God forgave David, but still punished him with painful family problems (II Sam 12-14). Family problems do not always signify punishment for sin. Things happen! In this life, trouble will surely come! As David deals with his troubles by writing psalms, we, too, must deal with ours in a constructive way.

Selah—This word is of very obscure meaning. It probably denotes *rest* or *pause*, both as to the music and singing, intimating something emphatic in the sentiment ¹

Confidence: He Affirms His Trust in the Lord (v.3-4)

David looked by faith to the Lord, His shield (v.3; Gen. 15:1). Israel looked to their king as their shield to protect them (Ps. 84:9; 89:18). David, however, looked to the Lord for protection (Ps. 7:10; 18:2; 59:11). David trusted God to lift his head up (v.3)!

¹ Jamieson, R., Fausset, A. R., Fausset, A. R., Brown, D., & Brown, D. (1997). *A commentary, critical and explanatory, on the Old and New Testaments* (Ps 3:2). Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.

v. 4...”cried aloud”-*cross reference with*-II Samuel 15:30 But David continued up the Mount of Olives, weeping as he went; his head was covered and he was barefoot. All the people with him covered their heads too and were weeping as they went up.

Check out these comments from the Matthew Henry Commentary:

David was now in great grief; when, in his flight, he went up the Mount of Olives, he wept greatly, with his head covered, and marching bare-foot; yet *then* he composed this comfortable psalm. He wept and prayed, wept and sung, wept and believed; this was sowing in tears. Is any afflicted? Let him pray; nay, let him sing psalms, let him sing this psalm. Is any afflicted with undutiful disobedient children? David was; and yet that did not hinder his joy in God, nor put him out of tune for holy songs.²

Celebration: He Anticipates the Victory (v. 5-8)

Verse five is very similar to verse eight of Psalm 4. Sleeping in the midst of such great trouble reminds us of Jesus sleeping in the midst of a storm (Mk. 4:39) and Peter sleeping in prison (Acts 12). David is certain of victory as he cries for God to arise. He anticipates deliverance and blessing (v.8). We can, too!

...You have struck all my enemies on the cheekbone... (v.7) The use of “*cheekbone*” and “*teeth*” represents his enemies as fierce, like wild beasts ready to devour (Ps 27:2), and smiting their cheekbone (1Ki 22:24) denotes violence and insult.³

thou hast broken—God took his part, utterly depriving the enemy of power to injure.⁴

Psalm 4

Author: David

Background: Written during the time he fled from his son, Absalom (II Sam. 15-18)

Theme: Rejoicing in God’s protection and peace. We can place our confidence in God because He will listen when we call on Him. (From the Life Application Bible)

Outline

Look to the Lord (v.1)

“Distress” in verse one (KJV) means “pressed into a corner, in a tight place.”

Confront the Enemy (v.2-3)

The “sons of men”, leading men of rank who were seduced by Absalom and leading God’s people astray, are confronted indirectly by David. They will not prosper as they love what is worthless!

² Henry, M. (1996). *Matthew Henry's commentary on the whole Bible : Complete and unabridged in one volume* (Ps 3:1–3). Peabody: Hendrickson.

³ Jamieson, R., Fausset, A. R., Fausset, A. R., Brown, D., & Brown, D. (1997). *A commentary, critical and explanatory, on the Old and New Testaments* (Ps 3:7). Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.

⁴ Jamieson, R., Fausset, A. R., Fausset, A. R., Brown, D., & Brown, D. (1997). *A commentary, critical and explanatory, on the Old and New Testaments* (Ps 3:7). Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.

Encourage Your Friends (v.4-5)

David encouraged his followers to:

1. Fear God (4a)
2. Be angry without sin (4b)
3. Search their hearts (4c)
4. Be still (4d)
5. Offer the right sacrifices (5a)
6. Trust the Lord (5b)

Praise the Lord (v.6-8)

The question, “Who will show us any good?” can be translated, “Can any good come out of this?” or “Who can get us out of this plight?” The good David wanted was for the light of God’s smile to rest upon His people. His hope in God put gladness in his heart (v.7) and a praise on his lips. May your hope in God do the same for you!