

Psalm 3

A Psalm of David When He Fled from Absalom His Son. There is little reason to doubt the veracity of these superscripts.

3:1-2

LORD, how they have increased who trouble me! Ahithophel betrayed David to leave with Absalom as well (2 Samuel 15:12). Jesus was likewise betrayed by a good friend (Matthew 26:50). **2 Many are they who say of me, “There is no help for him in God.”** Matthew 27:43 records many doubting that Christ has any help from God.

Selah Not necessarily something to be done by the speaker, but rather something to be done by the reader or hearer: “stop and think about this.”

3:3

But You, O LORD, This is not about what “they are doing to me; this is about what Jehovah is.” **are a shield¹ for me, My glory and the One who lifts up my head.** This is the language of a possible promotion (or restoration, Genesis 40:13)...even though it is also the language of decapitation. God restores and promotes us like a Father lifting the chin of a fallen face displayed on his children. John 17:5 speaks of Jesus’ “restoration to glory” just as David was to be restored to his throne in this Psalm. This is the “joy set before” Jesus in Hebrews 12:2...restoration to the throne of God.

3:4-5

I cried to the LORD with my voice, Perhaps verse 7 is the “cry” from David. Meanwhile, Hebrews 5:7 is the prayers and crying of our Lord. What was it a prayer concerning? Restoration and protection while awaiting that restoration. From a Christological perspective, this prayer in and through death is repetitive in the Psalms...particularly in Psalm 16:7-11.

And He heard me from His holy hill. Consider the connection with Psalm 2:6. These are not haphazardly arranged. Matthew 27:46 speaks of Christ calling out His Father wishing to be with His Father, and here David had strong desire to be on the **holy hill**, and felt removed from the presence of God (having to be in exile).

5 I lay down and slept; Consider Psalm 4:8 and their connection. So now we have a connection with the preceding and the succeeding Psalms.

I awoke, if “sleep” can be used for “death,” then we can have some assurance that this can be language for resurrection. **for the LORD sustained me.** This seems like a good Christological reference to the resurrection. Psalm 13:3 allows for “sleep” to be used in the sense of death. Here, with David, it is a night’s rest, but in the big picture, this seems to allow for a Luke 24:44 understanding.

Job 3 and Job 13:3 seem to say the same thing (death is a deep sleep). John 11 finds Jesus using this “sleep” as talk for Lazarus’ death. 1 Thessalonians 4:13 tells us that the death of the Christian is but a “sleep.”

I lay down and slept; Jesus says He laid down His life (John 10:18) in a very willful “death.”

3:6

I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people Who have set themselves against me all around. Matthew 16:21 records Jesus’ own conviction that He would rise again from the dead—the same faith recorded here of David.

3:7

¹Lit. *around*

⁶Ps. 23:4; 27:3

Arise, O LORD; a sort of “get up!” Equal and surpass the efforts of those who “rise up against me” (verse 1). **Save me, O my God!** Imagine Jesus praying for His Father to save Him. This is acutely addressed in Hebrews 5:1-7 where Christ “cried out to Him Who was able to save Him from death.” This is, of course, another prooftext that God saves His people.

For You have struck all my enemies on the cheekbone; God has hit them squarely on the face. **You have broken the teeth of the ungodly.**¹ Both deliverance and judgment are righteously being sought here in this same prayer.

3:8

Salvation the act of “saving people” from verse 7 **belongs to the LORD. Your blessing is upon Your people.** There’s plenty of help for Him in God, contrasting what others say in verse 2.

¹There is an entire appendix about the topic of “whether believers should pray like this” in my commentary on Revelation.