

Sacred Songs, Life Lessons

God Save the King

Psalm 3

May 19, 2024

HDBC

Without a song the day would never end;
Without a song the road would never bend;
When things go wrong a man ain't got a friend, without a song.

That field of corn, would never see a plow
That field of corn, would be deserted now
A man is born, but he's no good no how, without a song

I've got my trouble and woe,
But sure as I know the Jordan will roll
And I'll get along, as long as a song is strong in my soul.

I'll never know, what makes the rain to fall
I'll never know, what makes the grass so tall
I only know, there ain't no love at all, without a song

It was written in 1929 but has been performed by multiple singers. Frank Sinatra, Willie Nelson, Stevie Wonder, and even the Beatles.

It's true, isn't it? The right combination of words, rhythm and melody can work magic. The right song at just the right time can change your demeanor, lift your spirits and put a spring in your step. Music is one of the great gifts provided to us by our wonderful Creator. It is one of life's great little pleasures.

But it was not created only for our enjoyment. It has some bigger, more important uses. We use music for instruction. Think of the ABC song for kids. We use it for worship. We use songs to reinforce the truths about God that we learn in His Word. **Songs are so important that God included a songbook in the Bible.** It is the longest of the 66 books of the Bible. Don't underestimate its importance.

This morning we are starting on a brief journey through a few of the songs included in the Bible's songbook, the Psalms. There are 150. We will only consider 4-6 in this series. Most of the one's I've chose are Psalm that I have never preached to you. So, in most of these we will be plowing new ground together. In each song we will find practical application for our lives. These are **Sacred Songs**, with **Life Lessons**. We'll begin with Psalm 3. But first a few general words of introduction to the book of Psalms.

Most of the songs were written to be used in Israel's worship services.

Fifty-five are dedicated to the **Director of Music**.

Twenty-four are associated with musicians who are involved in worship.

The psalms are heavily quoted in the New Testament.

The psalms reflect real life in a broken world.

The psalms are emotional. Frustration, fears, discouragement, depression.

The psalms exalt the greatness of God.

The psalms point to Jesus as the coming Messiah.

The psalms engage the heart as well as the mind.

The psalms are truth, because they come from the heart of God.

Jesus used the psalms to silence the chief priests and scribes.

When the apostles needed to replace Judas, they turned to the Psalms.

When Peter preached on the day of Pentecost, he used the Psalms.

Paul taught salvation by faith from Psalm 32.

The psalms are for the discouraged, depressed, fearful, and uncertain.

The psalms are for the victorious, confident, bold and forgiven.

Spend as much time in the Psalms as you can.

Let's jump into the series by looking at Psalm 3. I've entitled this message

God Save the King. I've done so because of the historical background. Written by King David during a time when his life was threatened.

David was a combat soldier. He knew what it was like to be in the heat of the battle. More than once he had led his troops to victory. More than once he had exhibited leadership and courage in the fact of insurmountable odds. **But all that was in the past**. Now he is the king of Israel. He has subdued the enemy nations around. He has established a strong defense. No one would dare attack. The walls were secure. The homeland was safe.

Little did David know that though they were safe from outward attacks, they were vulnerable to an internal one. And that is exactly what happened. One of David's sons, **Absalom** led a successful coup and dethroned his father. David escaped from Jerusalem and for a time once more lived as a fugitive in the wilderness of Judah.

It was during this time that David wrote this song. Its contents reveal the heart of a man who was surrounded by hostile forces, but who which was at perfect peace because of his faith in God. Let's take a look. **Read Psalm 3**

1. The Pursuit of Enemies (1-2)

As I said, the backdrop for this psalm is David' flight from his own palace, when, in the dead of night, he forded the brook Kedron, and went with a few faithful followers to hide from Absalom. **Like his earlier fugitive days** when Saul was trying to kill him, David was once more being pursued by a deadly enemy. His life was in danger. His future was uncertain.

David's words indicate that Absalom had a growing number of followers. And the talk was that David did not stand a chance. This would be the end of his reign. He was in serious trouble.

Have you been there? Probably not in the sense of military danger, though a few of you have. But there are other enemies that want to destroy our lives. There are other kinds of enemies which we face.

We've all heard the question at least once during a TV show. Someone has been murdered. And the investigators are questioning family and friends. They want to **know if this person had any enemies**. Anyone who would want to kill him.

In many cases they answer "no." But the truth is that we all have enemies. Maybe not those who want to physically kill us. But there is **a spiritual army** that is bound and determined to destroy the lives of God's people. Paul wrote about this in Ephesians 6.

For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual

forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm.

Beyond the spiritual enemy that we have, there may be others who are openly or secretly hoping for our demise. **Maybe someone at work is carrying a grudge and is trying to sabotage your job. At school, a fellow student has got it in for you.** It happens, doesn't it. David has a word for you. Here it is.

2. The Protection of God (3-4)

But you are a shield around me, O Lord . . .

Rather than focusing on the enemy, **David** focused on the protection of God. **A shield was the great defensive implement** in ancient times. Shields were so important that the **Greek commanders told their soldiers they could return from war either carrying their shields or be carried on them**, & frequently it was the latter. But here David is invoking God as his protector & helper. The enemies were saying there is no help for David, but David says just the opposite. He declared emphatically that God was his protection.

As David is surrounded by his enemies, he is aware of the omnipresence of God. Wherever the enemies are to be found, God is to be found, and he is superintending even the thoughts of the enemies. Though there are those who are waiting for David to slip up so they can attack him, his confidence is that the God of Israel is still his helper and his protector.

If you've read the book, ***Black Hawk Down***, or seen the movie, you know the story of Michael Durant. His **Black Hawk went down in the heart of the city of Mogadishu that was swarming with blood-thirsty, well-armed men, he knew he was in big trouble. His back was broken. His leg sustained a compound fracture. Some of his crew had died in the crash. All the others were unconscious and wounded. Angry mobs were swarming to the scene.**

Circling overhead was another helicopter with a pair of Delta snipers, Gary Gorden and Randy Shugart. Seeing the scene below, they volunteered to go down and protect the downed crew. Two times the request was denied because the officer in charge knew it would be a suicide mission. On the third

request, permission was granted. The two men were dropped off at the scene and proceeded to bravely defend the downed crew against hundreds of Somalis. Both men were killed. But in the process they ultimately saved the life of Michael Durant who was captured, but later released.

They provided for him, a shield of protection, though it cost them their lives. Both men received the Congressional Medal of Honor for their actions.

In a similar way David knew that God was defending and protecting him. He called for help, and the help came. **God stands ready** and willing to come to our aid and provide a shield of protection for us when our enemies come running. Unlike human defenders who are mortal and vulnerable, He is invincible. He is a shield which cannot be penetrated. You can trust Him.

3. **The Peace of Mind (5-6)**

I love verse 5. David knew the situation. **The enemy was growing**. But He also knew that he had a shield of protection about him. So secure was He in this shield that he **closed his eyes and slept**. That indicates real peace.

Have you ever watched a really scary movie and then were unable to close your eyes when you went to bed? I've never been in combat. But those who have can testify to the absolute terror of being in a foxhole at night and worrying about an enemy soldier creeping up to it. That's why they post soldiers to watch and protect. **David was completely at ease with his situation, for God was standing watch.**

Scene in Jurassic Park. Dr. Grant and two children, Lex and Tim are sitting in a tree, having escaped from the T-Rex. In the distance you can hear roaring of dinosaurs. Lex is worried. Dr. Grant tells her not to worry because he will be watching. She says, "What if you go to sleep?" He replies, "I won't!" At that, she relaxes and falls to sleep.

Notice not only that David went to sleep. But he also woke up the next morning. The Lord sustained him. David's assessment? I will not fear. Ten thousand may rise against me. No problem.

4. The Prayer of Faith (7-8)

The song closes with a prayer of faith. In this prayer of faith, David expresses His utter dependence upon the Lord and his confident assurance that He has and will continue to be his defender.

The language may seem strong, but David's situation was one of warfare. In that context, he was acknowledging that God was superior. The same can be said of whatever your situation is. God is your protector & defender.

And when He does we should be quick to acknowledge that He is the one who has delivered us. That is what David is doing in these closing verses. He is pointing us to our true defender.

Christmas Eve 1875 and Ira Sankey was traveling on a Delaware River steamboat when he was recognized by some of the passengers. He was the song leader for the famous evangelist D.L. Moody. They asked him to sing one of his own hymns, but Sankey demurred, saying that he preferred to sing William B. Bradbury's hymn, *Savior Like a Shepherd Lead Us*. As he sang, one of the stanzas began, *We are Thine; do Thou befriend us. Be the Guardian of our way.*

When he finished, a man stepped from the shadows and asked, "Did you ever serve in the Union Army?"

"Yes," Mr. Sankey answered, "in the spring of 1860."

"Can you remember if you were doing picket duty on a bright, moonlit night in 1862?" "Yes," Mr. Sankey answered, very much surprised.

"So did I, but I was serving in the Confederate army. When I saw you standing at your post, I thought to myself, 'That fellow will never get away alive.' I raised my musket and took aim. I was standing in the shadow, completely concealed, while the full light of the moon was falling upon you. At that instant, just as a moment ago, you raised your eyes to heaven and began to sing...'Let him sing his song to the end,' I said to myself, 'I can shoot him afterwards. But the song you sang then was the song you sang just now.

I heard the words perfectly: ***We are Thine; do Thou befriend us. Be the Guardian of our way.*** Those words stirred up many memories. I began to think of my childhood and my God-fearing mother. She had many times sung that song to me. When you had finished your song, it was impossible for me to take aim again. I thought, *The Lord who is able to save that man from certain death must surely be great and mighty.* And my arm of its own accord dropped limp at my side."