

THE ROAD TO RESTORATION

A. The Story: 2 Sam 13-16

Prelude:	the rape of Tamar by Amnon	13:1-22
	the murder of Amnon by Absalom	13:23-39
	the exile of Absalom by David	14:1-33
	the rebellion of Absalom against David	15:1-12

The Road to Restoration

Psalm 51: Confession & Plea for Restoration

A	David's flight from Jerusalem	15:13-18
B	10 concubines left & violated by Absalom	15:16, 16:22
C	5 encounters leaving the city: 15:19-16:13	
	2 mirrors of loyalty: Ittai & Zadok	
	1 immediate answer to prayer: Hushai (<i>Psalm 3</i>)	
	2 mirrors of Saulide disloyalty: Ziba & Shimei	
D	In the Desert: Spiritual Restoration	
	<i>Psalm 63 - Heaven in the Dust</i>	16:14
D'	Mahanaim: Political Restoration	16:24-18:33
	News of Absalom's death	
C'	5 encounters by the Jordan	19:15-20:2
B'	10 concubines restored	20:3
A'	David's return to Jerusalem	20:3

A Father's Mirror

Look at your son, David,
what do you see?
A prince, a future king,
or fool to lust?
That's you, David.

And you, David, used like a pawn,
for someone else's private jest,
the court joker in a game of secret seduction,
your royal touch its faithful service
servicing his untamed lusts.
How does it feel David?
Weep David.
That was you, David.

Look at your daughter, David,
beautiful Tamar, succulent palm tree,
princess in Israel.
What do you see, David?
Innocence gone, seized in a moment,
royal robe rent in violent song.

She's crying David,
are you angry that she cries?
Would you rather she keep silent, David?
She's crying for you,
She wants her daddy, David.
She crying for justice.

Where are you, David?
Why can't you hold her?
Why do you look away, David?
Does that gaping wound of desolation
stare bloody back at you?

Why are you weeping, David?
Is it because you could have,
but didn't,
your once quick, decisive hand
that played the harp,
seized the spear and shot the sling,
now frozen in silence, paralyzed
by sins deafening blows.

Why are you weeping, David,
an absent father now purged tender,
by a daughter's inconsolable grief?

That how I felt, David,
plagued with pained, unable to reach
my daughter, whom you touched.

So weep
your weary eyes dry, O David,
I love you David,
for today
she made you a father.

B. Poem: Psalm 3

**The Voice of a Distraught Father
A Morning Prayer after a Dark Night**

A psalm of David.

When he fled from Absalom his son.

- 1 *I AM*, how many are my foes!
Many rise up against me!
- 2 Many are saying of me,
“God will not deliver him.”
- 3 But you, *I AM*, are a shield around me;
you are my glory, the one who lifts up my head.
- 4 I cry aloud to *I AM*,
and he answers me from his holy hill.
- 5 I lay down and slept;
I awoke because *I AM* sustains me.
- 6 I do not fear the tens of thousands of troops
Who are drawn up against me on every side.
- 7 Arise, *I AM*! Deliver me, my God!
Strike all my enemies on the cheek;
break the teeth of the wicked.
- 8 Deliverance belongs to *I AM*.
Your blessing be on your people.

4:1 For the director of music. With stringed instruments.

Psalm 3 (Waltke translation)⁷²

⁷² Waltke, *The Psalms as Christian Worship*, 192-193.

EXERCISE #5: TURNING FROM LAMENT TO CONFIDENCE

“BUT YOU, O GOD”

PSALM 3:1-3

<p>1 O LORD, how many are my foes! Many rise up against me!</p> <p>2 Many are saying of me, “God will not deliver him.”</p> <p>3 But you, O LORD, are a <i>shield</i> around me; you are my <i>glory</i>, the one who <i>lifts up my head</i>.</p>	<p>I. Facing the Facts: <i>earthly</i> perspective</p> <p>A <i>many</i> - David is outmanned</p> <p>B <i>many</i> – the attack is immanent</p> <p>C <i>many</i> – his reputation is at stake as his identity as God’s son (king) is called into question</p> <p>II. Turning His Gaze to the Lord: <i>heavenly</i> perspective⁷³</p> <p>A’ God is his <i>protector</i> against the many</p> <p>B’ God is committed to <i>vindicate</i> his servant</p> <p>C’ God promises <i>victory</i> against the king’s foes</p>
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I. David Turns from Lament to Confidence – “But you...”⁷⁴

A. Laments typically include a complaint that...

1. the enemy is too strong,
2. the psalmist is too weak,
3. and God seems absent.

All three are mentioned or inferred in the enemies taunt, “God will not deliver him” (v. 2).

B. **Outnumbered and overwhelmed:** “*Many...many...many*” (the “many” fits well with 2 Sam 15:12-14; cf. 18:8). David underscores his apparently inescapable distress by a *staccato anaphora*,⁷⁵ a three-fold repetition of *many*, after an exclamatory *How!* The conspirators, whom the anointed later numbers in the tens of thousands, greatly outnumber and out-arm the anointed king.

C. **The enemies’ taunt:** “*God will not deliver him*” is painful and personal. It strikes at the very heart of the king’s covenant relationship with God. The responsibility to deliver for the cause of justice fell particularly upon the king (1 Sam 1:27; 2 Kgs 6:26) and above all upon the Lord. If God fails to help the innocent sufferer, the afflicted is put to shame (Ps 44:8).

⁷³ David is following the example given in Psalm 2 of turning his gaze heavenward in the face of fierce, rebellious attacks on his person and trusting in the One who enthroned him (Ps 2:7-9).

⁷⁴ This section is adapted from Bruce K. Waltke’s commentary on Psalm 3. Waltke, *The Psalms as Christian Worship*, 198-201.

⁷⁵ *anaphora* - the repetition of a word or phrase at the beginning of successive clauses.

D. **Confidence: “But you, O God”** – Though perilously outnumbered by the surging foe, the anointed king refuses to come to terms with his godless enemies and turns his gaze upon God, who is greater than the innumerable hordes attacking him. David matches the three “many...many...many” with **three metaphors** describing God’s covenant relationship to David:

1. “*shield around me*” – his source of protection. A light, round shield that is made of wood or wicker and covered with thick leather rubbed with oil to preserve it and to make it glisten, is carried by the light infantry to ward off the enemy’s sword, spear or arrows; it is frequently employed to describe God’s presence in warding off a foe’s attack (Psalm 18:2, 30, 35).
2. “*my glory*” – a metonymy⁷⁶ for the king’s luster that God gives him in victory. The divine aura conveys majesty, power and salvation on his king (Pss 21:5; 62:7; 84:11). Here the royal reputation, his glory, is his wondrous victories over his many foes that gain him the respect of his people and of the nations.
3. “*The one who lifts up my head*” — The reference to God as the one who *lifts up my head* means that God singles him out for honor and lifts him clear of perils (cf. Gen 40:13; 2 Kgs 25:27; Pss 27:6; 110:7). Bowed under humiliation, David fled Jerusalem with his head covered (2 Sam 15:30), but vindicated in victory he returns as king with his head held high.

“For the expression of sublime trust in God this psalm is not surpassed.” (W. O. E. Oesterley)

II. Turning your Lament into Confidence

- A. Consider a time in your life when you experienced a similar situation where you were completely overwhelmed and outmatched by those who opposed you.
- B. How would you give voice to the “*many...many...many*”? Articulate your lament in four lines.
- C. “**But you, O God**” – As you turn your gaze to God, what metaphors would you use to describe God’s character and/or covenant promises to counter the situation?

Articulate your confidence in three or four lines.

III. Validation

- A. Briefly share the context of your lament with a group of friends or family.
- B. Read your lament and confidence slowly, taking a breath between the lines; perhaps you will gain even a greater insight as your perspective turns from the chaos of earth to the quiet order and beauty in heaven.
- C. How did it feel to give voice to your confidence in the presence of God and his people?

⁷⁶ Metonymy – literally “*change of name*” – a figure of speech based on a shift in meaning: something is stated, but an adjacent concept or entity is meant, as when “the Crown” is used to refer to the monarch or when “tongue” and “hands” refer to a person’s speech and deeds.

My Psalm 3: "But You, O LORD..."

**A Voice Overwhelmed by God's
Surprising, Unexpected, Loving Presence**

Psalm 63

A Psalm of David,
when he was in the wilderness of Judah.

A 1 O God, you are my God;
I shall seek you earnestly;
My soul thirsts for you, my flesh yearns for you,
in a dry and weary land where there is no water.
2 Thus I have seen you in the sanctuary,
to see your power and your glory.

B 3 Because your everlasting-love is better than life,
my lips will praise you.
4 So I will bless you as long as I live;
I will lift up my hands in your name.

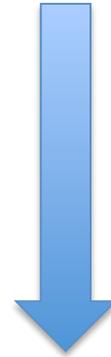
C 5 **My soul is satisfied** as with marrow and fatness,
and my mouth offers praises with joyful lips.
6 When I remember you on my bed,
I meditate on you in the night watches,

C' 7 For you have been my help,
And in the shadow of your wings I sing for joy.
8 My soul clings to you;
your right hand upholds me.

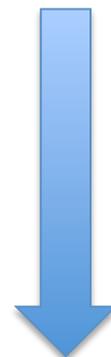
B' 9 But those who seek my life to destroy it,
will go into the depths of the earth.
10 They will be delivered over to the power of the sword;
they will be a prey for foxes.

A' 11 But the king will rejoice in God;
everyone who swears by him will glory,
for the mouths of those who speak lies will be stopped!

David's appetites are intensified



David's soul is satisfied



David's vision is clarified

"My soul is satisfied"

The audible rehearsal of David's acute memory transports him beyond the horizon to within view of the celestial city. And there he is welcomed, invited in and sat down to a feast that transcends all earthly pleasures. Everything he had left behind in Jerusalem, everything he lacked in the wilderness now descends from heaven with more power and pleasure than he ever experienced on earth. His soul, once parched with thirst, now not only drinks, it eats—and not mere food, but the richest of delicacies, marrow and fatness, until his soul is sated. Here is the reality of what the metaphors "streams in the desert" and "honey from the rock" are all about. The silence of the desert that engulfed David now gives way to full throated singing as shouts of ecstatic joy burst forth from the deepest parts of his soul.

The ark, which David had abandoned and sent back to Jerusalem, now descends from heaven itself. The wings of the cherubim rest right above his head. It is a sight too amazing to comprehend. Under the shadow of those wings, a canopy of protection, David's soul sings. Above the wings of the cherubim, the God who earlier had exiled David now grabs him with a powerful grasp that awakens a burning love that reaches back for God with strenuous surges. David is renewed with a support reserved for kings and warriors ("*your right hand,*" Isa 42:6; 45:1).

The fact that David is "sated" with God's presence explains why this lament psalm uniquely has *no petition*. There is no need, for in God's presence, David has everything he needs.

The Diary of an Old King A poem

A lustful son
an engaging cousin,
a violated daughter,
a vengeful brother,
an enraged father,
an unforgiven son,
exiled at home
before a father's iron face.

An enraged son,
a nation's revolt,
from the city
the king must flee
to dreaded desert to be
naked,
bare,
alone.

"Let me see
Your face,
and I shall be forgiven free
reinstated
in heaven's home."

Facial *Presence* descends
in an alien's embrace
a mirror of the poet's Jonathan
at Gethsemane's place.

In the dying of an angry son,
a distraught father,
enveloped in consummate grief,
is beckoned home
to the city of the king,
reinstated by a cripple.

My Psalm 63

1. Find the ache. Use the ache to focus on the the Lord.
2. Trace God's loyal-love through the pain with concrete images.
3. Wait for God to feed you in the presence of your enemies.
4. Don't be surprised if a new vision is born in the process.