God: Our Shield, Then and Now

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Preacher: Zac Story

[0:00] Good morning. Let me see that. Sorry, just making sure I got this right. Good morning. It is good to see you all here.

And it is good, though in a scarier sense, to be up here this morning. May Yahweh be at work, and may Yahweh be pleased. The title of the sermon is, God, Our Shield, Then and Now.
The whole Bible is a testament to how he protects his people, and it sets the understanding for how he protects us now. He listened to his people then, and he listens to his people now.
He cared for his people then, and he cares for his people now. He wrote for his people then, and he wrote for his people now. The word of our God, from pre-Moses to post-Jesus, has universal, eternal implication for all generations.
Each generation... Sorry, I lost my... Where are we? Let me restart.
[1:20] Each generation just needs to be faithful to do the work applying it to their current time, circumstance, and community, trusting that the same God who gave us these words will grant us success in said application.

Such work is part of that protection and faithfulness hinted in the title. Before I move on, though, let me start with my usual passage. This time, it will be for more than my usual reason, but the usual reason is still present.
The first passage that I'm going to is Acts 17, 10-14. Again, that is Acts 17, 10-14.
Acts is a predominantly historical book in the New Testament half of the Bible, is written by Luke, and is a follow-up to his gospel, the Gospel of Luke.
The book of Acts starts with Jesus' final words to his followers before his ascension into heaven. The rest of it, consistent with his name, is about the acts of said followers, including the latecomer Paul, whose conversion and ministry are contained in this book.
[2:42] Acts 17, 10-14 has an example of a certain wise way of being that I believe is important for all believers to read, with us being no exception.

So here it is. Acts 17, 10-14. Here reads the word of Yahweh. The brothers immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea, and when they arrived, they went into the Jewish synagogue.
Now these Jews were more noble than those in Thessalonica. They received the word with all eagerness, examining the scriptures daily to see if these things were so.
Many of them therefore believed, with not a few Greek women of high standing as well as men. But when the Jews from Thessalonica learned that the word of God was proclaimed by Paul at Berea also, they came there too, agitating and stirring up the crowds.
Then the brothers immediately sent Paul off on his way to the sea, but Silas and Timothy remained there. So reads the word of Yahweh.
[3:56] For our purposes, here is one of two things to note from this text. The Jews of Berea are called more noble, and Luke then explains the reason why they are so.

First, they received the word with all eagerness. Verse 11. They were excited, energized to hear the teaching of these Christians. Their hearts were not hardened to what those who followed the one true God, as most clearly seen through Jesus, had to offer.
Given our shared beliefs, this is good to read. But there is more to this. Second, and most important for us as an already Christian community, they examined the scriptures daily to see if what Paul and Silas said is true.
They did not just take Paul and Silas' word at face value, as eager as they were to receive their word. Rather, their eagerness came with both patience and discernment.
They made sure that what was being said, as awesome as it was to them, was consistent with what they already knew to be true.

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[5:13] This is the basis for my usual reason for bringing up this passage. While Yahweh has blessed his people with pastors and teachers, said pastors and teachers are still part of this fallen world.

They are finite and they are fallible. They need to pray for forgiveness and they need to be prayed for in order so that they do not lead their people astray.
This is true even for veteran pastors like our own vocational elder, who is now on a much deserved and needed vacation. How much more true is this for someone like me, whose highest education is in secular theology and perpetually struggles to be useful and functional?
So please, do not be passive with this. May you already have an active reading relationship to our God by his word, the Bible.
And may part of that relationship be an active engagement of these texts, both with me and independent of me, though never independent of the God who wrote them and preserves them.
[6:24] Hold yourselves accountable to understanding his word and hold me accountable in kind. Together, whether in the pulpit or the pew, may we increasingly imitate Christ together.

That is my usual point for the passage above. However, this time, and perhaps for as long as I continue to preach on the Psalms, there is another. Note what the Berean Jews searched.
That is, note what the Berean Jews found in Acts 10 used as their standard for discerning what Paul and Silas said was true or not.
Their standard was the scriptures. That is what they examined. Now, at this time, the odds that the Jews of Berea had a full New Testament to use is beyond unlikely.
Even the idea of them having even a single letter from James, Paul, Peter, etc. may be just as unlikely. However, not having the New Testament is not the same as not having scriptures.
[7:35] And the process of elimination, as well as the stated fact that these Bereans are Jews, make it clear what these scriptures are. The Old Testament. Before the New Testament even began to be written, the claims of Jesus were defended from the Old Testament.

While the Old Testament is incomplete without the New Testament, the New Testament has nothing to complete without the Old Testament. The Old Testament was written in a way that anticipated its own completion, which is why Jesus and his early followers could use it to explain and vindicate Christ's teachings.
For example, it is no accident that in Luke 24, 27, again, Luke chapter 24, verse 27, Jesus was able to explain passages about himself from both the Old Testament books of Moses and the Old Testament books of the prophets.
After all, they were written by the same God that Jesus is a person of. And it can do that because, along with the New Testament, it is a source of truth.
In fact, the most important and complete source of truth. So, when we read Psalm 3 today, we are not reading something outdated.
[9:03] Even if our passage is not the most prophetic of Jesus, it is part of the scriptures that is our standard. And speaking of our standard, I have one more passage before we go into our main one, Psalm 3.

That passage is 2 Timothy 3. It is the third chapter of the second letter that is concerned for us from Paul to Timothy.
Again, that is 2 Timothy 3. And this one I will be reading. 2 Timothy 3. 2 Timothy 3.
Here reads the words of Yahweh. But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty. For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power.
Avoid such people. For among them are those who creep into households and capture weak women, burdened with sins and led astray by various passions, always learning and never able to arrive at a knowledge of the truth.
[10:53] Just as Janus and Jambres opposed Moses, so these men also opposed the truth. Men corrupted in mind and disqualified regarding the faith, but they will not get very far, for their folly will be plain to all, as was that of those two men.

You, however, have followed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness, my persecutions and sufferings that happened to me at Antioch, at

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Iconium, and at Lystra, which persecutions I endured, yet from them all the Lord rescued me. Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, while evil people and imposters will go on from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived.
But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it, and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.
All scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.
[12:28] So reads the word of Yahweh. Note three points, though with a point kind of in between them. We'll get to that. The first is that Paul goes at length to talk about all the ways people will reject God in the last days, from disobedient to parents to treacherous, and from bad to worse, they will follow everything except the true God, and not only suffer for it, but cause others to suffer as well.

The second thing to note is the remedy. What is the antidote to the evils of the times of difficulty in the last age? The answer, the cure, the counter to the evils, is the scriptures.
All scripture is breathed out by God. All scripture teaches us, corrects us, trains us to be righteous as only the words of the only true God can.
That is all that is needed. Economics, military training, science, engineering, philosophy, and honest trade. All those may, if used rightly, be used to expand and apply our faith.
In service to God in both stewardship and evangelism, it is good for at least the capital C church to have members that engage in all of the above.
[13:58] However, those disciplines are not the core. God's word is the core. God's word is the truth by which all our truths become possible, the relational truth that will train us in the righteousness that will keep us from, that will keep us from, as was said above in verse 7, always learning and never able to arrive at a knowledge of the truth.

Before moving to my last point, I want to stop and ask, why are we here today? Why are we gathered together to discuss the Bible through particular passages found in it?
Given the above and the way I've been trained in life, I have a cheeky but important answer. We are here to be a groupthink. Now, that term is usually a negative term, a term for a fallacy, a term for those who just believe what everyone else around them does and cannot discern otherwise.
But let me explain why it is not the case. For one, Christianity is not a groupthink even if our worship has some resemblance to it. It is the only true complete faith, the only faith that accounts for everything, from the most scientific to the most artistic, from the most abstract to the most personal, from the most ideal to the most mundane, and from the farthest corners of the universe to the smallest confines we inhabit.
The Christian faith applies to all, completes all, and unifies all. For two, if God is who he claims to be, then many of what would otherwise be fallacies, what would otherwise be wrong ways of thinking, like appeals to authority, circular reasoning, and others, are made right when God and his word are what we first, last, and foremost hold on to.
[15:58] Sometimes they're just fallacies because they have a God-shaped hole in their reasoning. For last, this meeting is for those who already believe. The Christian faith even makes sense of those who do not believe.

But worship by sermon and all the other ways of worship that come with it on Sunday morning is for those who already believe. It is for those who already know who the true God is and know, at least to some extent, what his word is for.
We all say, like John said to Jesus, our God, in John 6, 68. Again, John 6, verse 68, for those who are taking notes. Only you have the words of life.
And indeed, since Jesus is God, as a second person in the Trinity, the Bible's words are very much his words too. So, we are here to be a righteous groupthink, a group of believers that already believe that reading and studying God's word is the only way to be.
As it says in verse 17, complete, equipped for every good work. Within that understanding, there is much room to be Bereans, but only if we first have that shared understanding.
[17:22] Now, if unbelievers are present, not only are they welcome to be here, but it is not as if our groupthink will be unhelpful. If God's word, as is found in the Bible, is the word of life, is God-breathed, is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, then it will apply in some way to everyone here.

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renewed, or Yahweh willing, pre-newed. Now that that is said, back to Timothy. At the historical point in time of Paul's letters to Timothy, there might be some books and letters of the New Testament available to Timothy.
However, like with the Jews of Berea, the only complete part of the Bible guaranteed to be fully available to Timothy, especially at the early age mentioned in 2 Timothy 3, is the Old Testament. The same Old Testament that Jesus and his followers use to defend their faith claims and fulfill what the Old Testament proclaimed. Now, Paul fully believed that both the Old and New Testament are God-breathed, even if he did not call them by those names, and even if the New Testament was not complete yet.
For example, in 1 Timothy 5.18, again, that is 1 Timothy 5.18 for those taking notes, Paul quotes both an Old Testament command and a New Testament command in succession and with equal authority.
[19:08] Still, the Old Testament is where the true faith begins, and it is where the conclusion of that faith is first understood. That was a lot, so let me bring this intro and context together.

Apart from God's mandates and textual presuppositions about being a part of a gathering of believers, we are here because, through Jesus' death and resurrection, and our belief in him as the resurrected Lord of everything, already believe that continuing to communally read and study his word is necessary to grow in relationship with God and in righteousness through God.
We already believe that God's word is the standard, just as the Bereans do in Acts and just like Paul does in his letters to Timothy. And we believe the Old Testament, including the Psalms, which includes Psalm 3, is part of that standard.
With that, please turn in your Bibles to Psalm 3, which is found on page 448 of your Pew Bibles. that is Psalm 3, found on page 448 of your Pew Bibles.
Please stand for the reading of God's word. A Psalm of David, when he fled from Absalom, his son.
[20:58] O Lord, how many are my foes? Many are rising against me. Many are saying of my soul, there is no salvation for him in God.

Selah. But you, O Lord, are a shield about me, my glory, and the lifter of my head.
I cried aloud to the Lord, and he answered me from his holy hill. Selah. I laid down and slept. I woke again, for the Lord sustained me.
I will not be afraid of many thousands of people who have set themselves against me all around.
Arise, O Lord. Save me, O my God.
For you strike all my enemies on the cheek. You break the teeth of the wicked. salvation belongs to the Lord. Your blessings be on your people.
[21:59] Selah. So reads the word of Yahweh. Let us pray. Our Father in heaven, the Lord of heaven and earth, the Lord of the tribe, the nation of Israel, the Lord of the new Israel, scattered throughout the world, in the kingdom that is not of this world, that is not yet, but is increasingly already present.

Awaiting your return. Glory be to you, Lord God, and may this time be edifying to you. May it not be just edifying in the what I say, but may it be edifying in how it is received by others, even if you have to filter for it.
Indeed, Lord, whatever is wholesome and true and is fitting for them to hear, to take, to use as part of their active reading and active relationship with you, may it be remembered.
If something needs to be tweaked, if only in their heads, Lord, do that as well. You are the God who is with each and every one of us. To the extent that what I have to say is not fruitful, Lord, though, may you just have it be forgotten.
To you be the glory. In your most precious and holy name, I pray, amen. Amen. Oh, yes, you may be seated.
[23:17] Sorry to the one person who is still standing like a trooper. Let us start from the top as this is the first psalm where the top is a title.

A psalm of David when he fled from Absalom, his son. First, we get what this is. This passage is a psalm, an Old Testament communal song.
Because of that, it is poetic, which can be seen in its structure and heavy use of metaphor. It uses imagery to capture the human heart and emotions.
At least one otherwise excellent Christian scholar that I know has mistakenly taken this to mean that you cannot trust the propositions from these psalms.

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That is, you cannot take facts from them. They are too hyperbolic, too subjective. Like I said, I believe that this is a mistake. Humans are not mere computers and meaning and purpose is not merely derived from fact sheets.
[24:23] It is good to have the facts, but as persons with perspective, context, cares and concerns, aspirations, and emotions to match, facts can be unethical levels of impersonal.

We don't just need facts. We need facts that mean something to us. This is where the psalms succeed. Through the artistic techniques found with songs, facts become personal.
facts can be made to mean something to us, even if they otherwise come from a faraway place and situation. Providing facts, even from a particular perspective, in this way, activates the imagination and emotions in a way that is much harder for a more historical, propositional, or treatise-like account to accomplish.
While this understanding will impact the rest of our reading, there is a second half to the title. When he fled from Absalom, his son. Now, the situation stated here is only abstractly discussed in the rest of the psalm.
The emotions, feelings, and truths about Yahweh are the same, but outside of the title, the context is specific. Knowing the story that inspires the psalm is a great way to better know the psalm.
[25:50] The story of Absalom and David is mainly found in 2 Samuel 13-19. Again, 2 Samuel chapters 13-19.

Absalom's place in the political hierarchies is briefly discussed in 2 Samuel 3-1-5 and 1 Chronicles 3-1-9, but 2 Samuel 13-19 is where the events that lead to David's fleeing and the events after David flees are made in great detail.
Like I said, actively reading those texts is a great way to understand our God, both by themselves and through better understanding this text. However, they are not necessary, and the psalm can continue to be explored by its own content.
Perhaps this will happen at a future date, but not today. I also want to avoid it because, unless one is more careful than perhaps I am capable of being, as is, the psalm can be made to be too idiosyncratic.
In other words, it can be made to be too much about David at the expense of explaining how it can be for all the people that read it.
[27:06] it can be made to be too much about him and not enough about us, which not only defeats the purpose of the psalm, but also against what we read in 2 Timothy.

Psalm 3 needs to help equip us and generations of future Christians to come for... Sorry. Needs to help equip us and every generation of future Christians for every good work and not just David.
I think that that is at least part of the reason why specific details about the situation are sparse in the psalm. There are plenty of details in the psalm, but more of the imaginative, artistic, universal type that relate us to David regardless of the specific historical circumstance and all that that implies.
So now, I will stick to the one piece of info that is provided. If people want to know more, again, where you can learn about this part of history is 2 Samuel chapters 13 through 19 as well as 2 Samuel 3 verses 1 through 5 and 1 Chronicles 3 1 through 9.
But yes, for now, I'll stick to the one piece of info that is provided. The inspiration for the psalm is that David had to flee his own son. That is enough to reveal that the situation is desperate and heartbreaking.
[28:39] And that is the backdrop for the verses of this psalm. So yes, the title of this psalm, A Psalm of David When He Fled from Absalom His Son.

Now to the first stanza, composed of verses 1 and 2. Here reads the word of Yahweh, the one true God. O Lord, how many are my foes?
Many are rising against me. Many are saying of my soul, there is no salvation for him in God. So reads the word of Yahweh.
David is crying out by the number of his enemies.
And these are not merely professional enemies. They are denying his salvation. Such salvation is not as fully understood in the Old Testament as it is in the New Testament, but David is one of the best to know.
[29:44] As is told to us in 1 Samuel chapter 16 verses 12 through 13. Again, for those taking notes, 1 Samuel chapter 16 verses 12 through 13.

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David was anointed by Samuel at God's command. David is the Lord's anointed over Israel. Because of this, the idea of salvation here is quite deep.
It is not just that David has no salvation in the sense that he will lose his loyalist, his kingdom, and his life. It is that David, to his foes, to those rising against him, has no salvation from God himself. His soul will be lost with his kingdom as God turns his back on him. So, not only is Absalom David's own son against him, but so is an army of people who believe that God will not save David, despite David being anointed.
However, also note that David is not echoing their case to God. He is relaying it. He is telling God his situation as he sees it and hears it.
[31:04] This would lead us to the next stanza, if it weren't for a word off to the side, here reads the word of Yahweh, Selah. So reads the word of Yahweh.

If this word seems odd to you, then congratulations, you are paying attention. It is a transliteration, meaning that the Hebrew letters were swapped out with their English equivalents.
A modern day example would be like the Russian word yes, which is da, which uses a totally different alphabet. Now, when you translate it, you would just say yes, but if you transliterate it, you would turn its letters into the letters da, da.
Translation of da, yes. Transliteration of da, da. That is what's happening with the word Selah. The reason they did this instead of translating it is simple.
The scholars do not know what it means. The transliteration allows us to pronounce it, but does not allow us to understand it. It allows us to flow, but not comprehend.
[32:16] That being said, there are guesses, and the two I know are A, a liturgical slash musical direction, and B, a term for reflection.

Take anything I say here with a salt lick, but I believe that it is a term for reflection, even if a liturgical musical one. For example, some musical terms could be those for a stanza or bridge, which are, I believe, correct me if I'm wrong, instrumental spaces for people to take in what was said and to anticipate where it is going.
If the liturgical spacing and musical theme are done well, they can enhance the meaning and provide us space to take in said meaning.
I'm getting that. So yes, thank you, Dan. And thank you, Dan, for providing those for us in our services. Another term for that, if I can. Oh, yes, please. It's a non-descriptive. It's music that doesn't allow people's minds to follow a certain tune like they might be familiar with.
It's music that has no tune with it, but allow, like you said, to allow people to think about what was just read. Awesome. Thank you for that. I appreciate that point.
[33:34] So, if it is a reflection term, it means that we pause and think about what has been said. But if it is a musical term, then it might still mean that even if indirectly.

Regardless, as long as we do not know, I am okay with using it as a reflection term even if it is not one because it is never a bad idea to reflect on God's word.
Just two psalms prior, we were told that the blessed man meditates on God's word. Meditating on the psalms will provide its own blessing. So, that is Selah, at least to the extent we can say something about it.
Now, to the next stanza, verses 3 and 4. Here reads the word of Yahweh. But you, O Lord, are a shield about me, my glory, and the lifter of my head.
I cried aloud to the Lord, and he answered me from his holy hill. Selah. So reads the word of Yahweh.
[34:45] Notice the change. David casts his anxieties on Yahweh, but he is not so stuck on them as to forget who Yahweh is. God protects, God provides, he raises us up, and he answers.

Each is a blessing in isolation, but together they form a depiction of a consistent Savior God. In this passage, about this passage, let me ask something obvious about it.
When David says that God is his shield, does that mean that God is literally a shield? That he has all the qualities and limitations of a shield? Would you be impressed with David if you found out that he was talking to a shield in his tent this whole time?
This would undoubtedly be a very awesome shield, as only a God shield would be. Still, even if you made Yahweh the infinitely best physical shield, would you feel fulfilled by this understanding?
I would not. I would feel quite lied to, and for a long time. Yes, obvious might be too kind of a word for my point, but it is one that can be used to ease the harder cases.

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[36:00] David was a warrior. He knew how a shield worked. He knew that it could be the difference between life and death in a battle. He also knows that God is not a shield, a physical shield, and that a shield is not God.

Yet, he can abstract qualities well demonstrated in the ability of a shield away from the shield and put them on God, showing a quality of God less obvious, though very real, in his nature, by what is obvious in the more limited nature of a shield.
Such is the power of metaphorical transference. God has those qualities of a shield, but without their finite limits. God may not be a shield, and praise him for that, and yet he is a better shield than any shield is.
I hope that that made this point feel less useless, but there is a little more to add, and that is simply to not get lost in the specifics. Go as deep as you want with the Psalms, but don't merely stay there. David can abstract the qualities of a shield for communicative purposes, and so can we. God does not need to be an actual shield any more than we need to be David the warrior for this psalm to be for us.
[37:18] Again, the psalms are at least for every Christian. We all need a shield, even if it's not one in battle. And speaking of Christians, notice the last line of this section.

Yahweh answers David from a particular place. During David's time, God was more geolocked. While Yahweh could be elsewhere and was so plenty of times in the Old Testament, he often hung around his specifically designed ark and dwelling place.
He manifested himself there. One could say that Yahweh has done a similar geolocking, but instead of the ark, it is now with his people. As Jesus says in John 14, 17, again, for those taking notes, John 14, 17, the spirit of truth, the third person of our Trinitarian God, will not only be with Jesus' followers, but in them.
We are the new dwelling place of God. While we still have the same God who can answer from anywhere, we now have a relationship with God through Christ where he is with us.
And he is with us when we are going through struggles and the anxieties that come with them. Praise Yahweh that he fulfilled what the Old Testament promised.
[38:53] Again, another Selah. Again, another moment for reflection. Now to the next section, verses 5 and 6.

Here reads the word of Yahweh. I lay down and slept. I woke again, for the Lord sustained me. I will not be afraid of many thousands of people who have set themselves against me all around.
So reads the word of Yahweh. Two major aspects of this one to me are A. David going to bed and waking up and B.
A plurality of enemies. While different, what connects the two themes is David's peace. He is not up all night in a frantic state. He is able to rest, trusting rightly in both God's protection and sustenance. He protects David so he can sleep and he gives David the peace so that he can sleep. Similarly, David can trust God to the point that he will not be afraid.
[40:03] He still has enemies and those enemies surround him, but God's peace changes the perspective on the situation. One last thing to point out though, and in contrast to what I said earlier about the poetic nature of this.

If you want to treat the thousands of enemies as metaphorical! a number, go ahead. What is more than enough to turn to God for? For me, it's not even real enemies, it's just to-do lists and things like that.
That can be overwhelming enough. That being said, I honestly believe that Christians will always have thousands of enemies. Will actually have thousands of enemies.
In fact, if anything, that number is modest. Are demons not our enemies all around? One man may have had thousands of them.
Aren't false religions and the nations they consume enemies all around? For both us Christians and the ancient Jews who first sang the psalm? Psalms will always be metaphorical, but they don't need to at every specific point.
[41:10] Going back to that, nine nations around, this was a civil war, a struggle between David and his son. So again, while the Psalms will always be metaphorical, they don't need to be at every specific point.

If they were, it would be hard to understand them at all. They are facts through the lens of emotion and imagination. They are not factless.

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The point is this, while I've already said one should not make the psalm not apply because it does not quite match our historical situation, don't be afraid to apply it to ourselves directly if the historic situation does apply.
Reach out to God regardless, sing out to him regardless. Now to the next section, verse 7.
Here reads the word of Yahweh. Arise, O Lord, save me, O my God, for you strike all my enemies on the cheek.
[42:15] You break the teeth of the wicked. So reads the word of Yahweh. First, the context for the psalm and the title.

Next, an explanation of the situation in the first stanza. Then two sections where David explains what kind of savior God is. Now he besieges God to be that savior.
David, through the imperatives of a servant to the almighty, request aid. He asks Yahweh to make himself known by coming to David's aid, saving him from the plot of his enemies to undo his kingdom and salvation.
And why? Because the true God of David, the true God of the entire universe, can defeat enemies as no one else can. There is no match. The terms used here, particularly the objects of the attack, the cheek and teeth, are meant to both take away power and humiliate.
For example, teeth represent both health and strength, in a way that is quite visible. To rhyme, to be able to break an opponent's teeth is to simultaneously maim and shame, especially with the speed and power that Yahweh can do it.
[43:31] Now, to the last section, verse 8. Here reads the word of Yahweh. Salvation belongs to the Lord.

Your blessings be on your people. Selah. So reads the word of Yahweh. While it is great to know what Yahweh can do for us, there is a somber but truly good point here.
Salvation is not ours to demand, because it is not ours. Even though David was granted peace, he still needed to ask Yahweh for deliverance.
And the reason is simple. Salvation belongs to the Lord. He gets to decide. Maybe you will live to a healthy, fruitful age, or maybe you will be a martyr.
That is God's call. Yet in the New Testament sense, that is even more fine. For one, like with David, while salvation may not belong to us, it also does not belong to our enemies.
[44:38] They do not get to decide for us any more than we do. God gets to either way. But as a hopeful reminder, we are his servants, not those who seek to take our salvation away from us.

Which group is he for? As it ends, may the blessing be on Yahweh's people. people. In our and their lifetimes, may those who once wished no salvation for us become Yahweh's people as well.
And finally, on a Christian note, one thing has changed is the eternality. This was before the thief on the cross who asked for forgiveness there and asked to be with Jesus, where Jesus said, truly, you will be with me in paradise.
To be a martyr is not to be, is to not have salvation, is to know that there is a greater reason for why things happening and that God will come and make all things new and not just in the form of a kingdom, but in the form of all creation.
For all of it was God's kingdom. Anyway, one last Selah, one last time to reflect. So, where does this leave us?
[46:08] I believe that I can make this brief. I believe that this psalm is one that easily works for us all, from the ancient Israelites to the last generation of Christians.

It is general enough that we can all sing it, but united enough that we can all sing it together. Across the world and across generations, we can all bring our plight to God akin to how David did.
God was our shield then, and he is our shield now. The main difference is that Yahweh has given us a far more specific picture of who he is and what he has done for us, and he did so through Jesus.
I'll let the intro to Hebrews spell this out better than I can. Hebrews 1, 1-3. Here reads the word of Yahweh.
Long ago, at many times, and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets. But in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world.
[47:21] He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right

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hand of the majesty on high.

So reads the word of Yahweh. Let us pray. Our Father in heaven, glory to you, most precious and holy God. I pray that all of this was glorifying to you in your strength, in my weakness, in your strength, in our weakness, Lord.
May you be present, may you be here, may you be working out your kingdom, and may it be, in some way, the same one that David had a scope of, that the Israel then is our Israel now, that there is a continuity between David and his belief in you, and us and our belief in you.
May these Psalms be used to connect us with the one faith internal, the one relationship with the one true God. in your most precious and holy name I pray.
Amen.

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