



THE
TEHILLIM PROJECT

Mizmor 3

October 18, 2020

EMOTION

Even at one's breaking point, have faith - in Ha-shem and in your own worthiness!

Look for silver linings!

CIRCUMSTANCE

When one is close to his breaking point - i.e. it can't get any worse than this!



Summary of Discussion

Background: Avshalom's revolt against his father King David (See Shmuel II Chapters 15-19); According to the Talmud, this was a punishment to David for his sin with Basheva.

3 Questions about the psalm:

1) Why is this psalm (about an event near the end of David's life) at the beginning of Tehillim?

Most people have a "breaking point" in their faith. This is probably the closest to David's breaking point (both physically - being pursued to the death; and spiritually - doubting whether he still possesses upstanding moral character after his sin) and yet he still maintains faith. Therefore, it is placed at the beginning of Tehillim to set this important parameter.

2) Why is it a "mizmor" (song) if David wrote it during the ordeal before he knew its outcome?

David sees the "silver linings" even at a time of grave danger: "Look, the punishment is by rebellion is by my own son who will have compassion!" (Talmud)

3) Why are there 3 "selah" phrases, each which denotes the end of a section?

Section 1: The predicament

Section 2: The basic premise of faith

Section 3: Internalizing faith into one's own feelings

Additional Discussion points:

- Faith is not only in Hashem; it's also in oneself!
- One can lose faith even in the mission and destiny of the Jewish people altogether. David ends with a powerful affirmation of his: "Salvation is Hashem's, upon Your people is Your blessing, Selah!"
- Even though David is the victim, he selflessly worries even about his assailant; he wants everyone to be saved! In that way, Hashem's salvation is more complete than man's.