Psalm 3

Phase 1: ORAL

Step 1: Listen

Listening to a guide translation and versions of the psalm

Prepare at least three or four guide translations in Appendix A:

1. A semi-interlinear, copied from the Exegetical Layout and adjusted for minimal readability,
2. The literal, type 1 corresponding (but more readable) translation, exegetically the same as 1)

Activity: Read the two prepared guide translations. One reader per translation or one reader for all translations (as skills permit). Others to listen with closed books. Consider 'how to listen' – posture? with responses? in silence?

Step 2: Familiarise

Explaining and discussing the meaning and beauty of the psalm

FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF THE PSALM

After listening to the guide translations, please respond to any of the following questions:

- What do you like about the psalm?
- What do you find difficult?
- Which verse do you find particularly important in this psalm?
- What does this psalm teach you about the LORD? What does this psalm tell us, and tell you, about the LORD? What is the LORD like?
- What is repeated a lot in this psalm?

CREATIVE RESPONSES

Discuss:

- Where would you divide the poem (into sections)?

I will praise you, LORD, among the nations

- What made you divide at those points? (How did the poem change, that indicated a new section?)
- What is the mood of the poet in each of your sections?
- What do you think is the main theme in your first section? And in each of the other sections?
- What do you think is the cause of the psalmist's problem?
- What is the psalmist asking God to do?
- Try to list the various things that happen in the psalm.

ENGAGING WITH THE WHOLE PSALM

Address the following topics:

- *The participants in the psalm, the different "speakers" and "audiences"*
- *The theme and flow of the psalm*
- *The peak or peaks of the psalm*
- *The patterns of images, like metaphors, if relevant*
- *The genre and purpose of the psalm*
- *The historical background and the context of the psalm, the story behind the psalm, if relevant*
- *Key poetic features of the psalm, but only those relevant to the big picture*

Discuss:

- How does the psalmist feel at the beginning of his prayer? Why does he feel like that?
- What are his enemies saying?
- How does the psalmist feel at the end of his prayer – in v.7b? And in v.8?
- Notice the use of "But" in v.3. What does that tell you? What has changed his thinking?
- What does he remember about what happens when he cries to the LORD? (v.4)
- What gives him confidence to make the statement in v.6?
- Because of what he remembers (vv.3-4), how does he feel about the future? (v.6)
- After complaining and remembering who the LORD is, what does he do? (v.7)
- What does the psalmist remember about how the LORD deals with enemies who speak badly of him? (v.7)
- What names are used for God? Who uses which word?
- What title would you give to this poem?
- Shield (v.3) is one that protects on all sides. Why is that important (v.6)?
- What verbs appear in both vv.1-2 and v.7? Why is that important?
- Who is the psalmist speaking to in v.3? In vv.4-6? In v.7?
- Who is the psalmist speaking to in the first part of v.8? And in the second part?
- Ps 3 is a short lament prayer of an individual. It has the typical components of a lament: 1) address to God, 2) complaint, 3) petition, 4) request for justice against enemies, and 5) affirmation of trust. Which verses fit into each of these categories?

> **Activity**: Discover and list the different actors and audiences in the psalm.
>
> The participants are David the psalmist, mostly addressing the LORD. David also testifies of past victories, addressed to the audience of Israelites who will sing and hear this psalm sung in the

I will praise you, LORD, among the nations

> temple service. Another participant (or group of participants) are the enemies, the foes, who are Absalom and all the disloyal Israelites rising up against him.

- What did the psalmist actually say? What is this psalm about?

Theme and flow of the psalm

The psalm starts with a complaint about the many enemies surrounding him, in this case Absalom and the rebellion.

The psalmist then praises by remembering who the LORD is to him, namely his shield, protection, and glory, and that he came to his aid in the past.

The psalmist then expresses his peace and calm during the campaign of being surrounded by overwhelming enemies.

The psalm ends with a call or plea to the LORD to dramatically act against his enemies, so that the mocking would stop. In the final line he declares his confidence in the LORD his salvation.

- What type of song or prayer is this psalm? Do you have something similar in your language?
- What triggered the psalmist to compose it?
- What did the poet want to achieve? Or hoping to achieve for himself or for his audience? Why did he want to say what he said in the psalm? What motivated him to say it?

Genre and significance of the psalm

The relation of genre of the Hebrew poem to local genres (of poetry and music) should be explored early and helps participants to carry ideas known from that genre into their thinking in Steps 5 and 10.

The reason why David writes this psalm is not altogether clear from the psalm itself. He likely composed it during the actual flight from Absalom.

- What is the story behind this psalm? What is its historical context?

Activity: Select two narrators, and volunteers to enact the text as it is read slowly. Also, one person plays the role of David and one that of Absalom. The others are the followers of David or followers of Absalom.

Narrator 1: In 2 Samuel 7, we read that God made a covenant with David while he was king of Israel. God chose David, and he promised David three things:

1. God would make David's name great.

2. God would provide a home for the people of Israel, where they would not be disturbed by wicked people.

3. David (and his descendants) would be king. They would be punished if they did wrong but God would never stop loving them.

I will praise you, LORD, among the nations

Later, David had a son named Absalom, who became proud and angry with his father for some things that had happened. As a result, he rebelled against David. He raised up an army to try to take the kingdom of Israel from his father and to make himself king. This was against the covenant God had made with David.

Narrator 2: In 2 Samuel 15:13-16, we read that a messenger came to David, saying, "The hearts of the men of Israel are with Absalom."

Then David said to all his servants who were with him at Jerusalem, "Get up. We must flee, or else we won't be able to escape from Absalom. Be quick!"

The king's servants said to him, "We are ready to do whatever you decide."

So, the king left, with all his household following him.

Narrator 1: When David heard about what Absalom was doing, he was frightened. With his followers, he fled away from Jerusalem into "the bush". That is when David writes this psalm!
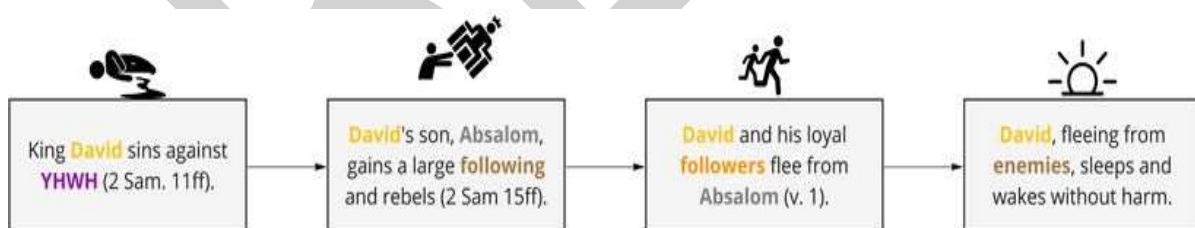
Activity:

    1. Read aloud 2 Samuel 12: 10, 11

We see that, because David had sinned with Bathsheba, God said that there would be trouble in his family. So, Absalom's betrayal of his father, David, was part of God's punishment for David's sin. Thus, how would David feel when he sees what Absalom is doing? (Guilt? Fear as this is part of God's purpose?)

    2. Read aloud 2 Samuel 18:33

We must remember that David loved Absalom very much. How do you think he feels when he experiences the estranged relationship with his loved son?

The facilitators walk around during the above exercise, giving assistance if needed. Only do feedback in the large group if many are struggling.

| King David sins against YHWH (2 Sam. 11ff). | David's son, Absalom, gains a large following and rebels (2 Sam 15ff). | David and his loyal followers flee from Absalom (v. 1). | David, fleeing from enemies, sleeps and wakes without harm. |

Historical setting of the psalm

YHWH made a covenant with David, in which he promised to rescue him from his enemies (cf. 2 Sam. 7:12-16; Ps. 89:21-25).

YHWH promised to discipline David and his descendants when they violated the covenant (2 Sam. 7:14; 12:11-12; Ps. 89:31-33), but even in discipline, YHWH said that his loyalty would never leave David (2 Sam. 7:15; Ps. 89:34).

YHWH's acts of covenant loyalty in the past are evidence that he will be faithful to the covenant in the future.

I will praise you, Lord, among the nations

Some people interpret the king's trouble as a sign that YHWH has rejected him (2 Sam. 16:8; cf. 2 Sam. 15:26; Ps. 71:10-11).

If YHWH no longer delights in the king, then he will not respond to his call and rescue him from his enemies (cf. 2 Sam. 15:26; Pss. 41:12; 22:9)

SEGMENTATION OF THE PSALM

Verses 1-2 - Complaint to God about his many enemies

Verses 3-4 - Remembrance of who the LORD is to him, and did for him, in the past

Verses 5-6 – Confessing his peace and calm in the midst of being surrounded by enemies.

Verses 7-8 - A request to act against the enemy, and declaration of confidence the LORD as his salvation.

UNLOCKING SOME OF THE BIG PICTURE OBSTACLES TO THE PSALM

- The tenses of the verbs in Psalm 3 needs special care, especially verses 5 and 6. Are they in the present or in the future?
- The sequence of thought in Psalm 3 seems to be confusing. The events are not necessarily in chronological order. In vv3-6 David is confident, but then all of a sudden utters a plea for help, followed by an imprecatory or cursing wish on his enemies. Why does he do that if he has such confidence earlier on?
- The image of beating on the cheek and breaking the teeth is very vivid as an imprecatory wish, or curse, on his enemies.

FINAL SUMMING UP

Discuss:

- In summary, what is the main point/message of the psalm?
- What does this Psalm teach you about the LORD?
- How could your church (or you) use this psalm?
- What heading or title would the group suggest for this psalm?

I will praise you, LORD, among the nations

Step 3: Internalise

Absorbing the big picture of the psalm

In this section we look at the whole psalm so that we can retell the message of the entire psalm. This is not an attempt to memorize the psalm, but to be able to understand the whole message and to express it in the target language. The facilitator should do at least the first two activities and consider doing the third activity, if desired.

CREATIVE RESPONSES

Internalisation Activity 1: Drama – script for acting out Psalm 3.

Volunteers play the roles of the psalmist (could be several people), the enemies (at least two), and the voice of God. Have the words for each person written on papers, for them to follow as they act out.

Psalmist 1: O LORD, I have many enemies! Many are rising against me; many are saying to me,

Enemies (in jeering voice, and despising actions): God will not help him!

Voice of God (off-stage): I am your shield!

Psalmist 2: Yes, LORD, you are a shield all around me.

Voice of God: I give you honour.

Psalmist 2: Yes, LORD, you give me honour!

Voice of God: I lift up your head.

Psalmist 2: Yes, LORD, you lift up my head.

Psalmist 3: Whenever I cry aloud to the LORD, he answers me from his holy hill. I lay down, slept, and then woke again, for the LORD kept me alive. I will not be afraid of many thousands of people who have set themselves against me all around.

Psalmist 4: Arise, O LORD! Help me, O my God! For you have struck all my enemies on the cheek; You have broken the teeth of the wicked.

Psalmist 1 to God: Help comes from the LORD! Your blessing be on your people!

Internalisation Activity 2: Draw— One person reread the guide translation aloud with others listening only. As they listen, participants draw a picture and/or jot down a few words to remind them of the key idea in each stanza (e.g., enemies, shield, rest, act and confidence). Then, in groups of 2 or 3, participants reconstruct the psalm (as much as they can remember, from using their words/pictures). Then they write down the poem, which will serve as the basis for the oral translation and the final translation.

I will praise you, LORD, among the nations

Step 4: Compose

Crafting a song of the psalm

Once the artist-translators have sufficiently internalised the psalm in the workshop setting, compose a song, poem, rap, chant, or prayer to capture as much of the psalm as possible. This could be a further refinement of a song, if that was done in Step 3.

> **Activity**: Participants are to choose a style or genre that is relevant for the psalm, and to set the whole psalm or sections to a rhythm or music.
>
> **Activity**: Make a recording of the composition(s).

Step 5: Draft

Translating stanza-by-stanza

To take full advantage of the oral form, avoid reverting to written Biblical text at this point. Divide into smaller groups and let one in each group read the different guide translations for the specific stanza. Together come up with an oral draft for each stanza. The oral draft can at that point be recorded and/or immediately written down (Step 6 merged with Step 5).

> **Activity**: Have a look in the poems of your language and look for instances where there is a strange word-order, not the usual. Sometimes it would work to use some unusual word-order in your language as well. Experiment a bit with different word-orders and see what sounds the most beautiful, the most poetic.

STANZA-SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Often it speeds the work to have different groups do different stanzas. If you do this, make sure you all hear the psalm from top to bottom and to make suggestions to other groups when you come together…

Stanza 1: Verses 1-2 Complaint to God

Psalm of David, in his fleeing from the face of Absalom, his son.	*A psalm of David, when he fled from before Absalom, his son.*

1 YHWH, how they have become many, my foes!
 	
        Many are rising against me;
 	
2 many are saying to my soul,
	1 O LORD, how many my foes have become –
	        many who rise against me,
	2 many who say about me,
	        "No victory for him from God!"
	                        Selah

I will praise you, LORD, among the nations

"There is not victory for him in ELOHIM." *Selah*	

Discussion:

- The *many* is repeated three times. Consider how to translate this in some form of initial or end rhyme in your language.
- It is important to maintain the direct speech. Poetry often contains direct speech. But do consider if that is the case in your language. If not find another way to heighten the impact of the speech.

Creative activity: Make a poetic oral translation of these verses and record it.

Stanza 2: Verses 3-4 - Remembrance of who the LORD is to him (covenant partner[1])

| 3 **But you**, YHWH, a shield about me,
    my glory, and the lifter of my head.
4 **My voice** - to YHWH I cried
    and he answered me from the hill of his holiness.

                                        Selah | 3 **But you**, LORD – a shield around me,
    my glory, and the lifter of my head.
4   (With) **my voice**, to the LORD I used to cry;
    He answered me from his holy hill.
                                        Selah |

Discussion:

- There is a shift in the psalm and theme here from the psalmist's anguish to the LORD. It is a new stanza, but consider how to best mark this in your language's poetry.
- Discuss the use of *shield* here. Is there a word for shield in your language that covers from head to foot?
- Notice the guide translation, *But you, LORD, [...] my glory*. This is better than *you give me glory*, because it identifies the source of his honour with the LORD himself. The LORD is not honouring him because of some achievement, but because he belongs the LORD, he is part of God's covenant people.
- Notice the *you* repeated three times in verse 3b.
- V.3 ends with *my head*. V.4 starts with *my voice*. Almost as if the psalmist is saying, the Lord lifts my head up, I lift up my voice and call to him. V.4a ends with *I call*, v.4b starts with *and He answers*. It's beautiful how these phrases are hinged together.
- In your translation, consider the shift to the third person in verse 4. Such pronoun changes are not uncommon in the Hebrew psalter and fulfils a specific function, but it may be unpoetic and awkward in your language.

---

[1] Words in red are related – indicate aspects of the covenant relationship. (**INSERT RED FROM ORIGINAL GUIDE**)

I will praise you, LORD, among the nations

Creative activity: Make a poetic oral translation of these verses and record it.

Stanza 3: Verses 5-6 - Remembrance of a particular example when the LORD helped him

5 I, I lay down and I slept;
 	
    I awoke, for YHWH sustains me.
 	
6 Not I will fear of multitudes of people
    who around take their stand against me.
	5 I, I lay down and I slept,
	
	    I woke again, because the LORD (always) sustains me.
	
	6 I will not fear (many) thousands of people
	
	    who all around take their stand against me.

Discussion:

- The tenses of the verbs could be past (preferred, remembering the past) or a present habitual (I lie down…) or future (I will lie down). The past is preferable, with the psalmist remembering what had happened.
- The meaning of *sustains me* (or *keeps me*) is that of holding up, supporting. It is a metaphor.
- *Many thousands of people* is a poetic hyperbole. Consider how to translate it poetically in your language.
- *I will not fear*: there are probably different words for being afraid and fear in your language.

Creative activity: Make a poetic oral translation of these verses and record it.

Stanza 4: Verses 7-8 – (in light of stanzas 2 and 3), request, and declaration of confidence

7 Arise, YHWH!
 	
    Bring me victory, my ELOHIM!
 	
    Yes, you strike all my enemies (on the) cheek;
 	
    the teeth of the wicked you break.
 	
8 To YHWH – victory!
 	
    On your people – your blessing!
              Selah
	7 Arise, O LORD!
	
	    Bring me victory, O my God!
	
	    Yes, you strike all my enemies
	
	    on the cheek;
	
	    the teeth of the wicked you break.
	
	8 From the LORD – victory!
	
	    On your people – blessing!
	              Selah

Discussion:

- *Bring me victory* means saving, delivering, helping, putting things right for me again so that I can be safe and at peace.
- *Strike on the cheek/breaking of teeth* is figurative, but a very strong poetic image. The strength of the image should be maintained in your language, even if your metaphor may be different. But do consider the literal figure for your translation as well, as it may work well enough. Do think about this violent figure: there is obviously great emotion around it, and it is very vivid. The

I will praise you, LORD, among the nations

meaning of the broken teeth is that the foes will not be able to speak against the psalmist anymore.

- *From the LORD – victory; on your people – your blessing:* Both of these clauses are verbless. If possible, keep the ambiguity of a verbless clause in the translation.

> **Creative activity:** Make a poetic oral translation of these verses and record it.

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

> **Activity:** Before you go on to write a translation, listen to the recordings everyone has made of the different sections of the psalm, and try to put together and **record a poetic oral translation** of the whole psalm. Think about how to use ideas from these creative activities in your written translation. Try to include the different ideas you've had so far.

Discuss:

- Which part of the psalm might you pray? When?
- Which part would be useful to your church? When would the church pray/sing the psalm?
- What does this psalm tell us about the LORD?
- Are you happy with the unity of the poem? Does a word, or the order of words, need to be changed (e.g., to make it consistent, or sound more poetic, by using tail-head, repetition, or adding a line for parallelism)?

> **Activity:** Discuss what title you would like to give the psalm in your language. You don't need to make a final decision at this point.

I will praise you, LORD, among the nations

Phase 2: TEXT

Step 6: Transcribe

Make a written draft

Activity: Transcribe the recordings of each section/stanza onto paper or a computer.

Before moving on to the exegetical check, check the transcribed draft for the following. This should be done as a whole group, looking at the psalm projected onto a screen or wall. It is up to the facilitator to make this step move on at a good pace, but getting this out of the way at the beginning will help the exegetical and poetical checks that follow to stay focused on essential matters.

1. **Versification**: put the verse numbers into the psalm.
2. Check that the number of the psalm, and any **superscription**, are in place at the top. (Superscriptions are often left out completely according to team policy, but they are recommended to be put in the written text but not the song.)
3. Put in the **stanza breaks** (blank lines usually).
4. Correct the **punctuation**, in particular finding out where the sentences should end. Different groups use different approaches. Our recommendation is to use capital letters only for the beginning of sentences, not for the beginning of each poetic line.
5. Correct the **spelling**. You may find that there is a lot of discussion over this. The group needs to have consistency but also needs to abide by any government guidelines.
6. Raise any questions you have about the **back translation** at this point. The back translation just needs to be comprehensible; it does not need spell checks etc. You, the facilitator, are the only person who needs it. However, without a good back translation you cannot understand what is going on. As a bonus, at least a couple of exegetical questions you've prepared usually turn out to be unnecessary after this step.
7. Check the **line divisions** (this refers to how the power is broken up into lines and where to make those breaks).

I will praise you, LORD, among the nations

Step 7: Contents Check

Checking exegetical faithfulness

The purpose of this step is to check the content of your draft for faithfulness and trustworthiness as you compare it to the guide translations found in Appendix A and details in Appendix B.

> **Activity**: Review the draft translation in detail, using the oral recording of Step 5 or the transcription of Step 6. Do an exegetical check by comparing the draft with the guide translations given in Appendix A and the exegetical layout in Appendix B and adjust the text as necessary.

EXEGETICAL CHECKLIST

Give special attention to:

- Difficult exegetical matters:
    - Be sure about the verb tenses of verses 4, 5, and 7b.
    - Can you say, "the LORD is my glory"? If you can use these identification phrases, this will be best, it is more poetic, instead of unpacking the meaning in natural language.
    - Head lifted up or head help up high? Both are acceptable.
    - The translation of victory (save/salvation). Save/salvation has to do with removing a threat or removing a person from the threat, it's about delivering. It is stronger than merely helping or assisting.
    - The idiomatic way of translating arise, especially God arising. How is that best done in the language?
- Compare against the interlinear in the Appendix (and Hebrew, if relevant). Adjust the text as necessary. Note the following in particular:
    - How can you indicate the negative tone in the words of the enemies in v.2?
    - V.3 should begin with an adversative, or indicate a change of direction.
    - Have you used metaphors in v.3? If not, could you do so?
    - Three ideas in v.3 must be understandable. Check that the metaphor ("shield") carries the right meaning. Idea of "glory/honour" must make sense. Ensure people understand the image of "lifting the head".
    - Ensure the supporting statements are understood as such, viz. v.5 supporting v.4 (as an example) and v.4 giving a reason for v.6. Also vv.7b-c (giving reasons that are generally true), supporting v.7a.
    - Do you have an idiom for "thousands and thousands of people" (v.6)?
    - Note the imperatives in v.7. Also the subjunctive in v.8b.
    - Inclusios (from repetition of the vocative LORD in vv.1, 3 and 7) hold together vv.1-7 as a unit, and also vv.3-7 as a unit. Does your translation have these inclusios?
    - Would idioms or ideophones fit in v.7 for the punishment of the enemies?

I will praise you, LORD, among the nations

Step 8: Poetry Check

Compare and weigh the poetic features

Attention now needs to be given to the poetic devices found in the Hebrew, as well as poetic devices found in the receptor language that might not have been used in the Hebrew text (or might have served a different function).

Activity: Consider the poetic features of your translation. Compare also the compositions from Step 4 with the draft. See if there are any features from the compositions that can be used in the final official version.

POETIC CHECKLIST

Give special attention to:

- Is the word-order natural, or giving the focus indicated by the Hebrew?
- Consider if the following poetic features might enter well into the translation:
  - Vocative at beginning of a line (consider the position of the vocative in vv.1, 3, 7)
  - Alliteration and assonance
  - Use of ideophones for sensory ideas, e.g., the fear in vv.1-2, confidence in v.3, strong emotion in vv.7b-c.
  - Exclamations to indicate emotions (e.g., in the quotation in v.2)
- Is the rhythm good? Do you need to add words, or reduce some, to get a good rhythm? Should a change of rhythm be used to draw attention to an important idea (as in v.3)?

Step 9: Finalise

Preparing the final version of an authenticated translation

Preparation of the final version which will serve as an authorized translation, that in turn will serve as the basis for performing the psalm in the community.

Activity: Check the spelling of your transcription.

Activity: Recheck the punctuation, for instance whether there are appropriate commas for pauses, the in-setting, and the layout of paragraphs to represent stanza segmentation.

Activity: Recheck the line divisions of your transcription and recheck the essential accuracy of the back translation (not worrying about spelling).

I will praise you, LORD, among the nations

Activity: In AVTT, open a new passage for Step 9 and make a blank recording (a second or two without any speech). This will open transcription and back translation boxes in that passage. Copy the transcription and the back translation of your translation into the new step. This will be the place you make changes as you go through Steps 7 and 8 and edit your translation. The performances will be based on this version.

Activity: Copy the final written text into Paratext.

Phase 3: PERFORMANCE

Step 10: Perform

Performing the psalm in your community

Introduction to the creative performances. Different groups can do different performances.

Psalm-specific ideas:

Idea 1: Do you want to bring in ideas from the New Testament for a song?

E.g., 1) God being our Helper cf. Jesus being our Saviour.

E.g., 2) God gives justice (seen in Ps 3:7, Rev 21:4, Rom 12:19, Is 30:18-19)

E.g., 3) Listen to the voice of God, not the devil, or obey the Bible, not what unbelievers say).

E.g., 4) The psalmist could sleep even when surrounded by enemies, and Jesus was able to sleep on the boat in the storm, because they trusted God.

E.g., 5) The mockery the psalmist experience in v.2 could be compared with the mockery Jesus experienced on the cross (Lk 23:35).

Idea 2: You could try another performance with v.7 as a chorus, after each verse. For example:

Verse 1: O LORD, I have so many enemies! Many are rising against me. Many are saying to me, "God will not rescue him."

Chorus: Arise, O LORD! Save me, O my God!

Verse 2: But you, 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.

Chorus: You arose, O LORD! You saved me, O my God!

Verse 3: I lay down and slept; I woke again, for the LORD kept me. I will not be afraid of many thousands of people who have set themselves against me all around.

Chorus: You arose, O LORD! You saved me, O my God!

I will praise you, LORD, among the nations

Verse 4: For you struck all my enemies on the cheek; you broke the teeth of the wicked.
Help comes from the LORD; may you bless your people!

Chorus: You arose, O LORD! You saved us, O my God!

Activity: Complete a transcript and back translation for the lyrics of any song created by the team to be checked before recording.

FINAL CHECKLIST

In the end of each psalm, there should ideally be four products:

1. Transcription: An authorized, authenticated, or officially written draft in AVTT and Paratext.
2. Dramatic Reading: A recording of a dramatic reading or recitation of the whole psalm, using the authenticated version word-for-word, recorded in AVTT.
3. Whole Psalm Performance: A recording of a performance of the whole psalm, using the entire authenticated version but with freedom to adapt it for authentic performance, including poetic and dramatic features beyond the authenticated version, recorded in AVTT.
4. Song or Hymn: A recording of a performance of part of the psalm including the main idea of the psalm (this could be from v 2 as mentioned in Psalm-specific ideas above), in the form of a song or a hymn, with or without drama, with freedom to adapt it for authentic performance and to make it easy to sing and remember, recorded in AVTT. An improved version of the Step 4 composition could be used here.
5. Chorus: A recording of a short chorus of a main verse of the psalm. Something catchy and highly memorable, recorded in AVTT.

I will praise you, LORD, among the nations

Psalms that Sing

Psalm 3

STEP 1	STEP 2	STEP 3	STEP 4	STEP 5	APP. A
STEP 6	STEP 7	STEP 8	STEP 9	STEP 10	APP. B

Appendix A: Guide Translations

Guide Translation #1 (Hebrew-mirror)	Guide Translation #2 (Hebrew-tight)
Psalm of David, in his fleeing from the face of Absalom, his son.	*A psalm of David, when he fled from before Absalom, his son.*
1 YHWH, how they have become many, my foes!	1 O LORD, how many my foes have become – many who rise against me,
Many are rising against me;	2 many who say about me, "No victory for him from God!"
2 many are saying to my soul,	*Selah*
"There is not victory for him in ELOHIM."	3 **But you**, LORD – a shield around me, my glory, and the lifter of my head.
Selah	4 (With) **my voice**, to the LORD I used to cry;
3 **But you**, YHWH, a shield about me,	
my glory, and the lifter of my head.	He answered me from his holy hill.
4 **My voice** - to YHWH I cried and he answered me from the hill of his holiness.	*Selah*
Selah	5 I, I lay down and I slept,
5 I, I lay down and I slept;	I woke again, because the LORD (always) sustains me.
I awoke, for YHWH sustains me.	6 I will not fear (many) thousands of people
6 Not I will fear of multitudes of people who around take their stand against me.	who all around take their stand against me.
7 Arise, YHWH!	7 Arise, O LORD!
Bring me victory, my ELOHIM!	Bring me victory, O my God!
Yes, you strike all my enemies (on the) cheek;	Yes, you strike all my enemies on the cheek;
the teeth of the wicked you break.	**the teeth of the wicked** you break.
8 To YHWH – victory!	8 From the LORD – victory!
On your people – your blessing!	**On your people** – blessing!
Selah	*Selah*

I will praise you, LORD, among the nations

א Appendix B: Exegetical Layout

Psalm 3 is a lament prayer for help against enemies.

SUGGESTED HEADING

A God-follower calls out to God for protection from enemies.

Coding for TAM Verbs and Hebrew features:

- Qatal perfective = blue
- Yiqtol imperfective = red
- Infinitive construct = purple
- Wayyiqtol waw+imperfective = pink
- Jussive/cohortative = light brown
- Imperative = brown
- Participle = green
- **Weqatal = navy**

מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד	Psalm of.David
בְּבָרְחוֹ מִפְּנֵי אַבְשָׁלוֹם בְּנוֹ	in.his.fleeing from.the.face[2].of Absalom his.son[3]
יְהוָה מָה־רַבּוּ צָרָי	1[4] YHWH how-they.have.become.many[5] my.foes[6]
רַבִּים קָמִים עָלָי׃	many are.rising[7] against.me

---

[2] *From the face of:* the phrase is idiomatic, could also be translated *from before*.

[3] Psalm 3 is the first psalm with a superscription (cf. 2 Sam 15:13-17).

[4] Poetic elements: repetition of *many: rabiem*, rhyme of *rabiem qamiem, rabiem omriem*. If possible, incorporate this repetition and build up in your translation.

[5] The root *many* is repeated 3x in vv.1-2: the speaker is overwhelmed. Cf. v.6a.

[6] foes: In parallel with those rising against me, and enemies.

[7] *rising*: same root as *arise* (v.7a). Cf. 2 Sam 18:32.

I will praise you, LORD, among the nations

רַבִּים֮ אֹמְרִ֪ים לְנַ֫פְשִׁ֥י	2 many are.saying[8] to[9].my.soul[10]
אֵ֤ין יְֽשׁוּעָ֓תָה לֹּ֬ו בֵֽאלֹהִ֬ים סֶֽלָה:	There.is.not victory[11] for.him in.ELOHIM[12] [13] Selah[14]
וְאַתָּ֣ה יְ֭הוָה מָגֵ֣ן בַּעֲדִ֑י	3[15] **But.you**(2S) YHWH a.shield[16] about.me
כְּ֝בוֹדִ֗י וּמֵרִ֥ים רֹאשִֽׁי:	my.glory[17] and.the.lifter[18] of.my.head[19]

[8] What his enemies, those who rise up against him, are saying, is that he has clearly been abandoned by the LORD because of his affliction. The LORD will not rescue him. This is of course a false assumption, they were wrong, as were proven by David being restored as king after the uprising of Absalom.

[9] *to (my soul):* could also mean *in regard to* then translated as *of*. The third person reference in the quoted words that follow favour this option.

[10] *to my soul*: to me, essentially, but NEPHESH does refer to his total being, or his very life.

[11] *Victory:* Some translations use "salvation" / "save" in vv.2, 7, 8, but the sense in the book of Psalms is help, restoration, deliverance from trouble, things now put right again. Be cautious not to use a word that means "salvation from sin" in the NT sense of the word. Note inclusio formed by repetition of YHWH and root of *victory* (vv.7a, 8a). Cf. Ps 62:7a which links *salvation (victory)* and *glory* (as in v.3b).

[12] *ELOHIM*: cf. *my ELOHIM* (v.7b).

[13] These negative words of the enemy are countered by YHWH being *the lifter of his head* (v.3b), and *his victory* (v.8).

[14] *Selah* occurs 3x in this psalm. Its meaning is uncertain. It could indicate a pause, or a musical instruction. It is suggested you transliterate *Selah* in your language.

[15] There is beautiful rhyme in the Hebrew sounds, starting from the word *about me*, with repetition of i, di, and r: … *ba'adi, kivodi. umeriem roshi.* It's not easy to render this in English, but if there is a way in the target language to bring in rhyme, it would be fitting.

[16] *shield*: Cf. Pss 28:7; 84:9, 11; 119:114; Gen 15:1. Symbol of protection, against *the many*. Unlike most shields, YHWH is a shield *around me*, thus protecting on all sides (cf. enemies *all around*, v.6b). He trusts YHWH for his defence, and looks to YHWH to act offensively (and violently) Cf. v.7b-c.

[17] *my glory*: the one who gives me honour (good reputation, contra shame) and salvation. *Honour* also in Ps 4:2a. *Glory* linked to *salvation* in Pss 21:5, 62:7a, contra derision in v.2b. *You are my glory* is answer to problem of *many rising against me.* In Zech 2:5 *glory* is linked to "*a wall of fire all around*" (total protection, salvation). The LORD is not honouring him because of some past achievement or present potential, but because he belongs to the LORD, he is part of God's covenant people. In other words, his glory is God's faithfulness to him, God himself is his glory, however strange that may sound.

[18] *lifter of my head*: cf. *rising against me* (cf. v.1b). Could also be translated as a relative clause, *who lifts* or *who holds my head high.* Cf. Ps 27:6. The enemies have shamed his confidence in God with their words in v.2b. But YHWH is the one who removes that shame and discouragement (and lifts his head) because the psalmist is trusting in his covenant relationship with YHWH (v.1). Find a metaphor in your language that means to remove shame/despair and bring honour/salvation. Job 10:15 "I cannot lift my head . . . for I am filled with disgrace". Lk 21:28 *raising heads* is linked to *salvation.*

[19] Cf. Ps 89:17-18a which includes *shield*, *glory*, *lifting* of horn (or reputation), and *YHWH*. See Ps 113:7b *lifts the needy.*

I will praise you, LORD, among the nations

קוֹלִי אֶל־יְהוָה אֶקְרָא	4 **My.voice**[20] to-YHWH I.cried[21]
וַיַּעֲנֵנִי מֵהַר קָדְשׁוֹ סֶלָה:	and.he.answered[22].me from.the.hill of.his.holiness[23] Selah
אֲנִי שָׁכַבְתִּי וָאִישָׁנָה	5 **I**[24] I.lay.down[25] and.I.slept[26]
הֱקִיצוֹתִי כִּי יְהוָה יִסְמְכֵנִי:	I.awoke for YHWH sustains[27].me
לֹא־אִירָא מֵרִבְבוֹת עָם	6 Not-I.will.fear of.multitudes[28] of.people
אֲשֶׁר סָבִיב שָׁתוּ עָלָי:	who around[29] take.their.stand against.me[30]
קוּמָה יְהוָה	7 Arise(S), YHWH[31]

---

[20] *my voice*: whereas enemies used their voice to speak badly of God and show their unbelief, psalmist uses his voice to approach God for help and show his trust. The psalmist cannot match the power or number of the enemy, but his weapon against them is his faith in God.

[21] *I cried* indicates a habitual action, as in *I used to cry* or *I would cry* rather than a specific occurrence where the psalmist cried.

[22] *I cried and he answered*: what is expected in the covenant (note covenant name YHWH 6x)

[23] *hill of his holiness*: cf. Ps 2:6. Used 26x in HB. It is the place where YHWH is present, a place of safety, represented by Zion (the hill on which Jerusalem is built).

[24] *I* is emphasized (used 5x in vv.4-6). This is in contrast to *You* (v.3).

[25] *I lay down:* Most translations render this verse in the past tense. Using past tense in this sentence brings us back to the historical setting of David fleeing from Absalom. He slept and woke without being killed – God protected him. For the sake of the historical setting, you might choose to translate the verbs as past tense. But it seems like a case can also be made to translate it in a habitual, repeated sense, as in "every night I lie down to sleep, every morning I wake again, because God sustains me".

[26] *lay down and slept*: cf. Ps 4:8. The psalmist had the peace of God within so he could sleep without fear. This is explained by his comment: *For YHWH sustains me*.

[27] *sustains:* This verb is likely habitual. He's not saying God did it this one time. He's saying it's his pattern of sustenance. Does your language have a way to express this habitual nature of an action?

[28] The *many* are *myriads*, literally *many thousands of people*. It is a very large number of people, probably soldiers, and a form of poetic hyperbole. *Many* are troubling him (3x in vv.1-2) but he is confident against such overwhelming *multitudes*!

[29] *all around*: cf. *around* in v.3a. Could also be translated *on every side.*

[30] *many against me*: Cf. Ps 27:3.

[31] *Arise YHWH!* Cf. Pss 7:6; 9:19; 10:12; Num 10:35.

I will praise you, LORD, among the nations

הוֹשִׁיעֵ֣נִי אֱלֹהַ֗י	Bring.victory(S).me, my.ELOHIM
כִּֽי־הִכִּ֣יתָ אֶת־כָּל־אֹיְבַ֣י לֶ֑חִי	For[32]-you(2S).strike[33] (OBJ)-all-my.enemies cheek[34]
שִׁנֵּ֖י רְשָׁעִ֣ים שִׁבַּֽרְתָּ׃	**the.teeth of.the.wicked** you.break(2S)[35] [36]
לַיהוָ֥ה הַיְשׁוּעָ֑ה	8 To.YHWH victory
עַֽל־עַמְּךָ֖ בִרְכָתֶ֣ךָ סֶּֽלָה׃	**On-your.people**[37] your.blessing Selah

[32] *for:* The particle *kie* could also be an intensifying marker – yes/indeed.

[33] *strike*: the verb form could also be an imperative, rendering the translation *Strike all my enemies on the cheek*. But because the following verb (*break*) is a completed action and not an imperative, it makes more sense to read this verb as a completed action as well.

[34] *strike on cheek* (a sign of insult): Cf. Job 16:10b and 1 Kgs 22:24. In contrast to lifting up the psalmist's head in v3, he asks God to strike his enemies on the cheek. As the psalmist had been insulted by the words of his enemies, so now he prays for an insult to be administered to them.

[35] *You break teeth (of the wicked)*: Cf. Ps 58:6. This results in the person not being able to speak and continue insulting the psalmist.

[36] There is a chiasm in v.7b: struck; enemies; cheek; teeth; wicked; broken

[37] *on your people*: psalmist thinks not only about himself being blessed, but others too.

I will praise you, LORD, among the nations

Appendix C: Flower Garden

The repetitions and patterns below are placed upon guide translation #2 (Hebrew-tight). Read the commentary at the end of this Appendix which explains insights into these patterns.

Colour Code:

- …

Psalm 3

A psalm of David, when he fled from before Absalom, his son.

1   O LORD, how many my foes have become –
      many who rise against me;

2   many who say about me,
      "No victory for him from GOD!"

                             Selah

3 **But you**, LORD – a shield around me,
      my glory, and the lifter of my head.

4 (With) **my voice** to the LORD I used to cry;
      He answered me from his holy hill.

                             Selah

5 I, I lay down and I slept;
      I awoke (again), because the LORD always sustains me.

6 I will not fear (many) thousands of people
      who all around take their stand against me.

7   Arise, O LORD!
Bring me victory, O my GOD!
Yes, you strike all my enemies on the cheek;
The teeth of the wicked you break.

8   From the LORD – victory!
      On your people – your blessing!

                             Selah

I will praise you, LORD, among the nations