

O Lord, My Glory Psalm 3

What will you do when trouble comes – and lots of it? Distress takes you down a detour – that well-worn way of worry. Cares and concerns can fill you with apprehension and alarm. Difficult opposition tries to overwhelm you. They fight against your faith. Miseries and misfortunes can settle down in the deep recesses of your soul. Even worse, remembering your own failures can stir your fears to a feverish pitch. Sometimes these things can bother you so badly that you don't sleep well. In the dark hours of the night, your foes and your fears can cause you to lie awake for hours. What will you do when this kind of trouble comes? Every one of these sentiments can be found in Psalm 3. You can reflect on your life in the mirror of Psalm 3 and find new courage for the days ahead.

How You Use Your Free Time

David knew exactly why his trouble had come; he knew which mistakes he had made. On one occasion, he had used his free time to glorify God (see 2 Samuel chapter 7). The result was that David received a promise of eternal blessing on his house (his descendants). But on another occasion, David used his free time to commit an immoral act (2 Samuel chapters 11-12). As a result of this second episode, David received the promise of continual trouble for his descendants. This is a warning for every one of us: *be careful how you use your free time!*

Consider the words of 2 Samuel 12:10, **“Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thine house; because thou hast despised me, and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife.”** And now, according to the introduction to this psalm, David's son, Absalom had risen up against him. You can read the story of this conspiracy in 2 Samuel chapter 15. It's bad enough to have trouble; but what if some of it is your own fault? You can see how distress dogged David's way.

A Psalm of David, when he fled from Absalom his son. ¹ **LORD, how are they increased that trouble me! many *are* they that rise up against me.** ² **Many *there be* which say of my soul, *There is no help for him in God.* Selah.** ³ **But thou, O LORD, *art* a shield for me; my glory, and the lifter up of mine head.**

Attacks from your foes: *O Lord, how many are my foes that rise here and abroad*

David had enemies in all the nations round about. But now things were even more serious. Now, his own family and his own countrymen had risen up against him. As the caption for the psalm tells us, *“A Psalm of David, when he fled from Absalom his son.”* When your trouble comes, it is especially painful when it comes from your own family members. David had done so much for the benefit of his people – and now they were rising up against him. Those that troubled him were growing more numerous by the moment. 2 Samuel 15:30 paints the scene for us: **“And David went up by the ascent of mount Olivet, and wept as he went up, and had his head covered, and he went barefoot: and all the people that *was* with him covered every man his head, and they went up, weeping as they went up.”**

Attacks on your faith: And they are saying of my soul, "There is no help in God!"

It is one thing to face trouble; it is quite another when people try to wrench your hope in God away from you. This was a direct attack on David's faith – his trust in God. This kind of attack can render you hopeless and helpless!

- **Ephesians:** Christians face this kind of direct attack from Satan, the god of this age. Ephesians 6:16 makes a direct application for us on this point: **"Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked."** According to Ephesians 6, every believer wrestles with wicked spirits. What do they want you to believe? They want you to believe, **"There is no help for him in God."**
- **Paul:** In 2 Corinthians 12:7, we discover that Satan buffets believers with the thorn (or sharp stake) to produce all sorts of pain. Paul prayed earnestly that he might be faithful and not foolish during that test. There was help for him in God's grace.
- **Job:** The big test for Job (in Job chapters 1 & 2) was this: Should he hope in God? Satan insisted that Job would curse God to the face (Job 1:11). When Job fell ill under Satan's attacks, Job's own wife advised him, **"Curse God and die!"** (Job 2:9 Satan wanted Job to believe, **"There is no help for him in God."**
- **Peter:** According to Luke 22:31-32, Peter's faith was Satan's target: **"³¹ And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: ³² But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren."** And Peter, the failure, ultimately became Peter, the fiery preacher. He had been humbled by his failures, and his faith grew. There was help for him in God!
- **You:** The faith of every believer is Satan's target, according to 1 Peter 5:8-9: **"⁸ Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: ⁹ Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world."** Revelation 12:10 describes Satan as **"the accuser of our brethren . . . which accused them before our God day and night."** On this Sunday morning, Satan is accusing you. What will be your answer – especially if some of his accusations are true?

Why are things this way? The Apostle Paul wrote, **"⁷ But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us. ⁸ We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; ⁹ Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed;"** (2 Corinthians 6:7-8). In the context, **"the light of the knowledge of the glory of God has shined in our hearts in the face of Jesus Christ!"** This test is all about the glory of God; not about us. We are just the earthen vessels – the clay pots – where God has chosen to place His treasured light! Jesus Christ, our Creator is also our Redeemer. Overflowing with the love and mercy of God, He went to the cross to pay for every one of our sinful actions. For this reason, believers have an Advocate with the Father: Jesus Christ the Righteous (1 John 2:1)! Every sinner is trapped in loneliness by the god of this age. Every sinner will one day stand before God. Why would anyone want to do either one of these alone? The Lord Jesus offered Himself as your Advocate and Friend to face your foes and your fears. By the sacrifice of His blood on the cross, dying and rising again, He can lead you to face foes and fear.

Answers for your foes and your fears: But you, O Lord, a shield to me, my glory, You have said. Protect me and inspire my soul in lifting up my head

How do you withstand these evil attacks against your faults and against your faith? The answer is found in Psalm 3:3: **“But thou, O LORD, art a shield for me; my glory, and the lifter up of mine head.”** This is a lesson that David had learned many years before in a place call Ziklag (1 Samuel 30:6): David encouraged himself in the LORD His God.

○ **LORD:** This is the One who told Moses His Name: **“I AM that I AM”** (Exodus 3:14). He is the self-existing self-sufficient God, who needs no help or support to maintain His existence. In future messages, we will come back to this name of God, for it is very important to understand.

○ **A shield for me:** David faced trouble. But the Lord was his shield. When the fiery darts and the sharp stake dug into David’s soul, he turned to the Lord as His shield. Today, you can use the shield of faith in the Lord to quench the fiery darts of the wicked one.

○ **My glory:** David’s royal position was in danger; yet the Lord would sustain his glory. David had received the promise (that we call the Davidic covenant) in 2 Samuel 7. God had promised to bless him – to crown his descendants with glory. (King David’s descendant, the Messiah, Jesus Christ, was the ultimate fulfillment of this promise.)

Now you might object, saying that you have received no such royal promise. But as we learned in the last three messages, we have been crowned with glory and honor (Psalm 8). We have been called to grow from glory to glory (2 Corinthians 3:18). Our Creator, who is our Sustainer, who is our Merciful King (Romans 11:36) deserves all the glory. In the last book of the Bible, John reflected on the royalty of every redeemed person: **“Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, ⁶And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.”** (Revelation 1:5b-6) The Lord looks upon us as kings and priests before Him. So David says for all of us, **“O LORD, my glory.”**

When you get discouraged and you feel the bitter sting of Satan’s fiery darts, remember this: the LORD is your glory. He crowned you with glory and honor. He did so by His Creation and He did so again in your redemption. Twice blessed – as created image-bearers and as new creatures in Christ, we can say from our hearts, **“O LORD, my glory!”** This is why David would write in the last verse of this psalm: **“Salvation belongeth unto the LORD: thy blessing is upon thy people. Selah.”**

○ **The One who lifts my head:** David faced tremendous discouragement. But the Lord had lifted up his head. This is what you do when trouble comes. This is how you face difficulties – even the ones of your own making! You encourage yourself in the One who lifts up your head.

How to Apply This Psalm

Pray! (vs. 4,7,8)

How did David apply this glorious understanding of God's character? He prayed! You and I should do the same. ⁴I cried unto the LORD with my voice, and he heard me out of his holy hill. Selah. . . .⁷ Arise, O LORD; save me, O my God: for thou hast smitten all mine enemies *upon* the cheek bone; thou hast broken the teeth of the ungodly. ⁸Salvation *belongeth* unto the LORD: thy blessing is upon thy people. Selah.

Note the many personal references in this prayer: "I," "my voice," "he heard me," "the Lord sustained me," and "save me." David applied his knowledge of God's glory in a personal, encouraging way. We can do the same. He is our only real source of help in troubled times. But prayer is the shovel you will need to mine God's eternal riches for you. David remembered how the Lord had helped him in the past. He recalled those occasions when he had cried to the Lord with his own voice. And David knew with certainty that the Lord had heard him. This is a great way to encourage your own heart: remember past victories; remember how the Lord has answered your prayers in the past. In verse 7, David brought his prayer to bear on his present trouble. "Arise, O Lord; save me, O my God . . ." The Lord had answered him in the past, and he asked the Lord to do so again.

Rest

⁵I laid me down and slept; I awaked; for the LORD sustained me. ⁶I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people, that have set *themselves* against me round about.

Have you ever faced so much trouble that you had difficulty sleeping? Psalm 3:5-6 would be great verses to memorize. Even when his family members and countrymen were seeking his life, David was able to lie down and sleep. Why? The Lord sustains! It is the same for us today. This is how we can turn from our fears to faith in our wonderful God: Our LORD is our shield, our glory and the One who lifts our head.

O Lord, How Many Are My Foes (from Psalm 3)

*O Lord, how many are my foes that rise here and abroad
And they are saying of my soul, "There is no help in God!"
But you, O Lord, a shield to me, My glory, You have said
Protect me and inspire my soul in lifting up my head
I cried aloud unto the Lord And from His holy hill
He answered all my pleading cries until my heart was still
I laid me down and slept in peace; I woke. The Lord sustains!
So thousands cannot scare me now with all their proud campaigns
Arise, O Lord! Oh, save, my God! And strike against my foes
You break the teeth of wicked men and punish them with woes
Salvation to the Lord belongs! He answers all my fears
His blessings on His people flow; He wipes away our tears.*

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