

A Psalm of David when he fled from Absalom his son.

Text: Psalm 3:1–8 (NKJV)

Historical Setting

Psalm 3 was written during one of the darkest seasons in David’s life—his flight from Absalom, his own son, who had conspired against him and staged a coup. The background is recorded in 2 Samuel 15–16, where we see the heartbreak of betrayal by someone David deeply loved and trusted. As David fled Jerusalem, crossed the Brook Kidron, and ascended the Mount of Olives, he wept. This is not merely the story of a dethroned king; it’s the cry of a broken heart, seeking help from God when human support had failed.

“LORD, how they have increased who trouble me! Many are they who rise up against me. Many are they who say of me, ‘There is no help for him in God.’ Selah” (Psalm 3:1–2 NKJV)

David begins with raw honesty. The pain is real, the opposition growing. This was no minor threat. His enemies had multiplied—not just physically in number, but in influence and rhetoric. And the worst part? The voices weren’t just mocking David—they were declaring that even God had abandoned him.

Personal Application:

There will be seasons in life when opposition seems to surge unexpectedly—where betrayal stings, friends vanish, and even fellow believers may question your standing with God. In those moments, the enemy whispers the same lie: *“God has left you. There’s no help for you now.”* But as we’ll see, David didn’t let those voices have the final word.

“But You, O LORD, are a shield for me, My glory and the One who lifts up my head.” (Psalm 3:3 NKJV)

The tone shifts dramatically with the words, “But You, O LORD.” David does not deny the reality of his trouble, but he anchors himself in a deeper reality: the character of God. God is his shield—not just a protector from physical harm, but a personal defender of dignity and purpose. He lifts David’s head—not in arrogance, but in hope and confidence.

Personal Application:

When life brings humiliation, false accusations, or a sense of worthlessness, God doesn’t just protect us—He restores us. He lifts our heads when we are bowed low in shame, sorrow, or despair. In Christ, our dignity is not tied to our position or performance, but to our relationship with the Father who sees and values us deeply.

“I cried to the LORD with my voice, And He heard me from His holy hill. Selah” (Psalm 3:4 NKJV)

David *cried out*, and God *heard*. This wasn’t a vague spiritual feeling—it was a verbal, heartfelt plea from a man in anguish. And it was met with a response from heaven. God’s holy hill refers to Zion, symbolic of His dwelling place and authority.

Personal Application:

There is power in crying out to God. Even when others misunderstand, even when the situation

seems irreversible, God hears. Our prayers do not need to be polished—they need to be real. Let the burden move you to the place of prayer, not the pit of despair.

“I lay down and slept; I awoke, for the LORD sustained me.” (Psalm 3:5 NKJV)

How could David sleep when his life was hanging by a thread? Because he trusted the One who was holding that thread. The same God who created the heavens was sustaining his breath. His peace did not come from a change in circumstance, but from confidence in the Sustainer.

Personal Application:

Are you losing sleep over something? Rest is not just physical—it’s spiritual. When we entrust our situation to the Lord, we can rest—even when we don’t yet see the outcome. Peace is not the absence of trouble, but the presence of God in the trouble.

Verse 6: Courage in the Face of Overwhelming Odds

“I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people Who have set themselves against me all around.” (Psalm 3:6 NKJV)

David expresses a bold resolve. This is not blind bravado—it is faith informed by the past faithfulness of God. Though surrounded, he would not be afraid.

Personal Application:

Faith is not the absence of fear—it is choosing trust over fear. You might feel outnumbered, but when God is with you, you are never outmatched. Courage doesn’t come from self-confidence but from God-dependence.

Verse 7: A Call for Divine Intervention

“Arise, O LORD; Save me, O my God! For You have struck all my enemies on the cheekbone; You have broken the teeth of the ungodly.” (Psalm 3:7 NKJV)

David calls on God to act. He recalls past victories—how God had dealt decisively with the wicked before—and asks for the same deliverance now. The imagery is bold: breaking the jaw and teeth of enemies implies rendering them powerless.

Personal Application:

There’s a time to rest, and a time to cry out for rescue. It is not unspiritual to ask God to act decisively on your behalf. While we are called to love our enemies, we also trust in God’s justice to ultimately silence evil and bring deliverance.

“Salvation belongs to the LORD. Your blessing is upon Your people. Selah” (Psalm 3:8 NKJV)

David concludes with a foundational truth: salvation—rescue, help, and deliverance—does not come from men, armies, or our own strategies. It belongs to God. And not only does He save individuals—His blessing rests upon His people corporately.

Personal Application:

You may not see how help will come, but you can know from whom it comes. Salvation is not found in systems, strength, or status—it comes from the Lord. And He has not forgotten His people. His blessing rests upon those who trust Him, even in the fire.

Summary:

Psalm 3 leads us through a journey from panic to peace, from fear to faith. It shows us that:

- We can be honest about our trials (vv. 1–2)
- We must anchor ourselves in who God is (v. 3)
- We are heard when we pray (v. 4)
- We can rest in His care (v. 5)
- We can face opposition with courage (v. 6)
- We are invited to call on God’s power (v. 7)
- We must remember that deliverance is always in His hands (v. 8)

Final Reflection:

Have you been overwhelmed by a personal “Absalom” moment—where betrayal, opposition, or unexpected sorrow blindsided you? Psalm 3 is not just David’s song; it can be yours. Let it remind you that God is your shield, your glory, and the lifter of your head. You may be surrounded, but you are not abandoned.

Selah—pause, reflect, and rest in that truth.