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Reflections on Psalm 3

By Mike Sullivan

This week I had the opportunity to pray through Psalm 3 with another brother, and I was reminded how wonderful this psalm is. Let's consider it together.

Psalm 3:

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

O Lord, how my adversaries have increased!

Many are rising up against me.

Many are saying of my soul,

"There is no deliverance for him in God."

But you, O Lord, are a shield about me,

My glory, and the One who lifts up my head.

I was crying to the Lord with my voice,

And he answered me from his holy mountain.

I lay down and slept;

I awoke, for the Lord sustains me.

I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people

Who have set themselves against me round about.

Arise, O Lord; save me, O my God!

For you have smitten all my enemies on the cheek;

You have shattered the teeth of the wicked.

Salvation belongs to the Lord;

Your blessing be upon your people! (Ps 3:1-8, NASB)

Though none of us have ever or will ever find ourselves in these specific circumstances—running for our lives in the wilderness, fleeing from an army led by our own son, who's trying to usurp our throne—this psalm offers tremendous power and perspective for our own lives.

Have you ever been overwhelmed? By fear? Anxiety? Stress? Sorrow? Anger? Sometimes we are faced with incredible pressures and don't see anyway out. That's where David was when he wrote this psalm. But by God's grace and power, we can say, just like David: "You are my shield! You are my glory! You lift my head!" When we're overwhelmed we can

remember that God is for us. He's our protector and provider. He's our source of confidence, peace and joy.

Notice especially vv. 4-6:

I was crying to the Lord with my voice,

And he answered me from his holy mountain.

I lay down and slept;

I awoke, for the Lord sustains me.

In these painful and overwhelming circumstances David cried out to God. And notice, God answered. We don't know what that looked like or sounded like, but David understood that God heard him and had responded in some way. And with that knowledge—with that confidence, notice what David was able to do: sleep. Have you ever had trouble sleeping? Have you ever had sleepless nights because of worry or stress or fear? There have been and still are many times I'm not able to sleep because of things on my mind. If anyone has ever had reason to, surely David did in these circumstances. Yet, even in all this, he was able to sleep.

And not only was he able to sleep, he was able to get up in the morning. That's the other side of stress, etc.: we're up most of the night tossing and turning with racing thoughts, but then can't get out of bed in the morning because of the daunting obstacles of the day. Notice again: David was able to sleep and get up in the morning. Why? Because he was so great? Of course not, but because God was so great. Because David understood God was his shield, his glory and the one who lifts up his head.

And so notice the result in v. 6:

I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people

Who have set themselves against me round about.

Can we say that? Only by God's grace and power.

I know it's an abrupt ending, but we'll stop here for today. But before I close, let me encourage you to spend time praying through Psalm 3 on your own or with another brother or sister. Find yourself and your own experiences in this psalm. Maybe you're not surrounded by "adversaries", but you can insert the word "stresses" or "anxieties", or whatever is overwhelming you. And then let the Holy Spirit guide you through this psalm to greater faith, confidence and peace in God.

May our God bless you and give you peace in Christ.