Psalm 3 – When Trouble Surrounds You
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[Psa 3:1-8 NASB95] – 1 A Psalm of David, when he fled from Absalom his son. O LORD, how my adversaries have increased! Many are rising up against me. 2 Many are saying of my soul, "There is no deliverance for him in God." Selah. 3 But You, O LORD, are a shield about me, My glory, and the One who lifts my head. 4 I was crying to the LORD with my voice, And He answered me from His holy mountain. Selah. 5 I lay down and slept; I awoke, for the LORD sustains me. 6 I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people Who have set themselves against me round about. 7 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. 8 Salvation belongs to the LORD; Your blessing [be] upon Your people! Selah.

- Have you ever been so troubled that you were exhausted, but still could not sleep?
- Your body was in bed, but your mind was still fighting. You kept replaying the conversation, considering what might happen, and wondering how you would make it through.
- Psalm 3 speaks to that experience. David faces multiplying enemies, painful accusations, and a dangerous future. Yet, in the middle of the psalm, he does something remarkable: he sleeps.
- The trouble has not disappeared. His confidence in God has changed how he faces it.
- The superscription identifies this as a psalm of David when he fled from his son Absalom. Second Samuel 15–18 describes that rebellion. David experienced both a threat to his throne and betrayal within his own family.
- David was not a flawless victim; the wider narrative includes the consequences of his own sin. Yet he still turns toward God. Our need to repent does not remove our invitation to pray.
- Psalm 3 moves from lament to confidence, from confidence to prayer, and from personal danger to concern for God's people.

How can we trust God when trouble surrounds us?

Psalm 3 shows us four responses: bring God your trouble, lift your eyes to your Defender, rest in His sustaining presence, and call on Him for deliverance.

I. Bring God Your Trouble

a. [Psa 3:1-2 NASB95] – 1 A Psalm of David, when he fled from Absalom his son. O LORD, how my adversaries have increased! Many are rising up against me. 2 Many are saying of my soul, "There is no deliverance for him in God." Selah.
b. David begins by addressing God directly. He describes both the growing number of his enemies and the message they are spreading: God will not deliver him.
c. There are two battles here:
    i. The outward battle: People are rising against him.
    ii. The inward battle: Their words challenge his confidence in God.
d. His enemies presume to interpret his circumstances: his trouble supposedly proves that God has abandoned him. David brings that accusation into prayer.
e. David tells God what his enemies are saying; he does not accept their words as God's verdict.
f. Notice that he speaks to God about his trouble. Even before he expresses confidence, his decision to pray is an act of faith.
g. [Psa 62:8 NASB95] – 8 Trust in Him at all times, O people; Pour out your heart before Him; God is a refuge for us. Selah.
h. Spirit-filled believers can acknowledge pain without surrendering faith. Lament is a biblical form of prayer.

i. When pressure comes: Name the actual problem before God. Identify the accusation you have begun to believe. Refuse to measure God's faithfulness solely by your present circumstances.
j. The Holy Spirit helps us pray in our weakness when we struggle to express what we are carrying (Romans 8:26–27). We do not have to manufacture spiritual strength before approaching God.
k. You can tell God how bad it is without giving up on how good He is!

II. Lift Your Eyes to Your Defender

a. [Psa 3:3-4 NASB95] – 3 But You, O LORD, are a shield about me, My glory, and the One who lifts my head. 4 I was crying to the LORD with my voice, And He answered me from His holy mountain. Selah.
b. Verse 3 marks the turning point: David moves from what others say about him to who God is to him.
c. He describes God in three ways:
    i. "A shield about me."
    God is his protection. David's ultimate security rests in God, even while he must take practical action to escape danger.
    ii. "My glory."
    David's royal honor is under attack, but his deepest dignity comes from his relationship with God. Losing public approval does not mean losing his worth before God.
    iii. "The One who lifts my head."
    A bowed head can express grief, shame, or defeat. David trusts God to restore his courage and dignity.
d. In verse 4, David cries aloud and receives an answer from God's holy mountain. Though David has fled Jerusalem, God remains able to hear him.
e. Distance from Jerusalem has not placed David beyond God's reach.
f. [Psa 121:1-2 NASB95] – 1 A Song of Ascents. I will lift up my eyes to the mountains; From where shall my help come? 2 My help [comes] from the LORD, Who made heaven and earth.
g. Let God's revealed character shape your prayers.
h. When you feel exposed, remember His protection. When you feel humiliated, remember where your dignity comes from. When discouragement bows your head, ask Him to restore your courage.
i. In gathered worship, make room for sincere, vocal prayer. David's cry encourages us to call on God earnestly; it does not make volume a condition for being heard.
j. The Holy Spirit directs our attention to Jesus and strengthens our confidence in Him. A timely word of encouragement or a spiritual gift should serve that purpose and remain subject to biblical discernment (1 Corinthians 14:3, 29).
k. The voices around you do not have the final word over you!

III. Rest in His Sustaining Presence

a. [Psa 3:5-6 NASB95] – 5 I lay down and slept; I awoke, for the LORD sustains me. 6 I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people Who have set themselves against me round about.
b. David describes three ordinary actions with extraordinary significance: he lay down, slept, and awoke.
c. Why was he able to awaken? God sustained him.
d. Sleep involves surrendering our immediate vigilance. David could not watch every enemy while he slept. His testimony places his continued life in God's hands.

e. Verse 6 then expresses his resolve not to fear, even when surrounded by overwhelming numbers.
f. The progression matters: God's sustaining faithfulness becomes the foundation for David's courage.
g. David does not claim that danger is imaginary. He declares that danger will not govern his trust.
h. This is testimony to God's care in David's situation, not a promise that faithful believers will never experience sleeplessness, suffering, or death.
i. [Phl 4:6-7 NASB95] – 6 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. 7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.
j. Some people need deliverance from a dangerous circumstance. Others also need freedom from the constant mental rehearsal of that circumstance.
k. Before bed, practice a simple response: Bring your concern to God in prayer. Thank Him for specific ways He has sustained you. Entrust to Him what you cannot resolve tonight.
l. The Holy Spirit can minister peace while we wait for circumstances to change. Invite believers to receive prayer for fear, exhaustion, and troubled minds.
m. Difficulty sleeping should never become an accusation of spiritual failure. Pray compassionately and encourage appropriate practical care.
n. You can rest because your life is in the hands of the God who sustains you!

IV. Call on Him for Deliverance

a. [Psa 3:7-8 NASB95] – 7 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. 8 Salvation belongs to the LORD; Your blessing [be] upon Your people! Selah.
b. David's confidence does not eliminate his need to pray. He calls on God to arise and save him.
c. Faith rests in God and faith asks God to act.
d. The language about striking enemies on the cheek and shattering their teeth is forceful battle imagery. It portrays their humiliation and the breaking of their power to harm.
e. David appeals to God to deal with his enemies. This passage does not authorize personal retaliation.
f. Verse 8 gives the psalm's central theological confession: salvation belongs to God. Here, salvation concerns rescue from David's immediate danger. In the wider biblical story, God's saving work reaches its fullest expression in Jesus Christ.
g. David then moves beyond his own survival: he asks for God's blessing on His people. The king's prayer ends with the community in view.
h. [Rom 12:19-21 NASB95] – 19 Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath [of God,] for it is written, "VENGEANCE IS MINE, I WILL REPAY," says the Lord. 20 "BUT IF YOUR ENEMY IS HUNGRY, FEED HIM, AND IF HE IS THIRSTY, GIVE HIM A DRINK; FOR IN SO DOING YOU WILL HEAP BURNING COALS ON HIS HEAD." 21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.
i. [Act 4:29-31 NASB95] – 29 "And now, Lord, take note of their threats, and grant that Your bond-servants may speak Your word with all confidence, 30 while You extend Your hand to heal, and signs and wonders take place through the name of Your holy servant Jesus." 31 And when they had prayed, the place where they had gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and [began] to speak the word of God with boldness.

j. Pray specific prayers for God to intervene. Ask for protection, healing, freedom, wisdom, and the breaking of destructive opposition.
k. At the same time: Surrender personal revenge. Resist spiritual evil without treating people as enemies to destroy. Ask the Holy Spirit for boldness to obey while the pressure continues. Expand your prayer beyond yourself to your family, church, and community.
l. As in Acts 4, the answer may include fresh power to continue the mission while opposition remains.
m. Ask God to bring you through and to make you a blessing as He does!

- **When trouble surrounds you, cry out to God, trust Him to sustain you, and depend on Him to save you.**
- You may not be able to stop every voice, control every circumstance, or solve every problem today. You can turn toward the God who hears, sustains, and saves.
- The call of this psalm is simple: Bring Him your trouble. Lift your eyes to your Defender. Rest in His presence. Call on Him to save.