



river west church

The Victory of God and the Heart of Faith

Psalms 1-3

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Troubles Beyond Measure

Psalms 1-3 is where the praying starts in the Book of Psalms. Psalms 1 and 2 have set the stage for everything: faith, life, prayer. With our focus on the Word of God (Psalm 1) and the Son of God (Psalm 2) we're ready to move forward. Now it's time to apply faith to real life in a broken world. That's what happens in Psalm 3.

In Psalm 3, troubles overflow. This is trouble on steroids. And it's not just the vast number of enemies, though that is very real. It's also the personal nature of the conflict. David's own son has turned against him. The greatest hurts in life often come from those we love the most. This isn't symbolic trouble, this is real life. The story is recorded in 2 Samuel 15 – 16. Check it out. It's the worst situation you can imagine.

The Voices of Doubt and Despair

Life circumstances represent one level of personal trouble and challenge. But there's another, deeper level of trouble and pain. Notice verse 2. "Many are saying there is no salvation for him in God." This is the deeper wound – voices of doubt, despair, shame, and accusation. It's not just the difficulties of life that assail us. More than that, it's our perception of ourselves and our relationship with God as we face those difficulties. Problem is, there are ALWAYS voices speaking into our lives to feed our doubts and move us to despair. Sometimes these voices come from other people. Sometimes these messages come from our own hearts. And without fail, Satan will assail us with the voice of condemnation. This is the experience of David in Psalm 3. I'll bet this has been your experience as well.

The Heart of Faith

Verse 3 is one of the most loved verses in the Bible. It's incredibly beautiful all on its own. What an awesome expression of faith in God! When you place it in the larger context of Psalm 3, it's even more astounding. David's words represent a radical choice – the choice to look beyond the circumstances and see the glory and promise of God. David raises his voice in prayer to God and in so doing he comes against every voice of doubt, despair, shame, and accusation. This is the heart of faith. The heart of faith says, "BUT YOU LORD..." The Heart of faith focuses on the awesome reality of God. More than that, the heart of faith personalizes the awesome reality of God.

David says of God, "MY shield, my glory, the lifter of my head." Here David chooses to find his core identity in his relationship with the LORD. This is the way of faith in the Psalms. David refuses to let the situation define him. He refuses to find his identity in his son, or his position as king, or the immediate circumstances. His identity comes from another place: his view of God, the promise of God, his faith in God, and his relationship with God.

The Victory of God

But this Psalm isn't just about identity. It's about God actively working in our lives and in our world; God intervening to accomplish His plan and His purpose through all things. That's why the word "salvation" is a key to this Psalm. The enemies say, "There is no salvation for him in God" (verse 2). But David says, "Arise, LORD, save me!" and, "Salvation belongs to the LORD" (verses 7-8). The Hebrew word "save" means "to deliver or gain victory." This is the issue at stake in Psalm 3. David believes in the ultimate victory of God. That's where he takes his stand. It's not David's skill, power, or position that makes the difference, but rather the skill, power, and authority of God.

The Hebrew root word for salvation is "Yasha." From this word comes the name "Yeshua," (Jesus) which means Savior.

Now we see the rest of the story in Psalm 3. This Psalm finds its ultimate fulfillment in Jesus Christ, our Savior. Like David, Jesus, was betrayed, abandoned and mocked. Jesus was driven outside the city – right to the cross. The powers of darkness delighted. All hope seemed lost.

But Jesus Christ rose up from the grave and defeated all the powers of death and hell. This is real. This is the ultimate victory of God. Jesus (Yeshua) is our risen Savior. He has the power to save. Believe this. Hold onto this. Pray this. Live this. Let it be your focus and your identity no matter what the circumstances of your life. This is the victory of God and the heart of faith in Psalm 3.