

“Our Shield and Glory”
Psalm 3
(Preached at Trinity, September 27, 2009)

I’m supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord’s Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

Disclaimer: These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I’ll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. Et tu Brute – words immortalized by Shakespeare’s *Julius Caesar*. On March 15, 44 BC Julius Caesar was attacked by a group of senators. At first Caesar fought off his attackers but then he saw his good friend Junius Brutus. He then spoke these tragic words – Et tu Brute. “And you Brutus?” Words of betrayal and heart breaking grief. To be betrayed by his dear friend.
2. Jesus too must have felt this stabbing pain. To be betrayed by a His friend and follower. **Luke 22:48** – “Judas, betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?”
3. Perhaps there would be no greater grief than to be betrayed by your own child. David’s own son, Absalom, led a political coup against his father and won over the hearts of many of the people. David soon found himself surrounded by innumerable enemies and was forced to flee from his own palace.
4. It was while David faced these insurmountable foes that David called upon God knowing that He would deliver Him. This is the focus of **Psalm 3**
Psalm 3:3 – “But thou, O LORD, *art* a shield for me; my glory, and the lifter up of mine head.”
5. With **Psalm 3** we are introduced to two elements that we will see over and over in the Psalms.
 - A. One is the use of superscriptions. Over three-fourths – 116 to be exact, have superscriptions added at the beginning. They usually give some editorial information such as historical information and musical instruction. They also usually identify the author. As we can see in this psalm, David is the author and finds as it’s setting David fleeing from Absalom.
 - B. The other element we find in this psalm is the use of the word “selah” which was probably a musical pause. It is used 71 times in the psalms. We aren’t sure of the exact meaning but Selah was probably either a musical interlude or perhaps a pause for reflection upon the truth presented.
6. This psalm is divided into four parts, each containing two verses.
 - I. David’s perplexing problem – **Verses 1-2**
 - A. David recounts the number of his adversaries
 1. David had fled from his palace with a few faithful followers in the middle of the night.
 2. Absalom has turned many of the Israelites against King David
Psalm 3:1 – “how are they increased that trouble me! many *are* they that rise up against me.”
Psalm 3:2 – “Many *there be*. . .”
 3. We read in **2 Samuel 15:12** – “And the conspiracy was strong; for the people increased continually with Absalom.”

4. The growing opposition against David seemed insurmountable. With the few men that were with him he was hopelessly outnumbered
 5. It would have been easy for David to fall into utter despair. His enemies declared that he was forsaken of God – **Verse 2** – “There is no help for him in God.”
Shimei of the house of Saul cursed him.
2 Samuel 16:7-8 – “And thus said Shimei when he cursed, Come out, come out, thou bloody man, and thou man of Belial: ⁸ The LORD hath returned upon thee all the blood of the house of Saul, in whose stead thou hast reigned; and the LORD hath delivered the kingdom into the hand of Absalom thy son: and, behold, thou *art taken* in thy mischief, because thou *art* a bloody man.”
 6. The sections ends with “Selah” – a pause, perhaps a musical pause, perhaps a pause for meditation – Think about it and consider the magnitude of what has been said.
- B. There are times when we feel forsaken
1. Our troubles seem insurmountable.
They overflow us like the ocean waves.
 2. It may even appear to all that we are cursed of God.
 3. Satan sows seeds of despair – “God has forsaken you. You are cursed. No one cares and no one will come to your defense.”
 4. It is true. Has God forsaken us? Not according to Scripture.
Romans 8:35 – “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? *shall* tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?”
Romans 8:37 – “Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.”
Hebrews 13:5-6 – “I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. ⁶ So that we may boldly say, The Lord *is* my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.”
- II. David’s powerful protection – **Verse 3-4** – “But thou, O LORD . . .”
- A. David remembered his source of confidence
1. “Thou are a shield for me”
 - a. With God as our shield can any attack be successful?
 - b. We have an impenetrable defense
Psalm 18:30 – “*As for* God, his way *is* perfect: the word of the LORD is tried: he *is* a buckler to all those that trust in him.”
 - c. Arrows assault us continually seeking to destroy us but the fall impotently to the ground.
 - d. Paul spoke of this great shield
Ephesians 6:16 – “Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.”
 2. “my glory, and the lifter up of mine head”
 - a. David’s life seemed to be crumbling all around him but he trusted God to restore him. Who had made him king? Who gave him a kingdom. Wasn’t David the least among his brethren?

- b. God has given David all that he had – He could trust God with his life
 - 3. David sought God and God came to his defense
“I cried unto the LORD . . . and he heard me.”
 - a. David trusted his life into the hands of God
 - b. David had confidence that when he prayed God heard – what was the result? He was swept with perfect peace
 - B. Stop and consider your own source of confidence
 - 1. Again we are told to pause – “selah”
 - 2. Is God your shield? Is God not the source of your protection. Upon whom do you trust?
 - 3. And what is your thought about your life? Do you consider God your glory and the lifter up of your head? Who has given you everything you have – your family, your possessions, your reputation, your life! Can you not trust it all to Him?
- III. David’s perfect peace – **Verses 5-6** – “I laid me down and slept”
- A. In David’s desperate situation he was at peace
 - 1. Because he sought the face of God in confidence
Philippians 4:6-7 – “Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”
 - 2. In spite of David’s fiery trial he went to sleep in peace.
 - a. Night time can be the worst during adversity. Your head is spinning with the various issues and possible solutions.
 - b. In Christ we can trust His wisdom, power, and love.
 - c. David stopped thinking about his enemies. He stopped thinking about his condition.
 - 3. This is the place of peace, the place of faith. This must be the heart of the people of God. We must not look more upon the strength of our problem than we do upon God
 - a. Do you remember when Moses sent the spies into Canaan? Do you remember the two reports?
 - b. The faithless spies:
Numbers 13:31-33 – “We be not able to go up against the people; for they *are* stronger than we. ³² And they brought up an evil report of the land which they had searched unto the children of Israel, saying, The land, through which we have gone to search it, *is* a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof; and all the people that we saw in it *are* men of a great stature. ³³ And there we saw the giants, the sons of Anak, *which come* of the giants: and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight.”
 - c. Joshua and Caleb:
Numbers 13:30 – “Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it.”

- d. Had they seen different things? No they saw the same thing. The difference was the focus of their faith. Joshua and Caleb kept their eyes fixed on God.
4. David went to sleep in peace for he knew that God was well able to sustain him. His eyes were fixed upon God.
- B. This psalm has been called a “Morning Psalm” because of **Verse 5**
Psalm 3:5 – “I awaked; for the LORD sustained me.”
 1. David went to bed in peace and confidence in the midst of the trial; in the midst of thousands who wanted to take his life.
 2. But he awakened. Why? Because he was sustained of the LORD.
 3. **Verse 6** - With God no force is powerful enough to crush us
1 John 4:4 – “Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.”
Isaiah 54:17 – “No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue *that* shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This *is* the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and their righteousness *is* of me, saith the LORD.”
 4. It doesn’t matter how outnumbered we are.
 5. It doesn’t matter how impossible the situation may seem
We can rest in Christ

IV. David’s positive petition – **Verses 7-8**

- A. David closes this Psalm with his petition
 1. “Arise, O LORD” – It implies being stirred; coming to attention
It was a summons for God to rise up and go to battle for Him.
 2. “Save me, O my God: for thou has smitten all mine enemies”
 - a. David began to enter into a time of remembrance
 - b. David remembered. He remembered that God was his strength.
 - c. He would have remembered his experience with Goliath
1 Samuel 17:46 – “This day will the LORD deliver thee into mine hand; and I will smite thee, and take thine head from thee; and I will give the carcasses of the host of the Philistines this day unto the fowls of the air, and to the wild beasts of the earth; that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel.”
 3. He would have remembered the mighty victories God had given him
Psalm 3:7 – “for thou hast smitten all mine enemies *upon* the cheek bone; thou hast broken the teeth of the ungodly.”
 - a. David fought the battles but the victory was all God’s
2 Chronicles 20:15 – “Thus saith the LORD unto you, Be not afraid nor dismayed by reason of this great multitude; for the battle *is* not yours, but God's.”
 - b. This may sound harsh in our 21st century ears that have been conditioned by political correctness that demands tolerance but David was stirred more by a zealous passion for God’s holiness and glory. When David prayed “thou has broken the teeth of the ungodly” he was stirred by God’s righteous judgment.

- c. When we are being attacked by wicked hands we should pray for God's righteous intervention.
- B. With absolute confidence David declared, "Salvation belongeth unto the LORD."
 - 1. There is no ultimate deliverance apart from God
 - a. All who trust in Him will find deliverance
 - b. The ultimate deliverance is from the wrath of God and the curse of death
 - Matthew 10:28** – "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."
 - 2. David's thought were not limited to himself. All of those who have cast themselves upon the mercy of Christ have found the ultimate rest and peace. These are the people of God.
 - Psalms 3:8** – ". . . thy blessing *is* upon thy people."

Conclusion:

- 1. We know the end of the story. God did sustain David and God did destroy David's enemies. In the forest of Ephraim twenty thousand men were killed including Absalom. God did return David to his throne.
- 2. We don't know the end of our story yet, but in God's plan and purpose the end has been written. One thing we do know. He will sustain us until the end. Nothing shall separate us from the love of Christ. He will never leave us nor forsake us. He is our shield and glory.