

PSALMS: DIARIES OF GODLY OLD TESTAMENT SAINTS

Psalm Three: Encouragement And Direction When Confronted By Formidable Opposition

(Psalm 3:1-8)

I. Introduction

- A. Opposition from others is generally manageable if one is upright. However, when that opposition is **intensified** by (1) coming from **close relatives** (2) or from **many** other people (3) or when the opponent is well **educated** or intelligent (4) or when he **thinks** he is **right** (which makes for his deep commitment to his position), we can become confused, second-guessing our godliness etc.!
- B. Psalm Three teaches us the way to handle such formidable opposition as follows:

II. Encouragement And Direction When Confronted By Formidable Opposition, Psalm 3:1-8.

- A. David faced formidable opposition when he composed Psalm Three.
1. The Hebrew text uses the introductory notes about David's flight from Absalom as the first verse of the Psalm, Rudolf Kittel, ed., Biblia Hebraica, p. 978. Thus, David composed this psalm when he faced the emotionally wrenching, life-and-death opposition of his own son, cf. 2 Sam. 15:1-14.
 2. David faced numerous foes, Psalm 3:1. 2 Sam. 15:12 confirms this fact, stating: "And the conspiracy (of Absalom against David) was strong; for the people increased continually with Absalom."
 3. David faced intelligent opposition. His bright advisor, Ahithophel, had switched loyalties over to Absalom's side, making it hard to plan an adequate escape route from Absalom, 2 Sam. 15:31.
 4. Additionally, many in the opposition felt that God was not going to help David, for they claimed about David: "There is **no salvation** for **him** from **God**." (Psalm 3:2) They felt that God had abandoned David, that David was thus in the wrong, Bib. Know. Com., O.T., p. 793.
 5. The belief by David's opponents that God would not help him were rooted in David's own past failures, making it difficult for David to think clearly so that he could handle his current opponents decisively:
 - a. David's adultery with Bathsheba and consequent murder of her husband, Uriah had brought down God's judgment that there would be trouble in David's household thereafter, 2 Sam. 12:9-10.
 - b. Later, when David's son, Amnon raped, Tamar, Absalom's sister, David found it difficult to punish Amnon as it brought up memories of his own adultery, 2 Sam. 13:1-21 with Lev. 20:17.
 - c. Embittered by David's lack of justice for Tamar's sake, Absalom murdered Amnon and thereafter abhorred David to the extent that he led this insurrection against him, 2 Sam. 13:22-15:1 4.
 - d. Thus, when Absalom sought David's life, David found himself facing the fulfillment of God's prediction through Nathan, the prophet that the sword would not leave his house due to his past sin.
 - e. It was thus difficult to be firmly opposed to Absalom due to his own past failure.
- B. Nevertheless, David found encouragement and direction from the Lord to handle this difficult challenge:
1. David remembered that he had been anointed of God to be king, 2 Sam. 7:1-17. Accordingly, he concluded that God was still his personal help in even **this** formidable conflict, Psalm 3:3.
 - a. The word for "shield" here is *magen*, a round, light infantry, **personal** shield used by soldiers in close combat, Ibid., Roland de Vaux, Ancient Israel - Volume 1: Social Institutions, p. 244-245.
 - b. This shield was "round about" David, showing that God was going to fulfill His purposes regarding David so that **no** calamity by **any** source could offset **God's** plans **for** him in his anointed position!
 - c. Accordingly, God would restore David to his former position of king over Israel, the term "lifter up of my head" (v. 3b) speaking of restoration to a former position, Ibid., B.K.C., O.T.
 2. Thus, David would get a good night's sleep and awaken alive, Ps. 3:4-5 with 2 Sam. 16:21-17:23.
 3. Also, he would not be afraid of tens of thousands of opponents, Ps. 3:6.
 4. Further, David gained the confidence to ask for God's discipline of his opponents, vs.7. Smiting one on the cheek was culturally a great insult, Leupold, Psalms, 64, so David asked for it upon his opponents.
 5. Thereupon, David would **trust in God** to **save him** as an innocent party though his opponents felt God wouldn't save him because they felt he was guilty, Ps. 3:8 versus Ps. 3:2!

Lesson: (1) **God's UNCONDITIONAL plans regarding the believer will be UNCONDITIONALLY fulfilled!** (2) **Thus, he may handle ALL opposition to that divine goal IF he is CURRENTLY right with God, whether the trouble comes from (a) relatives, (b) many pe ople, (c) smart people (d) or from those who think they are right to oppose him!**