

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION
Psalms: Living By Faith In God
III. Handling Widespread Intimidation
(Psalm 3:1-8)

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

We face widespread efforts of intimidation in today's world, and we need to know how to handle it:

(1) It occurs in the federal government: Thomas J. Baker, a retired FBI special agent and legal attaché, in his op-ed, "The FBI Needs a Wray of Courage" in The Wall Street Journal, October 18, 2021, p. A15, claimed that "Attorney General Merrick Garland's memorandum instructing the Federal Bureau of Investigation to develop strategies for monitoring 'harassment, intimidation, and threats of violence' against local school personnel" was "clearly intended to intimidate parents and as such is a threat to their First Amendment rights." Mr. Baker supported his claim, explaining that "if any violence occurs at a local schoolboard meeting, its resolution is properly the purview of state and local law enforcement," not a federal agency like the Federal Bureau of Investigation!

(2) It occurs in the state government: Regarding "groups seeking to sue Connecticut over the school mask mandate, Doug Dubitsky, R-74th District, said, "There are tons of attorneys out there, but people are scared. Attorneys are scared. Everybody's scared to say the wrong thing or to poke their head up lest they be chopped off." (Susan Haigh, "GOP lawmakers lead lawsuits against state COVID rules," Republican-American, October 15, 2021, p. 7A)

(3) It occurs in society in general: Psychoanalyst Erica Komisar in an op-ed, "Cancel Culture's Mental-Health Toll" in The Wall Street Journal, October 14, 2021, claimed, "'School-sanctioning shaming and social-media free-for-all of bullying leave teens and young adults constantly walking on eggshells, afraid to express heterodox [dissenting] opinions in class, among peers or in schoolwork.'" ("Quotable," Ibid, p. 8A; brackets ours)

(4) It occurs in religious realms: "President Biden . . . who is Roman Catholic," supports "gay marriage and abortion rights," putting "him at odds with Catholic doctrine," what has "brought controversy and criticism from some leaders of the Catholic Church in the United States." (Alexandra Jaffe, "Biden set to confer with pope on Oct. 29, Ibid., p. 3B) However, when "a number of Catholic bishops debated denying Biden communion over his support for abortion rights . . . the pope weighed in against such a move, and the bishops backed off." (Ibid.)

Need: *So, we ask, "How does God direct that we handle widespread efforts of intimidation?!"*

I. David faced great, widespread pressure to feel intimidated when he composed Psalm 3:1-8:

- A. The introductory note claiming that David wrote Psalm 3 when he fled from his son Absalom is the first verse of the Hebrew text (Kittel, Bib. Heb., p. 978), so it reveals the actual setting of the psalm's composition.
- B. We know from 2 Samuel 15:1-16:14 that David's son Absalom led an insurrection against David's rule that was so great, David and his supporters had to flee for their lives from Jerusalem and cross the Jordan River.
- C. Since Psalm 3:1-2 reveals that there were many foes who had risen up against David and who said that there was no deliverance for him from God, David at the time faced great, widespread pressure to feel intimidated!

II. Yet, God's Word assured that David would survive and retain his rule, 2 Samuel 7:14-16 with 12:9-10:

- A. Opposite the claims of David's foes that there was no deliverance for him from God, back in the 2 Samuel 7 Davidic Covenant, the Lord had promised to chasten David if he sinned, but that God's mercy would not depart from him as it had left king Saul before him (2 Samuel 7:14-15), which removal of God's mercy had resulted in God's also removing Saul from being Israel's king, 1 Samuel 16:1.
- B. Later in 2 Samuel 11:1-12:10 after David had murdered Uriah the Hittite so he could take Uriah's wife to be his own wife, God had said that He would raise up calamity from David's own household, what was in part fulfilled when Absalom led an insurrection against David in 2 Samuel 15:1-16:14.
- C. Nevertheless, regardless of this severe divine chastening, the Davidic Covenant promised God's mercy would **still not leave David** as it had left Saul, that **David** would neither be assassinated nor lose his office as king!

III. So, applying the hope he had in God's faithfulness to the Davidic Covenant in his behalf, in Psalm 3:3-8, David affirmed his faith in God's help to overcome Absalom's insurrection:

- A. David hoped for victory over Absalom's insurrection by firmly applying God's Davidic Covenant in his behalf:
 1. The "You" that starts verse 3 refers to God, and it is emphatic, written apart from and before the verb; Ibid.
 2. The word for "shield" renders the Hebrew noun *magen*, a smaller, hand held, leather shield used by light infantry and worn by warriors to protect themselves in close combat. (B. D. B. A Heb. and Eng. Lex. of the O. T., p. 171; Roland de Vaux, Ancient Israel: Vol. 1 Social Institutions, p. 244-245)

3. Thus, David asserted that "**You** God" -- in infinite power and goodness coupled with His covenant promise to keep David as Israel's king -- that [and we paraphrase] "**You** God are my small, hand-held shield Who protects me in close combat against the many insurrectionists who have risen up against me," Psalm 3:3a.
 4. David thus cried unto God for help, and He answered him from His holy temple back in Jerusalem, v. 4.
 - B. As a result, David quieted his mind enough to lie down and sleep and also to awaken without being slain, for God was "sustaining" him, the verb "sustain" being in the imperfect tense (*yismekeni*, from *samak*, "sustain," Ibid., B. D. B., p. 701-702) to speak of God's **continuing** sustenance, Psalm 3:5.
 - C. David thus claimed he would **continually** (imperfect tense '*ira*' from *yare*', "fear," Ibid., p. 431) not be "fearing" the tens of thousands who had set themselves against him all around (Psalm 3:6), and he called on God to arise to save him, for God **customarily** (Hiphil perfect tense) "struck" (*hikita*, Ibid., Kittel; Ibid., B. D. B., p. 645-646) all of David's foes with mortal blows [in upholding the Davidic Covenant], Psalm 3:7 ESV.
 - D. In summary, David claimed that deliverance belongs to the Lord, and His blessing would be on His people in restoring their God-anointed king David to his throne [in accord with the Davidic Covenant], Psalm 3:8.
- IV. God upheld His Word, defeating the insurrectionists and restoring David as king, 2 Samuel 17:24-20:26:**
- A. In the battle that occurred between David's supporters and Absalom's men, God used the heavily wooded battleground itself to destroy more of Absalom's men than were slain by David's supporters, 2 Samuel 18:6-8.
 - B. God even arranged for Absalom himself to be captured uninjured when his long hair got caught in the thick branches of a tree as his mule rode under it, apprehending him for David, 2 Samuel 18:9. This divine capture of Absalom met David's desire that Absalom not be harmed, but merely captured, cf. 2 Samuel 18:5.
 - C. Absalom's forces were defeated, Absalom was wickedly murdered by David's ungodly general Joab in violation of God's and David's wills, but David was then restored as Israel's king, 2 Samuel 18:10-20:26.

Lesson: *Applying God's Scriptural assurances in the Davidic Covenant, David trusted God to preserve him from destruction by Absalom's insurrection, to defeat that insurrection and to restore him as king in Israel.*

Application: *(1) May we trust in Christ Who died as our Atoning Sacrifice for sin that we might receive God's gift of eternal life, John 3:16; 1 Cor. 15:1-11. (2) May we like David apply God's Word regarding His purposes for us in order to handle all the intimidating issues or parties we face.*

Conclusion: (To illustrate the message . . .)

In line with the sermon, we apply God's Word as it relates to us and what we face as noted in our introduction:

(1) Regarding the Attorney General's effort to intimidate parents at school board meetings, regarding edicts by school administrators that children must wear masks in school and regarding intimidation efforts by people in society in general, (a) if there is no Biblical cause to voice an objection to the issue involved, Romans 12:18 calls us to try to live peaceably with all men. (b) However, **if** there is a **Biblical** cause to **voice** an **objection**, (i) recall that unsaved or "carnal" believers who function via their sin natures do not accept Biblical truths, for such truths are foolish to them, and they are not able to accept them since these truths are spiritually understood, 1 Corinthians 2:14. (ii) Also, the unsaved are blinded by Satan to Christ's Gospel, 2 Corinthians 4:4. (c) Thus, we believers (i) **must not initiate giving Biblical information** in speaking to the unsaved or to "carnal" Christians in authority since doing so only invites a troubling response. (ii) Rather, we must prayerfully **wait for God** to give us the **opportunity** to speak **as accepted by the unsaved or "carnal" Christian in authority**, Colossians 4:2-3. (iii) Then, **when** we speak before the unsaved or "carnal" Christian in authority, we must use pleasant but pure, penetrating words (the meaning of the KJV's "grace, seasoned with salt" in Colossians 4:6; Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 684). (iv) However, if we are ever aggressively "cornered" by a hostile unsaved or "carnal" Christian in authority where we are charged to answer him, we then apply Matthew 10:16-20 and rely on the Holy Spirit to speak through us to that party!

(2) Regarding the pope's intimidation of bishops to tolerate fellowship with those who support gay marriage and abortion rights in violation of the Roman Catholic Church's official beliefs, and **in great violation of Biblical beliefs**, (a) Peter and the other apostles in Acts 5:29 called Christians to obey God over man. (b) Thus, if **any** religious leader or his church tolerates what violates Biblical limits on spiritual fellowship, and tolerating gay marriage and abortion rights certainly violates such limits (1 Corinthians 5:11; 6:9-10; Exodus 21:22-23), one must withdraw from that church and go elsewhere to fellowship with those who hold to the Biblical beliefs that were once-for-all delivered to the saints. (2 Corinthians 6:14-18; 2 Thessalonians 3:6, 14-15; 1 Corinthians 5:1-7 and Jude 3)

May we trust in Christ Who died as our Atoning Sacrifice for sin that we might receive God's gift of eternal life. May we trust God's Word relative to His purposes for us to handle all the intimidation we face.