

## **Sleeping through a Storm**

(Psalm 3)

8/31/16; Wed PM Pine Grove

### **Introduction**

Here are the top 5 reasons that people can't or don't get a good night's sleep...

5) The temperature of the room and your body temperature is too hot or too cold...

Studies show that people fall asleep faster when the room temperature is cooler than warmer.

4) Health problems also lead to a lack of good sleep...

Whether those are breathing problems that get worse with lying down or other illnesses, your body does not rest as well when your health is poor.

3) Too much drinking or eating right before bed time is also a cause of a bad night's sleep.

2) Your senses are overworked where you sleep.

It may be too loud or too quiet too bright or too dark, but it has been proven that our senses must be relaxed before our body can relax...

1) And the number is reason for a poor night's sleep is simply an overactive mind....

Whether that is an unusual amount of stress...

A battle with depression.

Anxiety caused by a deadline or an important event the next day...

Simply put, a stressful and uneasy mind makes it difficult to go to sleep and stay asleep...

Now, think about the stress of trying to sleep in extremely stressful times...

Let's say trying to sleep through the night when there is a strong possibility of tornadoes...

Or let's say trying to sleep through the night during WW2 when bombs are dropping all around you...

How do you do it?

Well, David faced that challenge many times in his life.

Ever since he was anointed the next king of Israel after Saul, David was on the run for his life..

Living in the wilderness.

Living in caves.

Hiding in foreign lands...

Running for his life was a way of life for David before he became king, yet after his sin with Bathsheba, David had to run for his life again...

We read about that in 2 Samuel 15-17 not many months ago where David's own son named Absalom rebelled against him...

If you remember, Absalom went to his hometown of Hebron and rallied support down there before heading to Jerusalem to take own daddy...

However, David got news of Absalom's planned rebellion and left out of Jerusalem before his son got to town...

And if you remember, David left out of Jerusalem and headed east...

Going down the back side of the hill where the temple would be built and then up the Mount of Olives crying as he went...

Because he hated to leave the city of Jerusalem behind....

And on his way out, he encountered more enemies like Shimei who threw stones at David and hurled insults at him as well...

Needless to say, it was a bad few days for David...

His son was trying to take the throne from him; the people of Israel that once loved David were now joining with Absalom in his attempt to overthrow David...

Talk about a stressful situation, but guess what?

David slept like a baby even though his mind was filled with all this trouble and even though he was far from his bed....

And how do I know that?

Well, Psalm 3 is a song that David wrote as he headed out of Jerusalem to flee from Absalom, and in Psalm 3 verse 5, David writes that he lay down and slept and he was sleeping so good that the Lord woke him up.

When we will look at that part of the psalm of the psalm when we get there, but for now, let us begin this psalm in verses 1-2 where David feels...

## **I. The Pressure of People (1-2)**

Verses 1-2...

*A Psalm of David, when [a]he fled from Absalom his son.*

**3**

*O Lord, how my adversaries have increased!  
Many are rising up against me.*

**2**

*Many are saying [b]of my soul,  
“There is no [c]deliverance for him in  
God.” [d]Selah.*

Couple things to note before we get to verse 1...

First, this is the first psalm with a heading...

We talked about that last week, but the words...

“A psalm of David when he fled from Absalom his son” were inspired by God...

They help set the stage for the words that follow and give us good insight into David’s situation and thoughts...

He is clearly on the run out of Jerusalem and away from the threat that his son poses to him...

And his first thought is this...

Lord, I am being overwhelmed by my enemies...

Many are rising up against me...

That is how life can look at times to us...

Every where we turn, there's a problem...

There's a situation that demands our attention...

There's a need that we need to fill...

David in a very real sense was not overwhelmed with daily struggles...

David was simply overwhelmed with people who wanted to kill him...

Talk about problems...

That makes being behind on my to do list seem like not so big a deal..

Yet, we all feel the pressure of people at times...

Whether it is family or friends or bosses or whoever it may be, the world seems to close in on us at times...

David felt that and we feel that as well...

But not only do they close in, they mock while they are closing in...

Look at verse 2...

They weren't only surrounding David, they were insulting him as well..

“There is no way that God will deliver him now..”

Your translation may say salvation, but this is not in the sense that David's God couldn't save him in a spiritual sense..

These were Jews who were mocking David...

They knew that God could save David spiritually...

They were simply saying that David was not going to be saved by God physically this time...

In other words, they were mocking David by saying that he was out of rescues with God...

And what do you think was their reason for God not coming to David's rescue?

I would suspect that they were using David's recent sin with Bathsheba against him....

Uh, huh, David.

Party is over this time...

God may have saved you from Saul, but now that you have committed this huge sin, God has pulled the safety net out from under you...

There is no way that He will deliver you this time, David...

This is the end of the road...

And let's face it, what does the enemy use to discourage us?

Often, it is the guilt of past sin....

You are in this state of being overwhelmed because you are the worst kind of sinner...

Satan is what?

He is an accuser, and he accuses believers day and night to cripple them and make them ineffective in their service to the Lord...

Listen to what Martin Luther said of the pressure of people's comments that tempt you to see yourself beyond the rescue of God...



All the temptations of earth and all the temptations of hell could be melted together into one but they would not compare to the temptation to see yourself beyond the merciful hand of God...

Let me sum this up like this...

This world seeks to overwhelm the Christian with their opposition and insult...

And look the sad fact is that these often come from people closest to us...

Don't forget who David is referring to here...

He is referring to the fact that his own son is now his enemy and his own flesh and blood is now insulting him...

We seem to only see Islamic terrorists in these verses in 2016, but let me give you a painful reminder...

The enemies rising up against you and insulting you are often your own flesh and blood...

Often times, Christians are attacked by friendly fire...

So, we identify with David in these opening 2 verses...

The pressure of people and the insults of their comments weigh on us time and time again....

So, what does David do?

I am glad you asked, but I bet you already know the answer...

David does what we should do, but often fail to do...

David turns to God in prayer.....

## **II. The Peace of Prayer (3-5)**

Verse 3....

**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 [e]mountain.  
Selah.***

**5**

***[ff]I lay down and slept;  
I awoke, for the Lord sustains me.***

In verse 3, David calls God a shield, his glory, and One who lifts his head..

We certainly should take note of God as our shield...

As kids, our teachers taught us how to respond to insults with a poem...

When your mean words come out,  
Remember I am rubber and you are glue,  
Whatever you say bounces off me,  
And sticks to you.

For the believer, God is the shield of our life...

As the people close in and hurl their darts of insults, God is our shield who protects us from them...

Now obviously, God doesn't stop the pressure of people and their insults from reaching our ears, so how is he a shield?

In this way, the insults of our enemies have no effect on our standing with God...

Think of it this way,....

Even though you are wearing a bullet proof vest, a bullet will still knock you down, but the vest saves your life...

Look, insults hurt but the words of a man can never take your salvation if you are truly saved...

God is a shield because 10000 people and 10000 insults can never do any damage to the fact that you are saved....

Look, when people attack, the best thought to fill your head is this...

No matter what you may say, I am still saved when your insults are over...

We also see that David praised God as a lifter of his head...

Enemies seek to physically and mentally harm us,  
yet God has the power to keep our heads high...

What a great picture in difficult days to be able to  
lift our heads to the Lord...

Listen to the words of one preacher...

When you hang your head, you may walk off a  
cliff...

Only those who keeps their head and eyes up and on  
the Lord are able to see the next step to take...

David then simply bears his heart to us...

He was crying to the Lord in verse 4...

It is fine to pray silently to the Lord.

In 1 Samuel 1, Hannah prayed silently to God in her  
heart, and God answered her prayer for a son...

But there are times when we need to cry out loud to  
God, and David was experiencing one of those  
times as he left Jerusalem running from Absalom...

And God heard that prayer as well because David  
said that God answered him in the second half of  
verse 4...

You may say what answer did God provide because the psalm doesn't tell us...

Yet, I think the answer to David's prayer was what you see in verse 5...

I lay down and slept; I awoke for the Lord sustains me...

Sometimes the answer to our prayer is the God lets us get good night's sleep..

Sometimes, God doesn't remove the problem or the people, he simply gives His people rest in the trouble....

Remember Jesus in the boat in the sea of Galilee?

Huge storm is brewing; the disciples are having a panic attack, but Jesus is simply asleep at back of the boat...

Sometimes, the answer to our prayer is that God calms our minds even though He doesn't calm to situation...

Look, God didn't stop Absalom's charge....

He did slow it down, but Absalom was still coming after David...

And his rebellion would go on for some more weeks...

David may have been praying that God would stop the rebellion, but God was simply going to give David peace in the midst of it...

You may want the bank account to go up, but maybe God is simply going to give you peace while it is low...

You may want your family drama to end, but maybe God is simply giving you a good night's sleep in spite of it...

Sometimes, the best prayer is to ask God to take it away, but if not, beg him to give you peace about it...

Often times, I hear people describe their problems and they want God to give a one minute solution...

I often remind them that is capable of doing that...

But often times, situations didn't happen overnight and they won't be solved overnight unless the Lord wills that to happen...

In those cases, it is best to pray but also to maintain your testimony as you deal with them...

And why is that?

Because there is no greater sleeping pill than a clean conscience...

If you sin in the situation by losing your patience or anger or slandering someone else, your conscience will be violated and you won't get a good night's sleep....

Therefore, the best thing to do is what David does here...

Cry to God in your trouble and cry to him about your trouble, and simply ask for God to fix it but if not to give you peace in your trouble...

And God heard David and he answered David if that was nothing more than a good night's sleep out in the wilderness of Israel...

Some days, all we want is a little rest, right?

And some days that is all God gives, and when he does, we should praise him for it...

And then take note of the end of verse 5....

I awoke for the Lord sustains me...



We take about it all the time, but how do you keep yourself alive through the night?

You don't.

God does.

In David's view, God put him to sleep and God woke him up...

Only God can give us the peace to sleep through difficult days, and only God can get us up to face another difficult day...

One sign of depression is the tendency to want to sleep all the time and not get up and face the day..

The peace of God should put us to sleep, but the peace of God should also get us up...

David gets up from sleeping look at his attitude toward his situation in verses 6-8....

### **III. The Promise of a Protector (6-8)**

Verse 6...

**6**

***I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people  
Who have set themselves against me round about.***

This is peace in God not pride in ability that David writes about here..

Paul told Timothy who was a young pastor feeling the pressure in a big church that God had not given him a spirit of timidity and fear

But had given him a spirit of power and love and discipline...

David is not a reckless man or warrior, but he could face 10s of 1000s of enemies because he simply had incredible faith in God...

***Jesus said, "Do not fear those who kill the body  
but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him  
who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."***

***Matthew 10:28...***

Our fear of God lessens our fear of our enemies...

David had his own son and his own army who had betrayed him breathing down his back, yet he would not fear them...

And neither should we fear unbelievers who hurl their insults and put pressure on us to crack...

Often times, the things that seem like emergencies and require our immediate attention go away in a matter of hours....

The problem may look like an army of 10000, but they often scatter like flies...

However, even if they don't and they continue to march toward you...

Cry to God like David in verse 7...

7

***Arise, O Lord; save me, O my God!***

***For You [g]have smitten all my enemies on the [h]cheek;***

***You [i]have shattered the teeth of the wicked.***

When we were kids, we played baseball in the street in front of my grandma's house...

And as kids, there were all sorts of arguments and fusses and fights over a game..

My grandma would put up with most of them, but if they got out of hand, she would simply need to get up out of her rocker on the porch and look at us....

And the argument stopped...

It go to the point where all she had to say to say when arguments were getting to numerous was....

“Don’t make me get up.”

And the thought was simply this...

If she gets up, there’s gonna be trouble for all of us...

Now, forget that she was old and probably couldn’t even get down the steps of the porch to us...

We simply knew to play so that she stayed in her seat and all would be well...

This is the picture that David paints of God...

We know that God is a Spirit, yet David gives him a body and in his prayer, but simply saying...

“God, get up and come to my rescue.”

The idea is that God only has to rise get up off his throne and David's enemies will take notice and the persecution will stop...

And then look at David's statements in the end of verse 7....

God, you hit my enemies on the cheek and jaw...

God, you smash the teeth of the wicked people around me....

This is graphic language, but look at what part of the body that David refers to here...

The mouth and cheek and jaw, and the picture is this....

David's enemies are all around him ready to chew him up and spit him out....

Their mouths are open and ready to devour...

Their tongues are wagging insults at David...

And God strikes them right in the mouth, shattering their teeth and stopping their tongue....

Some people are disturbed by these words that show God as someone who strikes down men....

But this doesn't bother me at all...

My God is a defender of his people...

My God is a protector of his children....

God is a consuming fire who destroys the wicked...

Those who don't like God's protection of them  
don't fully understand who God is...

David does, and he calls on God to stand up and  
protect him...

And then David ends psalm 3 with this...

**8**

***[j]Salvation belongs to the Lord;  
Your blessing [k]be upon Your people! Selah.***

Do you remember what David's enemies were saying?

God isn't going to save you this time, but who gets  
the last laugh?

David, and therefore, he writes....

Salvation and help and deliverance belong to the  
Lord...

God blesses his people...

And then he simply ends the psalm with a word that we have seen a couple times, but haven't talked about yet....

And that is the word Selah...

Much ink has been applied to paper to explain this word in Hebrew poetry and song...

But no one knows exactly what it means....

I think the best explanation is this....

“Selah means to take a moment and simply think about what you have just sung or said.”

It is simply a pause in the poem or song to encourage our minds to take in that truth...

In verse 1-2, we are to take in the truth that David is in trouble and there appears to be no help coming to him...

In verses 3-4, we are simply called to remember that David called to God in his trouble and God answered....

And now that we are at the end of this psalm, we are simply called to pause and consider this...

God heard his cry and came to his rescue...

In other words, God delivers and blesses his people...

Selah.

Think about that...

### **Conclusion**

And my conclusion to psalm 3 is simply that...

You think about God as your help in trouble and your deliverer from trouble...

And you say to me...

Well, I do think about that..

I do know that...

And I believe you, but my question is do you practice Psalm 3.....



All the knowledge in the world is useless unless it is used by the one possessing it...

In your troubles, go to prayer more than you complain.

In your troubles, ask God to help you sleep in the storm when he doesn't let the storm blow over...

And in your troubles, resist the temptation to fear man, but call on God to rise up and defend you...

And when the storm ends, praise the Lord that he rescued you...

Let us pray...