

PSALM 3
MANY FOES / ONE FRIEND

A Psalm of David when he fled from Absalom his son.

¹*LORD, how they have increased who trouble me!*

Many are they who rise up against me.

²*Many are they who say of me,*

“There is no help for him in God.” Selah

³*But You, O LORD, are a shield for me,*

My glory and the One who lifts up my head.

⁴*I cried to the LORD with my voice,*

And He heard me from His holy hill. Selah

⁵*I lay down and slept;*

I awoke, for the LORD sustained me.

⁶*I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people*

Who have set themselves against me all around.

⁷*Arise, O LORD; save me, O my God!*

For You have struck all my enemies on the cheekbone;

You have broken the teeth of the ungodly.

⁸*Salvation belongs to the LORD; Your blessing is upon Your people. Selah*

There are many foes in a person's life—some are expected, some are not. All mean harm. Foes that come from one's own family or from one's own circle of friends are most devastating to the heart.

King David had many foes in life. ¹*LORD, how they have increased who trouble me! Many are they who rise up against me.* Think of Goliath the Philistine giant, King Saul of Israel with his armies, Doeg the Edomite, Nabal the fool, and more. Imagine the sting when his own son, Absalom, turned against him to get the throne. Absalom stole the hearts of the people of Israel, attacked Jerusalem, David was forced to flee, Absalom took over, then pursued his father.

Perhaps you have experienced this to one degree or another—fathers vs. sons, mothers vs. daughters, brothers vs. sisters, brothers vs. brothers. Satan's game. As the list of one's foes grows, and when it includes someone from the family, the effect is discouraging—"I must be bad, a loser." Discouragement grows even more when you hear, your own heart says, ²*“There is no help for him in God. Selah.”* In other words, “Even God doesn't want you; you're disgusting to Him; God isn't going to help you one bit.” Do you remember Rab-Shakeh, leader of the Assyrian army, who told King Hezekiah and Jerusalem, “The Lord won't help you; He sent me against you!” (II Kings 18:25). Discouraging taunts. *Selah.* *Selah* is a Hebrew word likely meaning “break, pause for music, change of thought.”

What can one do against opposition and such discouragement? David writes, ³*But You, O LORD, are a shield for me.* Turn to the LORD God for help, admit your many failings/sins, seek forgiveness in His mercy and the promised Savior who “took it on the chin” FOR YOU and your sin. That same Lord is your help against all foes seeking your true harm. He is your shield—something to duck behind against all the flaming arrows of Satan and those whom Satan is using. “A mighty fortress is our God,” Luther says, “a trusty shield and weapon!

“O, Lord, my Glory and the One who lifts up my head.” The Lord is the shield and the never-failing rescue—even vs. sin, death, and hell. He is the Glory! He is the one in whom to boast and to rejoice, your

hero—not yourself nor any Hollywood-type hero. The Lord is your glory! He brings you peace, comfort, and safety. He calls you His holy child in Jesus. *Who lifts up my head.* Were you ever, as a child, despondent because you lost the game, because your pet died, because you weren’t old enough go along with Dad, because you had ruined something precious? Did Mom lift up your chin with her hand and give you words of forgiveness, love, comfort, and encouragement? That is what the glorious Lord did for David and does for you. “I love and forgive. It will be ok.” And this, no matter what the odds are against you.

⁴ *I cried to the LORD with my voice, and He heard me from His holy hill.* Indeed, the Lord hears your prayers and the silent prayers from your heart. He is in a position to help. He is on His throne on “His Holy Hill.” You can think of that in terms of a king of Israel on Mt. Zion, the “holy hill” of Jerusalem, or in terms of Psalm 121:1 “I will lift up my eyes to the “hills,” from whence comes my help,” or in terms of “the Mt Zion, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem” (Hebrews 12:22). The Lord, your King and your Friend, sees, protects, and leads—you and all His children in Christ. He is the one Friend you need, no matter how many foes stand against you! *Selah.* Break.

When sorely troubled and oppressed, it’s hard to sleep, there’s so much on your mind. David, even when opposed by his own son and Israel, wrote, ⁵ *I lay down and slept.* As worrisome and distressing as a situation may be, there is peace. Are you in charge? If so, what happens when you’re asleep and have “abandoned” your post? The Lord is “at the wheel.” Be at rest. David says that in the morning, *I awoke, for the LORD sustained me.* Every night the Lord sustains you. You can wake every morning, with the thought, “I’ve just been off-duty for 8 hours (or whatever), and I didn’t lift a finger to steer things, yet here I am. The Lord sustained me!” And He will sustain you through His Son and His Spirit for another day—no matter who’s against you. “If God is for us, who can be against us? (Romans 8:31).

⁶ *I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people, who have set themselves against me all around.* Foes? Me upset? Not even if 10,000 are against me—10,000 who have blocked my every way of escape! No, not afraid, nor despondent. Not even Satan himself can harm me! From Christ the Savior, my Lord, I have protection. “My sheep here My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand” (John 10:27-28).

David writes, ⁷ *Arise, O LORD; Save me, O my God!* God is on your side, LORD, Jehovah, the HE IS, the One to whom every man is answerable and subject. Imagine you are in bed at night home alone, you hear a prowler in the house who enters the bedroom. For the first instant you are startled, but then you intently say, “Rufus, get him!” and your big Rottweiler, camped beside your bed, leaps into action. Nothing to fear. Only this his text is much better! *Arise, O LORD! Save me, O my God!* Foes are powerless against you. Your God will save you—many times in earthly life as He sees right and best for your and the souls of His Kingdom. He may see fit that your earthly days end, and He takes you to your heavenly days. There you are safe from all the evil of Satan forever. *Save me, O my God!* are not just words for this earth, but for eternal life. Jesus is your SAVIOR. No one can out-manuever Him.

What a dramatic statement follows! *For You have struck all my enemies on the cheekbone; You have broken the teeth of the ungodly.* Let God land a “haymaker” on the jaw, the cheekbone, of your foe or foes and break out all their teeth! Can you see that in an Old West movie? Wham, and teeth being spit out! Humiliated and devastated your foe is defeated—every last one. Your Lord is at hand at all times.

David’s foes were crushed, even his brazen and rebellious son Absalom, whose head got caught in the branches of a tree as he was fleeing, in fear. Hanging in mid-air, he met a humiliating death, at the hands of David’s general Joab and men. How humiliating for your foes when you are set free from all the plots against your physical life and your eternal life. Your life with the Lord is secure! ⁸ *Salvation belongs to the LORD! LORD, Your blessing is upon Your people!*

Selah! Pause, break, rest in peace in Jesus each day!

Amen! So be it!

Pastor Kanzenbach---