

Peace in the Midst of the Storm

by David Guzik

David Guzik's sermon explores how to find peace and confidence in God during life's storms, as illustrated in Psalm 3.

Duration: 19:17

Scripture: Psalm 3:1-2, Psalm 3:7

Topics: "Faith And Trust", "Godly Confidence"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker focuses on Psalm 3, where David laments the increase of his enemies, including his own son Absalom. David is troubled by the lack of loyalty from those who have joined Absalom's rebellion. Despite his difficult circumstances, David finds his glory in the Lord and trusts in God's promises. The speaker challenges the audience to reflect on what they take glory in and encourages them to find their ultimate joy and satisfaction in the Lord.

Transcript

Alright, psalm 3. Now, if you'll notice at the very beginning of this psalm, before you even jump into verse 1, there's a title given to this psalm. I assume it's in most of your Bibles. It says, a psalm of David when he fled from Absalom, his son.

I think it's significant to notice about the titles that are given to different psalms. You'll notice not every psalm has a title. I think maybe less than one-third of them actually are given titles.

But the titles to the psalms are very ancient. They exist in the oldest Hebrew manuscripts that we have. And so there's every reason to regard the titles of the psalms as inspired.

To me, it's a bit curious why many commentators and many Bible teachers don't. To me, just the fact that they are in the oldest Hebrew manuscripts that we have indicates that the titles of the psalms are very relevant. And this psalm fits beautifully in the period of history that we're talking about when David fled from Absalom, his son.

Maybe I should paint the picture of that just briefly. David had problems in his family life. And we all know about his devastating sin of adultery with Bathsheba and the murder that followed upon that sin and the death of the child.

Because let's not forget that a child was conceived from David and Bathsheba's illicit union. And that child was taken by the Lord. But the problems that David had in his family life were long before that disgraceful affair with Bathsheba.

David had problems with his family life. You can tell just because he multiplied wives into himself. It shows that he got out of God's plan for marriage where one man is joined under one woman in what's known as a one flesh relationship.

That's God's plan. That's God's ideal for marriage. Well, David departed from that.

And because of the great problems in his family life, one of the things that Nathan, the prophet, told David after the disgraceful affair with Bathsheba, he told David that the sword would not depart from his house. And there was great violence in the household of David. You have brothers raping sisters.

You have brothers murdering brothers. And then in the whole case with Absalom, you have an occasion where David's own son, Absalom, attempted to overthrow David, to launch a civil war against him and to take the kingdom by force from his father, David. Absalom did this in a very cunning way.

He knew that David was busy with the affairs of managing the kingdom. And so Absalom would hang out in the town civic center. They was the gates of the city.

He'd hang out in the town civic center. And when anybody would have business for the king, Absalom would say, well, tell me your problem. You know, David, he's too busy to listen to you.

What a hardworking man David is. But he's just too busy to listen to you. Tell your problem to me.

And the man would tell his problem to Absalom, and Absalom would fix his problem for him. And through this, this very cunning way, Absalom gained a following for himself until one day it bared itself an open civil war. Well, when David was fleeing from the city of Jerusalem, knowing that his life could be taken at any moment because Absalom would not hesitate to kill his father, he penned this psalm.

Verse one. Lord, how they have increased to trouble me. Many are those who rise up against me.

Many are those who say of me, there is no help for him in God. Selah. By the way, Selah is a Hebrew word which seems to indicate a pause.

Some people believe that it's a musical instruction, as if it were a command to the lead guitar player to go send out a blistering lead or something. Some kind of musical interlude. Or it's an instruction to the leader, to the reader, I should say, to take a moment and to reflect.

The point, whether it's a musical instruction or an instruction to the reader, it's still the same. It's a time for reflection upon what was just written. In any regard, here's what's in front of us.

Verses one and two. David laments that they've increased against him those who trouble him. His son has launched a successful rebellion against him.

And many of his previous friends and associates forsook him and joined the ranks of those who troubled him. The Bible tells us in 2 Samuel 15 that all of Israel seemed to go after Absalom. And this is what troubled David.

It just wasn't that he had enemies. Oh, you know, you have enemies. David knew this.

He was a leader. And, of course, it hurt him badly that his enemy was his own son. That was a special wound in the midst of it.

But on top of it, it was just all the people that seemed to rush to the side of Absalom. Where's the loyalty, David thought? Where are the people who are going to hang around and support me? But there were many who rised up or rose up against David. Look at what they said.

It's at the end of verse two. This is perhaps the most cutting of all. There is no help for him in God.

That's what they said of David. David's situation was so bad that many felt that he was beyond God's help. Now, those who said this, they probably didn't believe that God was unable to help David.

They probably had their theological P's and Q's correct. They believed that God was able to help David. What were they saying when they said there is no help for him in God? They were saying that God didn't want to help David.

Why would they say such a thing? Well, probably they looked at David's past sin and they said this is what he deserves from God. There's no help for him in God. This is God's hand against him.

The Bible tells us that when David was fleeing the city of Jerusalem, that there was a fellow named Shimei standing off by the side of the road. Shimei started throwing rocks at the company of David as he was running by. And then he started screaming.

And he started screaming, David, this is all come upon you, the hand of God. You deserve this, David. Shimei had his own issues to deal with.

David was very generous towards Shimei. Some of David's men escaping with him said, can we just go up there and kill this guy? David said, no, no, God may be speaking through him. But just the thought that God is against you, David, you're getting what you deserve from him.

This was the most painful of all for David. The thought that God might be against him and that there's no help for him at all from God. Friends, I think this is one of the most grievous trials that a believer can go through.

It's a trial so terrible, I can't think of anything to compare with it. It's that bitter affliction that makes you feel that there's no help for you from God. Now you think about it, no matter what the trial is that you face, you lose family, you lose friends, you lose fortune, you lose your health, you lose all these difficulties.

As long as you feel that you have a secure help in God, you can survive any of those storms. But when it comes against you, the thought, the feeling, the persuasion, there's no help for you and God. Oh, how that troubles you, doesn't it? Oh, how that afflicts you.

And this is what people were saying of David. They were whispering it behind his back. They were saying it to his face.

There's no help for you in God. So what did David do? Take a look at verse three. He says, but you, oh, Lord, are a shield for me.

My glory and the one who lifts up my head. I cried to the Lord with my voice and he heard me from his holy hill. Selah.

You see, many people said to David that there was no help for him in God. But David knew that God was his shield. Others, maybe many others, they couldn't shake David's confidence in a God of love and help.

David was under attack from a cunning and ruthless enemy. David needed a shield. And God said, I'll be your shield.

I want you to notice this wasn't a prayer asking God to fulfill it. David wasn't saying, oh, God, please be my shield. Not that there would be anything wrong with that.

But look at the triumphant confidence in David. In verse three, he says, but you, oh, Lord, are a shield for me. You are my shield.

Then he says, you're my glory. You're the one who lifts my head. God was more for David than protection.

He was also the one who put David on higher ground, lifting up his head, showing his glory to David. There was nothing glorious in David's circumstances. Listen, when your life is an inch away from death and your own son is out there wanting to kill you, there's nothing glorious in that.

But what could David say? Say, David, Lord, you are my glory. You are the one lifting my head. Nothing glorious in David's circumstances.

Nothing head lifting in David's circumstances. But the Lord was greater than any other circumstances. I want you to think about it for a moment.

Men find glory in all sorts of things. They find glory and fame, glory and power, glory and prestige or possessions. David found his glory in the Lord.

How about you? What do you take glory in? What really thrills your heart? Is it your paycheck? Is it the possessions? Is it the hobbies or the entertainments that you have? I want you to consider for a moment that all of those can be taken from your life very quickly. But the Lord will never leave you or forsake you. You find your glory in the Lord and you'll always be glory.

Let me put it to you another way. That's going to be your glory in heaven. I'll tell you that right now.

That hobby that you love so much, that gives you so much joy right now. Well, maybe it's an innocent hobby. Maybe it's a beneficial hobby, but maybe your heart's slipping to it.

You're finding more glory in that than in the Lord. You know, I don't think that hobby is going with you to heaven. What, are you going to be in heaven missing your hobby? I don't think so.

Why don't you find glory right now in what you're going to glory in for all of eternity? Well, David had this assurance of heart, yet he knew he wasn't out of danger, so he continued to cry to the Lord. Did you see it there in verse four? I cried to the Lord with my voice and he heard me. David wasn't content just to pray silent prayers.

I think that's a trap for us sometimes. God hears our silent prayers. But I think that even the best of us find that even in the secret place, even in the closet of prayer, we find that we pray better aloud than silently.

I find that, don't you? So David cried to the Lord with his voice. And what was it? He heard me from his holy hill. I think this is wonderful because who was encamped on God's holy hill right then? Well, it wasn't David.

David was leaving town. Absalom was trying to take over. Absalom was on the holy hill of Jerusalem.

He wanted to dictate the policy for all of Israel, and he wanted David dead. But David says, no, I see that it's not Absalom enthroned on the holy hill. It's the Lord God, and God is going to hear me from his holy hill.

God still holds that ground. Absalom, you can't evict the Lord. You've evicted me, but you can't evict the Lord.

And you know what? The one who's still up there on that holy hill, he hears me. Absalom, you don't have a prayer. God is going to hear me from his holy hill.

Now look at it here, verse 5. David says, I lay down and slept. I awoke where the Lord sustained me. I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people who have set themselves against me all around.

Isn't that great? The fearlessness of David, but not just his fearlessness. Look at it in verse 5, his peace. I lay down and slept.

I awoke. David uses both of those as evidence of God's blessing. Now, sleep was a blessing.

You know, when you're under such intense pressure, when you're under that kind of stress, sometimes you can't sleep, right? I think I'm looking out on some faces that have known some sleepless nights. You're tortured. You're stressed.

You know, I'll be very frank with you. I don't think what you faced is worse than what David has faced right here. David's life was in mortal danger.

His whole family was broken up. His own son was out there trying to kill him. And what does David say? I can lay down and sleep.

You know, I'm under such intense pressure from the circumstances of Absalom's rebellion. But sleep is not impossible for me. I can sleep because of my great peace in the Lord.

One old commentator says, truly, it must have been a soft pillow. Indeed, that could make him forget his danger. Well, that is a soft pillow, isn't it? The promises of God.

A few weeks ago, the family, we were out in Europe and we had to make a few stops to a few different cities. And we arranged it to where we. Well, it wasn't arranged.

It's kind of forced upon us by airline schedules. But that we're coming into an airport very late at night. And we were leaving that same airport very early in the morning.

And we look into the hotels and there wasn't anything that seemed cheap or worth it to stay the night or anything. So. So, you know, good old dad myself, you know, well, we'll try it.

Let's let's spend the night in the airport. And so there we are. We're we're scoping out the airport ahead of time.

And, you know, they got a lot of benches in these in this airport and a lot of places to sit. And, you know, most of the benches didn't have those arms. You could lay out on these benches.

This would be great. So we noticed that on the outbound flight. We think this can work.

All right. Great. So we get back very late.

You know, it's been an exhausting day of travel when we come back into that airport. And now we have to spend the night there and we take a look around. And let me tell you, folks, there were hundreds of people spending the night in that airport.

There was not a single place to sit in the entire airport. We had to sit on the floor in a corner somewhere and just kind of huddle around and sleep the best we could. It was not a pleasant night for the Guzik family.

If you think we were bad in our place, you know, there were people walking by through the night envying where we were because we had a relatively nice place on the floor. But anyway, all the old dad myself, you know, there I am thinking I have to be the century, the person standing vigilant through the night. So I stayed awake the whole night watching over everybody and everything while everybody else kind of fitfully slept or tried to sleep through the whole night.

Now, I would have loved this verse. Then I lay down and slept. What a blessing that is.

You know, maybe if I had more faith, I would have slept. Maybe if I would have had the faith of the assurance that David had in this thing, I said, Lord, I just trust you to take care of the family. I'm going to lay down and sleep.

Perhaps I was being responsible. But boy, what a great thing it is when under the intense pressure of the moment, under great circumstances or trials or stress, you can lay down and sleep. That's not the only thing.

Look at it as well. The other blessing is I lay down and slept. And then he says, I awoke.

Now, that's a blessing, too, isn't it? David could have been murdered in his sleep. You know, sometimes you go to sleep and you wonder if you will or you wonder if you want to wake up in the morning. David says, I lay down and slept and I awoke and I won't be afraid of ten thousands of people with God sustaining and both sleeping and waking.

David could stand against any foe. You know, it was before it was ever written in Romans eight thirty one. But David knew it.

If God is for us, who can be against us? You'll stand against any foe. Look at how the psalm concludes here in verses seven and eight. David says, Arise, O Lord, save me, O my God, for you have struck all my enemies on the cheekbone.

You've broken the teeth of the ungodly. Salvation belongs to the Lord. Your blessing is upon your people.

Selah. David's mind is both on what he trusts God to do and that's save him from all of his enemies. But then it's all on what God has done.

Strike my enemies, God. You've struck them. You've broken the teeth of the ungodly.

I know what you have done and I trust what you will do. When he says those words arise, O Lord, it's it's reminiscent of the words from Numbers chapter 10. When Moses would say those words before the the camp of Israel went forward and he would call for it to God.

Arise, O Lord, and let your enemies be scattered. It was a war cry. At the bottom of the ball, he says salvation belongs to the Lord and your blessing is upon your people.

I love that. Did you notice that David doesn't just look for blessing upon himself, but upon the people of God? Your blessing is upon your people. You see, David wasn't grieved to what Absalom was doing to him just for his own sake, but he knew it wasn't good for the nation.

He wasn't just concerned for God's hand upon himself, but upon all of God's people. He didn't pray for preservation and victory just in the trial for Absalom, but for his own sake, but for the sake that it was best for the nation. So you see the generosity of David's heart.

You see, what I want you to see in this song is that David in this desperate, desperate place. He's looking for God to totally win a great victory. You want to see how total about there in verse seven, you've broken the teeth of the ungodly man.

Is that a vivid metaphor? God break their teeth. That's total victory. That's domination.

You see, what I want you to see is that in this song, David looked for protection, right? We understand that. But he looked for more than protection. He looked for victory.

It wasn't enough for David to survive this threat to the kingdom. He wanted to be victorious over it and to gain the blessing of God. Now, how about you and your walk with the Lord? I don't doubt for a moment that there's some of you.

Satan has so lowered your eyes that all you're hoping for from God is survival. I'm here to tell you tonight, God wants more than just survival, more than just protection for you in your walk with him. He wants to lead you to victory.

Those enemies in your life, the world, the flesh, the devil, God wants to break their teeth. To give you great victory over them, not just survival.

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