

No Help in God, Eh?

Psalm 3:1-8

Halifax: 28 February 2010

Introduction

Today, I invite you to turn to Psalm 3, the Psalm I read a few minutes ago.

- Psalm 3 is our new Psalm of Focus for Isaiah 36-39.

It has been quite a few weeks now that we have had Psalm 33 as our Psalm of Focus.

- For you who may not know what I mean by our Psalm of Focus, I will explain:
 - Our Psalm of Focus is a Psalm that we sing every week that has to do with our regular sermon series.
 - I introduce this Psalm in a sermon, and then we sing it each Lord's Day until we take up a new Psalm of Focus.
 - All this helps us to become more acquainted with the Psalm, and it also helps us to connect what we are singing to our sermon series.
 - Right now, we are doing a series in Isaiah—chapter by chapter...
 - And we have just finished that great section in Isaiah where the prophet speaks of God's sovereign dealing with the nations during the time of the Assyrian domination.
 - The prophet shows us that the LORD is the One who raises up and brings down nations according to His wise and holy purposes.
 - In connection with this section, we have enjoyed singing Psalm 33 which also speaks of God's sovereign power and working among the nations.

But now we have come to chapter 36 of Isaiah's prophecy and here a historical section begins...

- Here we have the threat and the defeat of Sennacherib, the King of Assyria, when he attempted to take the city of Jerusalem.
 - Isaiah had declared from very early in his ministry that Assyria would nearly destroy all of Israel and Judah—
 - He prophesied that only Jerusalem would stand.
 - He described the Assyrian assault as a river that would rise to the neck (leaving only Jerusalem the head), and then be marvellously stopped by the sovereign hand of God.
 - The Assyrian, however, is quite full of confidence because of all his former success...
 - And so he comes with his huge army and a lot of hubris against Jerusalem.
 - And of course, as we shall see in future sermons, he fails.

And so for this historical section, I have selected Psalm 3 for our Psalm of Focus because it also has to do with a very similar historical situation...

- We are told what that situation is in the Hebrew title, which arguably is part of the inspired composition...
 - It is a situation that is quite similar to the situation of Hezekiah when he found Jerusalem surrounded by the cocky Assyrian army and when, from all human appearance, it looked as if the end had come.
 - It is the situation of Absalom's rebellion.
 - It says,
 - "A Psalm of David when he fled from Absalom his son."
 - David had sinned against God by committing adultery and then by resorting to violence in his attempt to cover it up.
 - And the LORD had told him that because of what he had done, there would be trouble in his household.
 - Parents, beware!
 - God often chastens for our unfaithfulness by turning our children against us.
 - I know that this is not a popular doctrine.
 - I know that this is a doctrine that many would prefer not to believe.
 - But David will tell you that it is true, and so will Eli and so will many of the kings of Israel,
 - and so will a whole host of parents who are humble enough to admit their own sin.
 - It was a terrible rebellion because it was led by David's own son...
 - And it was especially directed against him personally.
 - Absalom's ambition was driven more by hatred or his father than it was by the love of power and position.
 - And he had led many of David's once faithful servants (like Ahithophel) and almost all of Israel into the rebellion.
 - In 2 Samuel 15:12-13, it says:
 - 2 Sam 15:12-13: Then Absalom sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite, David's counselor, from his city—from Giloh—while he offered sacrifices. And the conspiracy grew strong, for the people with Absalom continually increased in number. Now a messenger came to David, saying, "The hearts of the men of Israel are with Absalom."
 - Absalom had come into Jerusalem and into the royal palace with the intention of overthrowing the theocracy.

- You can see how these terrible circumstances are similar to the circumstances of the people of Jerusalem when Sennacherib had come to overthrow Jerusalem.
 - The LORD was the one who had given him success to come as far as he had.
 - It was a chastisement for His people's sin and unfaithfulness to His covenant.
 - And now, here they were in full power surrounding the city in which the Lord had chosen to place His name.
 - The two situations are very similar.

And we may bless God that these psalms, even though they sometimes relate to specific historical events,

- are written for the public praise of God's people as a whole;
 - And as such, they can easily be applied and adapted to the circumstances in which we find ourselves as God's people.

Now my dear brothers and sisters,

- it is very important to understand that you are by no means exempted from great suffering in this world.
 - Whether your suffering is as Job's for no particular sin, but only to test you...
 - Or as David's in this case, because of specific sin that he had committed...
 - Or as Daniel's when he suffered affliction because of the sin of his people...
 - The Bible assures you that you must undergo much tribulation in this world.
 - Jesus tells us that it will be so,
 - and Paul and Peter and James and John and all the others tell us that it will be so.
 - God has ordained it to be so, and you must understand that it will be so.
 - You must not be surprised when it comes.
- And so I say not **if** it comes, but **when** it comes,
 - you must be ready to endure it.
 - You must know what is to be done when enemies come up against you and you feel that you are completely helpless.
 - It can be pressure and threats from ungodly children, wicked church leaders, financial troubles, or sickness,
 - but whatever the form in which it comes upon you,
 - Psalm 3 teaches you what you must do.

- It is a Psalm for all of us to make our own song when we are afraid in times of pressure and trouble.
- The Psalm is divided into four pairs of verses, each providing us with what we ought to do when tribulation comes.

I. First, when trouble comes, bring it to the LORD.

A. It is for you to do just as David does in this Psalm...

1. Remember that the Psalms are given to God's people to sing before Him.
 - There is nothing in them that is inappropriate or unwise for us to bring before God in them.
 - They are our songs if we are God's people,
 - and we are to make them our thoughts and prayers and sentiments and praises before the Lord.
 - And here you are encouraged to describe your trouble to the Lord.
2. You will say, "But why should I bring my troubles before the LORD?"
 - Does He not already know all about them?"
 - Of course He does!
 - But you bring them before Him for your sake and for His honour and glory.
- a. For your sake because you need to face them, and see how desperate you are, and give them over to the LORD...
 - 1) We are a strange mix because there are times when we look upon our troubles too lightly—we do not see the seriousness of them or care about the things that are at stake...
 - And then at other times, we are all weighed down by them as if we had no help from God.
 - 2) By bringing them to the LORD like this, you roll your cares over onto Him.
 - Indeed, we all find relief in telling others about our troubles, even when they are unable to help us.
 - How much more does it relieve us to tell them to the LORD when we know that He can do something about them!
 - 3) Do we not have examples of this all through scripture?
 - In Isaiah 37, we are going to seek Hezekiah,
 - upon receiving a threatening letter from Sennacherib,
 - taking it and spreading it out before the LORD!

- In Nehemiah 4, we are told what Nehemiah did when he was taunted by Tobiah. He said,
 - Neh 4:4-5: “Hear, O our God, for we are despised; turn their reproach on their own heads, and give them as plunder to a land of captivity! Do not cover their iniquity, and do not let their sin be blotted out from before You; for they have provoked *You* to anger before the builders.”
 - And in Acts 4:29-30, we have this excellent example from the early church when Peter and John were released from prison:
 - Acts 4:29-30: "Now, Lord, look on their threats, and grant to Your servants that with all boldness they may speak Your word, by stretching out Your hand to heal, and that signs and wonders may be done through the name of Your holy Servant Jesus."
- 4) You are actually commanded to bring your troubles before the Lord like this in 1 Peter 5:7. It says:
- 1 Peter 5:7: Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.
 - The words, “casting all your care upon Him,” convey the idea of rolling your care from yourself onto the LORD...
 - Like a burden, you roll it over onto Him to bear it for you.

b. This honours the Lord...

- When you do this, you acknowledge great things about Him...
 - That He is the One who is able to do something about your burden.
 - That He is compassionate and cares about your situation.
 - That He is omniscient and knows about your situation.

TRANS> So you see that you need not be the least bit reluctant about bringing your problems to the LORD in this way.

- The LORD will not reject you if you come in this humble manner for His strong help.
 - It honours Him for you to look to Him in your need.
 - See then, how David does this...

B. See how David describes his enemies to the LORD.

1. You see that he emphasises their number!

a. He exclaims how they have increased and how they are many.

- I already showed you what it said in 2 Samuel about this conspiracy.
 - 2 Sam 15:12-13: And the conspiracy grew strong, for the people with Absalom continually increased in number.
- This was very troubling to David.

- It was trouble enough that his own son should rise up against him like this...
 - But then on top of that, that Absalom had managed to gain such a great following...
 - Even David's once trusted counsellor Ahithophel had gone over with Absalom...
 - and almost all of Israel.
 - These were David's once loyal subjects whom David had faithfully served as a wise and gracious king.
 - He loved his people and sought to do good for them,
 - but now they have turned against him.
 - And the fact that there were so many meant that humanly speaking,
 - there was little hope for David and his men but for the Lord.
 - So David shows this all to the LORD:
 - "How they have increased who trouble me! How many there are who rise up against me."
- b. And that is what you all must learn to do if you would be a child of God—a true Christian...
- You must come to see that you cannot handle your own life.
 - You are desperate and in need of God's help.
 - You have a Devil who is stronger than you and smarter than you and who holds you in bondage.
 - You have your sin that has brought condemnation upon you and is ready to sink you to the depths of Hell.
 - You have your own corruption that keeps you from serving God, this body of death that cannot submit to God.
 - You have a whole world that is in rebellion against the true and that wants you to join them in that rebellion.
 - You have all sorts of trials and difficulties to discourage you and dissuade you from serving the LORD and walking with Jesus.
 - It is for you to roll all of this upon the LORD Jesus Christ...
 - It is for you to show all this to God and to tell Him that you are overwhelmed...
 - Bring it to His attention to deliver you.

- That is what you have done, and what you continue to do if you are a true believer.
 - You know that you cannot atone for your own sins.
 - You know that you cannot stand in your own strength.
 - And this coming before the LORD becomes your whole way of life...
 - You learn more and more to cast all your care on the Lord as His child.
 - You show Him your trouble that He might have compassion on you in it.
2. You see further that David speaks of the terrible taunt of his enemies!
- How cruel they are!
- a. They look upon him suffering, helpless, driven out of Jerusalem...
- and they say—
 - “There is no help for Him in God.”
- b. What a terrible thing to say!
- 1) The thing itself is a dreadful thought...
- If there is no help in God, there is no help at all!
 - All other help that we may receive is only temporary help.
 - The help that He brings, whether through the agency of other people or the agency of nature, or however He brings it,
 - is the only true help.
 - And if we don’t have any help from Him, we are sunk...
 - We are utterly ruined and undone.
 - We are without any hope whatsoever.
 - It is not in your power to redeem the earth... you can’t even redeem your own soul!
 - You must have His help!
- 2) But this terrible taunt had a thorn it for David that made it much worse.
- David knew that he was being chastened by the Lord for his past sins.
 - Nathan the prophet had told him specifically that his sons would rebel against him because of what he had done—
 - and even specifically that one of his sons would take his wives before his own eyes and lie with them, a thing that was done to a king when he was overthrown.

- David and his dear friends were suffering now because of what David himself had done...
 - and David knew this and so did his enemies!
 - And now his enemies come and say, “there is no help for him in God.”
 - We are going to see Sennacherib say that to Hezekiah and the people—and to accuse them as those who are being chastened (which they were).
 - It is the work of Satan to accuse God’s people and to do all he can to drive them to despair...
 - There is no mercy in him.
 - He sees us being chastened and he attacks all the more aggressively...
 - Many, in league with him, will say, “God has forsaken you—there is no help for you in God.”
 - Did not our dear Lord Jesus have to bear with this taunt when He was chastened for our iniquities on the cross?
 - Did His enemies not surround Him and declare that God had forsaken Him in the time when the LORD had indeed turned away from Him for a time to afflict Him for our sins?
 - How difficult it was to receive this taunt!
- 3) Yet, you see that David brings even these terrible words, as painful as they were, and presents them before the Lord!
- That is the way to do it David!
 - That is the way to find mercy!
 - When the enemy speaks like that, it will stir up the LORD to come to your defence!
 - Yes child of God,
 - The taunts that come against you when you are chastened have something in them to encourage you!
 - The Lord sees them and they cause Him to hasten His deliverance!
 - Did David not encourage himself with this when Shemei cursed him at this time?
 - He said:
 - 2 Sam 16:10-12: So let him curse, because the LORD has said to him, ‘Curse David.’ Who then shall say, ‘Why have you done

so?’ And David said to Abishai and all his servants, “See how my son who came from my own body seeks my life. How much more now may this Benjamite? Let him alone, and let him curse; for so the LORD has ordered him. It may be that the LORD will look on my affliction, and that the LORD will repay me with good for his cursing this day.”

TRANS> So here is the first thing to do when trouble comes—

- Bring it before the LORD that He might take notice of it in His great mercy!
- Oh that we would learn to do this before our compassionate Father.
- Now let’s move along to the second thing you are taught to do by this Psalm when trouble comes:

II. Second, when trouble comes, remember all that the LORD is to you.

- This is one of the best things about our troubles...
 - So often we don’t pay very much attention to all that the LORD is to us, but when trouble comes, we do.
 - We come to see His love and His grace and His power in ways that we had not seen them before.
- A. David, in his troubles, mentions three wonderful, beautiful, comforting things that the LORD is to him...
 - and these He is to all of you who put your trust in Him—all of you whom He has chosen for salvation.
- 1. First he says, “But you O LORD are a shield for me.”
 - a. “They say that You have forsaken me and that I can expect no help from you...
 - But I know better than that!
 - I know that you are shield that wraps all around me (that is the way this shield is described here)...
 - You are a total defence to me.
 - No enemy can touch me unless You give him permission...
 - and if you give him permission, it will always be for my good that you might further my salvation.”
 - b. But how do you know that God is a shield to you?
 - You know it because He has promised to be a shield to all who trust in Him.
 - He has solemnly promised it in His covenant.

- Did He not say to Abraham:
 - Gen 15:1: "Do not be afraid, Abram. I *am* your shield, your exceedingly great reward."
- Did the LORD not also say to Israel,
 - De 33:29: Happy *are* you, O Israel! Who *is* like you, a people saved by the LORD, the shield of your help and the sword of your majesty!
 - Are not all of God's promises yea and amen to us in Jesus Christ?
- Did He not promise in Proverbs that:
 - Prov 30:5: "He is a shield to those who put their trust in Him"?

TRANS> Let our enemies say what they will.

- Let them say that we are fools for trusting in God—that there is no help in Him...
 - But we know that His wings are our protection and that we are very safe in His care...
 - Nothing can hurt us.
 - Though our bodies may be destroyed, it will only be to prepare us for a more glorious resurrection in the day of Christ.
 - But He is not only our shield...
2. David also says to the LORD (and let these be your words also), you are "my glory."
- a. In this way we remember our whole reason to exist!
 - People have no reason to live, no reason to go on, but for the glory of God.
 - We do not have honour or significance in ourselves, but only through our association with Him, for we are made for Him.
 - Once we come to know Him, our identity is totally bound up in Him.
 - We lose our own life in order that we may find it in Him.
 - Becoming united to Him, to His purpose, to the promotion of Him.
 - Our whole life is about advancing Him and showing forth His honour and beauty forever.
 - b. What a thing to remember in your deepest trials!
 - Say to yourself,
 - "What else am I here for but for Him who is my sovereign and my Maker and my Redeemer?"
 - "If I may honour Him by this present suffering, that will be glory for me!"

- “I have no glory in myself to preserve—only His to promote!”
- If in some way I may see His glory through my suffering and cause others to see it,
 - I will suffer with my master and join His prayer at the cross when He prayed that the Father would be glorified.
 - It was enough for Him that the Father would be known through His suffering, and that He would see His glory again.
 - And what a glory it is!
 - What a privilege it is to be associated with Him in it.
 - What an honour it is to suffer for Him who suffered for me.

TRANS> So in your sufferings, tell the Lord that He is your shield, tell Him that He is your glory...

3. And thirdly, says to Him: “You are the One who lifts up my head.”
 - a. This is an expression that is used in scripture to refer to exaltation...to deliverance from a lowly place to a better place!
 - For example,
 - When Pharaoh brought the butler and the baker out of prison in Joseph’s time, the scripture says that he:
 - “lifted up the head of the chief butler and the chief baker among his servants.”
 - The same words are used to refer to Jehoiachin, king of Judah, when he was brought up from prison by the king of Babylon...
 - It says that he “lifted up the head of Jehoiachin and brought him out prison.”
 - b. It is a reminder that even though God may bring you very low,
 - He will exalt you in due time.
 - He will lift up your head and bring you to glory.
 - Jesus has prayed for us that we will behold the glory that He had with the Father before the world began.
 - We know, that even though the worms destroy our body, yet, in our flesh, we shall see God.
 - God will restore everything and He will exalt us far above what we ever were before.
 - Even death is not threat to us.
- Always remember in your deepest affliction that it is only temporary,

- and that in Christ, it is producing an eternal weight of glory that cannot be compared.
- No matter how low you may be brought, the Lord will exalt you in due time.
 - He is the One who lifts up your head!
 - Tell Him so in your afflictions!
 - Encourage your heart by remembering all that He is to you.
 - You may not have paid much attention to these things before your suffering came, but now you can see God as you had not seen Him before.

B. Oh child of God, be encouraged that He hears you when you cry out to Him!

1. David believed that God heard him when he lifted up these prayers...

- Grammatically, verse 4 can be translated,
 - “I will continually cry with my voice and He graciously hears me from His holy hill.”
- I believe this translation is preferable in that this was what David experienced in the very midst of His troubles.
 - He turned to God and after a time, he attained the sweet assurance that God had heard him.
 - Like Jacob, he did not let go of the LORD until the LORD had blessed him.

2. This is what you must learn to do...

- Don't just pray a little perfunctory prayer!
 - You are in trouble and you have no place to go but to the Lord.
 - He is your own hope!
 - You must lay hold of the throne of grace!
 - Do not cease to cry to Him until you know that He has heard you...
 - until you believe His promise and are able to rest in it.

TRANS> And this brings us to the next section in this Psalm that speaks of the peace that you are to pursue when trouble comes...

III. Third, when trouble comes, see that you rest in the LORD.

A. You have not finished casting your burden on God and remembering what He is to you until you have the peace that David describes here in verse 5-6.

- Even our LORD Jesus had to wrestle and sweat in prayer in Gethsemane until He was settled... even in facing the cross...
 - How poised He was before His enemies when they came to arrest Him...
 - for He, in His human weakness, fully prepared Himself in a night of wrestling in prayer with cries and tears before the Father.
- If the Son of Man had to prepare himself for the battle, how much more do you!
 - Here was the mighty lion of the tribe of Judah wrestling in prayer while His disciples were sleeping...
 - and then when the hour of trouble came they fled in dismay and He was at peace.
 - Do not proudly suppose that you do not need to pursue this peace by importunate prayer!
 - Do not be like the disciples who suppose that they can stand.
 - Pray until you know that you have prevailed with God and have cast your care upon Him.
- But how do you know when you have prevailed?
 - You know when, in the midst of your troubles, you are able to have the peace that David describes here...

B. Verse 5 shows that it is a peace that enables you to sleep.

1. It is remarkable what David says here when you think of the circumstances!
 - a. Here he was, chastened of the LORD,
 - His own son turned against him and almost all of Israel in conspiracy against him.
 - Tens of thousands of enemies against him...
 - And David is able to go to sleep because he has cast his care upon the LORD.
 - We are told of some of the dear Scottish martyrs who were able to sleep sweetly on the night before their execution.
 - They had obtained such sweet assurance that God was with them and that they were in His gracious hands that they had no care.

TRANS> Not only did David sleep...

- b. He also was fearless when he awoke the next day to face the enemy.
 - In verse 6 he gives this further testimony of his peace:

- Ps 3:6: I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people Who have set themselves against me all around.
 - David knew that Absalom had a huge army that was going to pursue him that day, but he has no fear of them at all...
 - He has God as his shield and his glory and the one who will lift up his head.
 - Here again we may think of some of the Scottish covenanters who arose in the morning on the appointed day of their execution,
 - and offered up prayers of thanksgiving to God that they were counted worthy to suffer for their LORD and to seal their testimony with their own blood.
2. This is the peace you are to seek from the LORD in your troubles.
- a. You are called to follow David's example.
 - The command of Philippians 4:6 is clear:
 - Phil 4:6-7: Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.
 - b. You can always tell that you do not yet have this peace if your fears and worries keep you from being able to sleep.
 - Now of course there is a wrong kind of sleep that is ignorant of need—
 - like the sleep of the disciples in the Garden of Gethsemane when they were so sure that they did not need to pray—that they would be fine.
 - There are millions who sleep well every night because they are completely oblivious that they are only one step away from Hell.
 - They are at peace when they ought to be trembling.
 - If you have never reconciled to God, you would be sweating in terror if you knew the danger that you are in!
 - I am not talking about those who sleep because they are blind and ignorant...
 - But the sleep here is the sleep that comes when you have faced the real danger you are in and have put your trust in the LORD in the midst of your deepest troubles.
 - You have come to know that you are safe in Him as your shield and glory and as the one who will lift up your head.
 - Do not let go of Him until you have this peace.
 - That is the third thing to do when trouble comes.

IV. Fourth, when trouble comes, ask your sovereign LORD to act for you.

A. Ask the LORD to arise and save you.

1. You see how David prays this way in verse 7.
 - Ps 3:7: Arise, O LORD; Save me, O my God!
 - Here is a very simple prayer... a prayer of salvation...
 - We looked at what it means for God to arise in Isaiah 33 a couple of weeks ago.
 - We saw that God is said to arise when He comes to act for His people after a time of relative inaction on His part...
 - As when He allowed Absalom to gather a host against David, to come into Jerusalem so that David was forced to flee...
 - You see, God does not always prevent our enemies from coming against us, but He waits until His appointed time and then He arises to deal with them.
 - This is the way He works in the entire history of the world...
 - Satan goes about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour...
 - But the day will come when the LORD will arise for us to utterly defeat him.
 - Absalom had made great advances against David...
 - But now David is asking God to arise and act...
 - The matter has reached the boundaries that God had set for it and it is time for Him to show Himself strong against Absalom.
 - The time has come which God has set, for Him to show favour.
2. Brothers and sisters, when you are chastened of the LORD and He raises up enemies against you,
 - you too can confidently pray that He will arise against them.
 - You may not always know when He will answer, but you can be sure that as they are His enemies who oppose His kingdom,
 - He will indeed arise to stop them and to save you.

TRANS> But as the conflict with them may have been long and hard, as it surely was with David,

- It is important to strengthen your prayer... to fortify it as David does here...

B. Here are two ways to strengthen your prayer...

1. First, you can strengthen your prayer for God to arise by remembering how God has avenged you of your enemies in the past.
 - a. David remembers how God has, in the past, struck his enemies on the cheekbone...
 - and broken their teeth, making them harmless:
 - Ps 3:7: For You have struck all my enemies on the cheekbone; You have broken the teeth of the ungodly.
 - They had been like raging beasts, so David speaks of them as beasts who use their teeth to devour their prey.
 - To strike their cheek (or their jaw bone) and to break their teeth is to render them harmless.
 - It is to smash their faces in!
 - That is what our gracious LORD does...
 - He takes the enemies whom He has used to chasten us in His wisdom and He makes them harmless.
 - What examples David had from his past experience to encourage him!
 - He had his time as a shepherd boy when the LORD gave him grace to slay the bear and the lion...
 - He had the great day when he faced Goliath of Gath as a young man and saw the hand of God bring him down...
 - He had the many victories God had given him against the Philistines such that the women cried out and said,
 - “Saul has slain his thousands, but David his ten thousands.”
 - God had delivered him from Saul and from the Jebusites and from many others!
 - What confidence he may have now that God will deliver him again.
 - b. But you will say, “How does this help me?”
 - I have never been a shepherd boy aided by God against a lion and bear, nor have I been a warrior fighting in the field of battle.”
 - But my dear brothers and sisters,
 - If you are in Jesus Christ, it can only mean one thing...
 - The LORD of glory has rendered Satan harmless to you.
 - He has broken the Dragon’s teeth out of his mouth so that he cannot harm you.

- And He has delivered you from your own sin and corruption so that you repented and believed on Christ...
 - You did not change your own rebellious heart... you were dead in trespasses and sins...
 - It is He who made you alive!
 - It is He who delivered you.
- And how many times has He delivered you from temptation...
 - When it had taken hold of you and would have destroyed you if He had not provided a way of escape!
 - You have many deliverances to look back on...
 - So look back on them to bolster up your prayers now in your present affliction!
 - That is the first way to strengthen your prayers in the midst of your trials.

TRANS> What is the second way?

2. The second way is to remember that salvation belongs to the LORD.
 - a. It is His from start to finish!
 - What a comforting thought!
 - In verse 8, David says simply:
 - Ps 3:8: Salvation belongs to the LORD.
 - In your trials you must remember that your salvation is something that He undertakes—
 - It is totally in His hands and He knows exactly what He is doing.
 - Even the afflictions themselves and the chastisements are all part of God's overall work of salvation...
 - He has it all under control and you need to entrust it to Him.
 - Even the very best of God's people struggle with this
 - Abraham felt that he must help God along by lying about Sarah his wife.
 - And Jacob and Rebekah felt that they must help Him along by using deception to secure the birthright that He had promised to Jacob—
 - And Jacob continued for years to live as if he had to help salvation along...
 - until he finally came to realise that he was helpless and must depend completely on the LORD.

- It was like God kept saying, “Jacob, Jacob—I am going to bless you!”
- Please understand that I am not suggesting that you become passive here...
 - No, you are to work out your own salvation with fear and trembling...
 - But that is how you respond to God who is work in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure.
 - I am talking about when you start trying to set things up in such a way that God will bless you...
 - to scheme and plan to make things turn out for your blessing.
 - You know, you do little things that are not right in hopes that things will turn out the way you want...
 - You lie a little to make a sale...
 - You use ungodly anger to get your way...
 - When you do these things, it hinders your prayers because you have forgotten that salvation is of the LORD.
 - When you remember that, you pray to Him as if it really does depend on Him.
 - And you endure suffering with prayer that He is working in you rather than with despair and frustration.

TRANS> Very much related to this is the second part of verse 8...

- b. You remember that God’s blessing is constantly upon His people.
 - 1) He is not out to harm them in any way, only to bless them.
 - How discouraged David would have been if he had not remembered this in his trial with Absalom!
 - Can you imagine if he had doubted that all that was happening,
 - even though it was in part God’s chastening of Him,
 - was going to bring harm upon God’s people?
 - David would have despaired if he had had such a view of God.
 - But He knew that God had promised in Abraham that He would bless him and his seed...
 - And that in him, all the families of the earth would be blessed.
 - David knew that even in this time of terrible trouble,
 - it would all work out for the furtherance of God’s kingdom at last.

- 2) Do you have this confidence in your gracious God and in His promise?
- Do you believe that God is out to bless you and all of His people and that He will bless you and them?
 - Or are you paralysed with worry and fear?
 - If you are, why not follow the pattern presented to you in Psalm 3 when trouble comes...
 - First, when trouble comes, take it to the LORD.
 - Second, remember all that the LORD is to you.
 - Third, see that you rest in the LORD.
 - Fourth, ask the sovereign LORD to act for you.