

PSALM 3

A MORNING HYMN

By turning to the 15th chapter of the Book of Second Samuel, we shall there find the part of David's life during which this Psalm was composed; and it is very interesting to study this part of history as a backdrop to truly understanding this sacred song. At this particular time, David was under the chastening hand of God; and it would have been a great burden to his conscience as he remembered that he very justly deserved this chastisement because of his own sins. Concerning his transgressions in the matter of Uriah and Bathsheba, the Lord had said that the sword would not depart from his house; and surely David could not help seeing this word being fulfilled in the treacherous usurpation of his own son Absalom.

But although we find David and his trials in the primary and general sense of this Psalm, yet if we look beyond the history of the King of Israel, we shall discern a subject that is infinitely more important; for this sacred composition also has a reference to the persecutions and afflictions of Jesus! Did not our Savior, in the days of His earthly ministry, endure much contradiction of sinners against Himself? Was not the Lord of life and glory constrained to the deepest acknowledgements of sorrow, with strong cryings and tears (Heb. 5:7), when all His disciples forsook Him and fled? David, at this season when his life was in danger from his son Absalom, went up the hillside of the Mount of Olives with weeping; and do we not also recollect how Jesus also went forth to the very same spot, on the night of His unequalled sorrow, when His life was sought for by His rebellious children whom He came to seek and redeem? O precious Lord! How blessed it is to see You as being pre-eminent in sorrow, as well as in glory!

This Psalm is a prayer of David in the time of his greatest affliction, and under the severest trial that he ever experienced. Under Absalom's influence, all Israel revolted from him. David was now an exile – forsaken by all, betrayed by a member of his own household, and in the most appalling peril of his own life. But as he was sinking under this heavy calamity, and struggling in this agony,

Overview of the Psalm, adapted from Charles Spurgeon:

“A Psalm of David when he fled from Absalom his son.” You will remember the sad story of David's flight from his own palace, when – in the dead of night – he forded the brook Kedron, and went with a few faithful followers to hide himself for a while from the fury of his rebellious son. Remember that David, in this, was a foreshadow of the Lord Jesus Christ. He, too, fled; He, too, passed over the brook Kedron when His own people were in rebellion against Him; and with a feeble band of followers, He went to the Garden of Gethsemane.

This Psalm may be divided into four parts of two verses each. In the first two verses, you have David making a complaint to God concerning his enemies; he then declares his confidence in the Lord (verses 3-4), sings of his safety in sleep (verses 5-6), and strengthens himself for future conflict (verses 7-8).

see how he prayed unto God in faith! And how fervent was his heart in these cries to Him!

Of all soul-distresses, certainly the greatest is when the devil and our own unbelieving hearts tempt us to suppose that our Lord has forsaken us. Such was David's situation at this sorrowful time: "Many there be which say of my soul, There is no help for him in God." The child of God is sadly put to a difficult test when the enemies of our salvation thus reproach us. But the Lord preserves our souls from falling under this heaviest of all sorrows! While Jesus looks on our afflictions and speaks peace, all is well. Let Him only smile, and then we do not care who frowns. May we be continually preserved from ever beginning to despond and despair, for we know that His favor upon us abides forever. And this is a most precious assurance; for if it were really true that there was no help for us in our God, then we would be ruined indeed!

Let us now see what grace can do! "Thou, O Lord, art a shield for me," the Psalmist declares; "my glory, and the lifter up of mine head. I cried unto the Lord with my voice, and he heard me out of his holy hill." You may depend upon it: when grace and faith are alive and active – the more that opposition is made from the outside, the stronger the comforts will be on the inside. O how blessed it is to thus look up to our God! Jehovah is our shield to defend us, our glory to shine upon us, and our lifter to bear us up. Jesus is all in all to us; He is our safety, our honor, our support, and our holy joy! No wonder that the Psalmist proceeded to say, "I laid me down and slept; I awaked; for the Lord sustained me. I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people, that have set themselves against me round about!" How charming those verses are! Ten thousands opposed to one poor man are a mighty army indeed. But even if millions were standing against us – they are as nothing when God is on our side! Let us pray for faith to trust in the Lord and in the power of His might! If you desire to see a beautiful illustration of this doctrine, go and read 2 Kings 6:8-23 – especially verses 15-17.

"Salvation belongeth unto the Lord: thy blessing is upon thy people" (verse 8). Dear brother or sister, see this blessed and joyful conclusion! What could have been more gloomy and discouraging than the opening of this Psalm? But what can end more triumphantly and joyfully than these concluding verses? Let us not fail to trace this conclusion to its source: salvation is of the Lord – and the Lord alone! Yes! Jesus said, "Mine own arm brought salvation, and of the people there was none with me" (Isa. 63:3-5). Lord, may we never rob You of

Your glory by mingling anything of our own wretchedness with Your finished work of redemption. Lord Jesus, You alone deserve all the praise!

Lord, we pray that the arm of Your strength may be under us, and that let the light of Your face may shine upon us – for then we will not fear anyone! Amen.

