

**Psalm three – “Conflict against evil”**

LORD, how they have increased who trouble me!  
Many *are* they who rise up against me.  
<sup>2</sup> Many *are* they who say of me,  
“*There is no help for him in God.*” *Selah*  
<sup>3</sup> But You, O LORD, *are* a shield for me,  
My glory and the One who lifts up my head.  
<sup>4</sup> I cried to the LORD with my voice,  
And He heard me from His holy hill. *Selah*  
<sup>5</sup> I lay down and slept;  
I awoke, for the LORD sustained me.  
<sup>6</sup> I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people  
Who have set *themselves* against me all around.  
<sup>7</sup> 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.  
<sup>8</sup> Salvation *belongs* to the LORD.  
Your blessing *is* upon Your people. *Selah*

**Introduction**

The Bible is very clear that the Christian life is a constant conflict against evil.

**1 Peter 4: v. 12 (N.K.J.)**

<sup>12</sup> Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you;

Christians should not be strangers to conflict against evil.

In the main the Christian life is a **battle for God’s glory.**

The battle is against Satan and his followers.

**2 Timothy Chapter 3: v. 12 says** ...all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.”

We live in a world today that is moving very fast towards world-wide persecution of Christian believers.

Ultimately this will mean a one world-religion, that will be forced upon the nations of the world. We may feel quite safe in Japan today from persecution towards Christians.

However, with over 100,000 Muslims now living and worshipping in Japan, and Prime Minister Abe encouraging Islam to flourish in Japan, it will not take long for Islamic nations to get a foothold in this nation. Ultimately Muslim people will influence Japanese people against Christianity.

Therefore, the persecution against Christians in Japan could happen in the life time of some of the young Japanese people in our congregation today. We need to pray and remain strong in the almighty power of God.

In Psalm three David teaches us something **about his own conflict with evil and how God helped him through his situation.**

I am going to group Psalm 3-7 together in a mini-series.

In Psalm three we see the conflict against **evil.**

In Psalm 4 and 6 we notice the conflict against **circumstances.**

In Psalm 5 and 7 we are taught about the conflict against **slandorous people.**

**Psalm 3 – The Conflict against evil.**

The first thing that we need to do is to put this Psalm into its **historical context.**

David wrote this Psalm after he had fled Jerusalem when his son Absalom had taken over his throne.

Absalom had been working for some time to influence people against David, who was God’s anointed King.

We learn about this story from 2 Samuel chapter 15-18.

Even though David had forgiven Absalom his many sins, Absalom was determined to have power in Israel and be the new King.

Historically, at that time, it seemed that evil had won the day, and God's anointed David was set for a life of exile and failure. But God always has the final decision concerning the outcome of situations.

**1. David admits to God the intensity of the struggle – v. 1-2.**

David lays before God the seriousness of his situation.

He says twice that many people have risen up against him.

Once David was the popular King, he ruled with equity and justice. He protected and provided for his people.

But now he was the **run-away king**. People regarded him as rejected by God.

People said, "**There is no help for him in God**".

Imagine what it must have felt like for David.

He was the humble shepherd boy who was selected by God because of the purity of his heart.

**1 Samuel 16: v.7. (N.K.J.)**

<sup>7</sup> But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look at his appearance or at his physical stature, because I have refused him. For *the LORD does not see as man sees*; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart."

He killed the giant Goliath to save the Israelites from destruction. (**1 Samuel 17**)

David always acknowledged that it was God who gave him the strength to serve Him.

**1 Samuel 17: v. 37)**

<sup>37</sup> Moreover David said, "The LORD, who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear, He will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine." And Saul said to David, "Go, and the LORD be with you!"

David was on the run for many years, being persecuted by King Saul who was rejected by God for his disobedience.

Even though David had an opportunity to kill Saul one day, he resisted, because in spite of Saul's behaviour, he was God's anointed.

**(1 Samuel 24: v. 10)**

<sup>10</sup> Look, this day your eyes have seen that the LORD delivered you today into my hand in the cave, and *someone* urged *me* to kill you. But *my eye* spared you, and I said, 'I will not stretch out my hand against my lord, for he *is* the LORD's anointed.'

David was a very humble man who only wanted to honour God in his life.

However, now it seemed that God was not honouring him. He was suffering because of the evil behaviour of his own son Absalom and all his evil supporters.

David was lonely and in despair. He poured out his heart to God.

**Application**

This Psalm is a Psalm for today. It appears in our world that evil is winning over good.

It appears that the people who follow the Bible are not getting any help today from their God.

But as Christians we must never forget that Jesus has **already won the victory over Satan and death**.

Jesus was raised from the dead to assure us that one day, we too will get the victory over death and evil.

**Yes, as Christians we are in a battle, but we are on the winning side.**

God will never reject those people who put their faith and trust in Him.

Nevertheless, it is not wrong to cry to God with all of the problems that we face today as we live in such an evil world.

God wants to hear our cries as we face different struggles against evil.

The wonderful thing about the Psalms is that we encounter real people with real problems in difficult situations.

Their hardship is not a reflection of their spiritual state.

David was a man after God's own heart, and yet he still suffered.

That suffering came in the worst way, through his own son.

## 2. **David puts his trust and confidence in God – v. 3-6.**

In v. 3-6 David highlights a number of things that he is trusting God to do for him.

### a) **David wants God to hear his cry for help. – v. 4.**

David's confidence in the God of the Bible to hear him was not misplaced.

David tells us that God heard his cries for help.

It is wonderful that David had the assurance that God was listening to his prayers.

David was a man who knew God intimately. He talked with Him every day and he saw God act on his behalf many times before.

**Knowing that God heard the cries of David's heart was enough for David.**

David couldn't force the hand of God to do what He wanted, but He knew that **God had the power to do what He felt best** in the situation for this moment in time.

Yes, David was suffering now, but he knew that God acts on behalf of those who wait for Him.

**( Isaiah 30: v. 18 – N.K.J.)**

Therefore the LORD will wait, that He may be gracious to you;

And therefore He will be exalted, that He may have mercy on you.

For the LORD *is* a God of justice;

Blessed *are* all those who wait for Him.

### **Application**

Today we have great communication links with the internet.

With our cell phones/mobile phones we can check our bank accounts and transfer money around the world.

With messenger we can communicate with our friends, and with twitter and youtube, we can communicate with the world.

**However, the most important communication that we really need, and must have, is a communication with our creator God, the God of the Bible.**

David didn't need a monthly contract with a cell phone company, but he did need a **personal relationship with his creator God.**

David was in a personal relationship with the God of the Bible.

If we want to have **the assurance that God is listening to the cries of our heart, then we need to be in a personal relationship with our creator.**

This can only happen if we deal with **sin in our lives.**

**Jesus Christ** is the only person who has the **right to forgive our sin.**

The reason is that He died to take the punishment **for all of our sins.**

**Jesus is our substitute sacrifice.** He died in our place.

He died that we might be forgiven and **have our relationship with God restored.**

Putting our **faith and trust in Jesus personally** will give us the assurance in our hearts that God is **listening to our prayers.**

**Once our sin is forgiven, it provides access to the very throne of God.**

What a wonderful thing it is to know, that when we pray, the God of Heaven is listening to our prayers.

### b) **David is trusting God to deal with his depression – v. 3.**

David is telling us that he is trusting God to lift up His head.

When you are depressed your head usually looks down to the ground.

**David knew that God could deal with his depression.**

Depression is a big medical problem in Japan, and also all over the world.

Most people suffer some form of mild depression in their lives.

Christians are not immune from this problem.

However, as most attacks concerning depression come from the wrong thinking of our minds, David is trusting God to remove those negative thoughts.

People were saying that God had rejected David and that God was not going to help him.

However, David knew that the thinking of his enemies was wrong.

David knew that if he focused upon **God's word, and not the words of others, then he would be set free from his depression.**

It is not wrong to take your depression to God and ask for His help.

However, the answer is to believe in God and His word and not trust your negative thinking, or **even trust your feelings.**

The New Testament teaches us to focus on good things.

#### **Philippians 4: v. 6 -9 (N.K.J.)**

<sup>6</sup> Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; <sup>7</sup> and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. <sup>8</sup> Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things *are* noble, whatever things *are* just, whatever things *are* pure, whatever things *are* lovely, whatever things *are* of good report, if *there is* any virtue and if *there is* anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things. <sup>9</sup> The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you.

#### **c) David was trusting God to be a shield for him - v. 3.**

A shield was a piece of armour that was held by a soldier to protect him from arrows that were designed to harm him.

David wanted God to be his personal shield.

David wanted God to protect him from the physical arrows as well as the spiritual arrows.

#### **Ephesians 6: v. 16.**

<sup>16</sup> above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one.

David was certainly going to be attacked with physical arrows as well as spiritual arrows.

David was asking God to do something that he knew was in the power of God to do.

**God did have the power to protect David.**

David knew about God's power because he had experienced it on a number of occasions.

David was not a stranger to experiencing God's protective hand.

David had the assurance that God would protect him in this difficult situation.

When we pray personally for God's protection, we may never know the lengths to which God has gone to protect us.

On one occasion a missionary in Africa discovered the lengths that God went to in order to protect him from certain death.

**This is a true story.**

A missionary who worked in Africa travelled to collect medical supplies and money from a town that was a two- day journey from his home.

What he didn't know until later was that a group of men planned to attack him, kill him and take his medical supplies and money.

The Missionary discovered later through the confession of one of these men that the only reason that they did not kill him and take his money and medical supplies was that he had an armed guard of 26 men around his tent at night.

**The missionary said that this was impossible.**

However, this story was supported by all those who planned to attack the missionary.

When the Missionary returned home, he was speaking about this story at his home Church.

One man stood up to ask the date of this incident when he was protected.

The missionary remembered and the man who stood up was amazed.

The date was the same date that the Church member had a very big burden to pray for the missionary.

His burden was so strong he gathered all of his golfing friends and they **prayed for the protection of the missionary.**

There were **26 men at that prayer meeting, the exact number of guards that protected the missionary from certain death.**

What an amazing miracle of God's protection.

So the lesson is, if you ever get a burden to pray for somebody, PLEASE PRAY.

We never know what our prayers will achieve to protect people around the world.

d) **David was trusting God to keep him bold and without fear –v. 6.**

David tells us that he would not be afraid of 10,000 enemies if they surrounded him on every side.

**It was very bold of David to make such a claim.**

However, David made that claim trusting in God to honour that confidence in Him.

David's confidence in God was certainly NOT misguided.

The Bible records an incident when Elisha trusted in God in spite of an army of Syrian soldiers.

**2 Kings 6: v. 8-18 in N.L.T.**

<sup>8</sup>When the king of Aram was at war with Israel, he would confer with his officers and say, "We will mobilize our forces at such and such a place." <sup>9</sup>But immediately Elisha, the man of God, would warn the king of Israel, "Do not go near that place, for the Arameans are planning to mobilize their troops there." <sup>10</sup>So the king of Israel would send word to the place indicated by the man of God. Time and again Elisha warned the king, so that he would be on the alert there. <sup>11</sup>The king of Aram became very upset over this. He called his officers together and demanded, "Which of you is the traitor? Who has been informing the king of Israel of my plans?" <sup>12</sup>"It's not us, my lord the king," one of the officers replied. "Elisha, the prophet in Israel, tells the king of Israel even the words you speak in the privacy of your bedroom!" <sup>13</sup>"Go and find out where he is," the king commanded, "so I can send troops to seize him." And the report came back: "Elisha is at Dothan." <sup>14</sup>So one night the king of Aram sent a great army with many chariots and horses to surround the city. <sup>15</sup>When the servant of the man of God got up early the next morning and went outside, there were troops, horses, and chariots everywhere. "Oh, sir, what will we do now?" the young man cried to Elisha. <sup>16</sup>"Don't be afraid!" Elisha told him. "For there are more on our side than on theirs!" <sup>17</sup>Then Elisha prayed, "O LORD, open his eyes and let him see!" The LORD opened the young man's eyes, and when he looked up, he saw that the hillside around Elisha was filled with horses and chariots of fire. <sup>18</sup>As the Aramean army advanced toward him, Elisha prayed, "O LORD, please make them blind." So the LORD struck them with blindness as Elisha had asked.

Today if we were to affirm our faith in God in the same way as David, then we might be considered mentally insane.

And yet the same God that we worship today is the same God that David and Elisha trusted in and **experienced deliverance from their enemies.**

The problem is never the God of the Bible and whether He has the power to protect and deliver His people.

The problem is always the faith of God's people towards God and His ability to perform miracles.

3. **David anticipates God's judgement upon his enemies – v. 7.**

Some translations render the verbs in v. 7 as past tense.

This would indicate that David was looking back over past victories that God had given him.

Other translations see this verse as a prayer for present and future victories.

Whichever way you look at it, David had the faith for God to go before him and defeat the army of Absalom.

**God did that historically.**

The phrase “struck all my enemies on the cheekbone” was an act of humiliation.

In history God vindicated David and punished his son Absalom for his act of treason.

The one thing that we can be sure of as Christians is that God is portrayed as a **God of Justice and Judgement in the Bible.**

God may allow time for people to repent, but in the end God brings judgement upon non-repentant people.

**4. David acknowledges that victory only comes from God alone – v. 8.**

Isaiah 42: v. 8 – N.K.J.

<sup>8</sup> I *am* the LORD, that *is* My name;  
And My glory I will not give to another,  
Nor My praise to carved images.

The big difference between Absalom and David is that **David wanted God’s glory** and Absalom only **wanted his own glory.**

God may choose to use one of His children to accomplish something.

However, the end result of any activity that involves blessing for God’s people must go to God Himself.

It is very important that every Christian who is blessed by God in any way acknowledge that it is

**because of almighty God, and not because of their own efforts, that their blessing has come.**

At the end of the day, God’s honour is at stake.

If we pray and submit a situation to God, then God gets the glory and the praise and the thanksgiving.

So Psalm three is an encouragement to all Christians.

Although we live in evil days, and the world seems to be against good, and against the God of the Bible and His children, we know that God will hear our cry when we are in a personal relationship with Him.

God will ultimately bring judgement to the enemies of God and His people.

God will ultimately bring blessing to His people, through the Lord Jesus Christ.

**Our future is secure when our hearts are secure in Jesus Christ.**

**Amen.**