Opening Words

Don't let the lies of the world, the lies of others, the lies of the evil one and sometimes the lies we tell ourselves, drive a wedge between you and God.

Psalm 3 – Part 1 – The Lies David Faced

The year was about 1000 BC. King David was in firm control of the Jewish nation. He was making all the right decisions, he was blessed by God, the promise of the kingdom was given to him and to his descendants forever, a temple would be built by one of his sons for the glory and praise of God, and then it happened. At the height of his success David fell into sin with Bathsheba. They committed adultery which led to an unsuccessful cover-up which led to a murder which led to another cover-up which was then exposed. It was a sad day for David and for the kingdom and for the Lord.

The Lord forgave David, but he also disciplined him and for the remainder of his reign in Israel, he faced many hardships in his kingdom. None may have been harder than that which he experienced at the hands of his son Absalom. Absalom raped his sister and was banished from the kingdom for two years. Absalom was restored, but when he came back he undermined his father's reign. He stole the hearts of the people, instigated a rebellion against his own father and David had to flee for his life. A brief civil war followed and although David was victorious, his heart was torn over his son's rebellion and his son's death.

This is the background for our lesson today! We will look at Psalm 3, a psalm David wrote when he fled from his son Absalom. Some may think, how could this piece of poetry written 3000 years ago about rebellion in a faraway kingdom have anything to do with what I am experiencing today? Great question – let's read the psalm and then we'll discover how.

1 LORD, how many are my foes!
How many rise up against me!
2 Many are saying of me,
"God will not deliver him."
3 But you, LORD, are a shield around me,
my glory, the One who lifts my head high.

4 I call out to the LORD,
and he answers me from his holy mountain.
5 I lie down and sleep;
I wake again, because the LORD sustains me.
6 I will not fear though tens of thousands
assail me on every side.

7 Arise, LORD!
Deliver me, my God!
Strike all my enemies on the jaw;
break the teeth of the wicked.

8 From the LORD comes deliverance.
May your blessing be on your people.

If you have been tracking with us as we have examined Psalms 1 & 2 you have learned that Psalm 1 tells us how we can have a blessed life. That blessed life comes from establishing our ways in the Word of God. Psalm 2 tells us that God will be our refuge, but when we come to Psalm 3 we learn why God must be our refuge, and we learn that a blessed life does not mean a life without problems. We discover that life also is filled with troubles and enemies. Psalm 3 is the first psalm where there is a cry for help to God.

We see how David presents the trials in verse 1. Three times he uses the word, "many". Many are my foes, many rise up against me, many are saying bad things about me. We also see a progression of the evil against David. First, the evil is just present and lurking. David says, "Many are my foes." Then, the evil organizes and begins an offensive against David who says, "many *rise up* against me." Then, we find what the evil ones are doing. They are speaking harmful and discouraging words against David. They say, "God will not deliver him."

Isn't that interesting! The attack against David came, first, in the form of harmful, discouraging words. Isn't that the way it is with us? The troubles we experience often come as harmful and discouraging words. In David's time they were saying, "God isn't going to do anything to help you, David. You might as well give up. God isn't going to come through for you. Surrender now!"

Have you ever felt that way? Have you ever felt like your troubles were intensifying? You saw troubles lurking on the horizon, then they organized and multiplied in your life, and then discouraging, spiritually paralyzing words came into your mind, "Don't seek the Lord. He isn't going to help you. There will be no deliverance for you from heaven."

It's all a bunch of lies! We know better, or, we should know better. When people say, "God isn't going to help you," there are actually two lies presented to us. The first lie is a lie about our relationship with God. "God isn't going to help *you*! God has abandoned you because of your sin, because of your problems. All this is your fault anyway. God is punishing you, and he is not going to bring help or deliverance."

Do you see what is happening? The lies are trying to drive a wedge between you and your relationship with God. The lies are trying to make you feel unworthy. The lies are trying to fill you with unbelief and convince you that no help is coming.

Have you been tricked by lies? The lies come in so many forms – "I am not worthy, I am not valuable, I am not worth loving, no one cares for me, it's always my fault, I am a piece of junk," and when we believe such things, we add to it by thinking God would never want to have anything to do with us."

It's all a bunch of lies. Yes, it is true that we are not worthy but that doesn't mean God will not save us! That is why he is called a Savior. And when we think that we are not valuable and just a piece of

junk, that is a lie! We are valuable to God. He made us in his image and he wants to restore the image in us. We are worth loving. He does care for us.

At times like this it is important that we remember important Bible verses. I don't think we can pick any better verses than Paul's words in Romans 8:35-39.

> 35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or
> famine or nakedness or danger or sword? 36 As it is written:
> "For your sake we face death all day long;
> we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered."
> 37 No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. 38 For I am
> convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the
> future, nor any powers, 39 neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able
> to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

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In Psalm 3:2 we find a second lie in the words, "God will not deliver him." The second lie is one about God. The second lie is that God will not be faithful. "God isn't going to come through for you," people say. "He is an inconsistent God. He is an unfaithful God. He is not a very powerful God." This lie is an attack on the character of God.

If you are hearing these lies about the character of God what can you do? You must reaffirm your faith by dwelling on the character of God. Why not, at a time such as this, meditate upon Psalm 23 – "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not be in want"? Why not meditate upon Isaiah 40 which tells us about the matchless power of God and his faithfulness to his people? Listen to some of these words:

12 Who has measured the waters in the hollow of his hand,
or with the breadth of his hand marked off the heavens?
Who has held the dust of the earth in a basket,
or weighed the mountains on the scales
and the hills in a balance?
13 Who can fathom the Spirit of the LORD,
or instruct the LORD as his counselor?
14 Whom did the LORD consult to enlighten him,
and who taught him the right way?
Who was it that taught him knowledge,
or showed him the path of understanding?

15 Surely the nations are like a drop in a bucket;
they are regarded as dust on the scales;
he weighs the islands as though they were fine dust.
16 ~~Lebanon is not sufficient for altar fires,~~
~~nor its animals enough for burnt offerings.~~
17 Before him all the nations are as nothing;

they are regarded by him as worthless
and less than nothing.

25 "To whom will you compare me?
Or who is my equal?" says the Holy One.
26 Lift up your eyes and look to the heavens:
Who created all these?
He who brings out the starry host one by one
and calls forth each of them by name.
Because of his great power and mighty strength,
not one of them is missing.
27 Why do you complain, Jacob?
Why do you say, Israel,
"My way is hidden from the LORD;
my cause is disregarded by my God"?
28 Do you not know?
Have you not heard?
The LORD is the everlasting God,
the Creator of the ends of the earth.
He will not grow tired or weary,
and his understanding no one can fathom.
29 He gives strength to the weary
and increases the power of the weak.
30 Even youths grow tired and weary,
and young men stumble and fall;
31 but those who hope in the LORD
will renew their strength.
They will soar on wings like eagles;
they will run and not grow weary,
they will walk and not be faint.

Matchless words, aren't they! I believe it was words like this, truth like this that kept King David going in his time of trial. It is words like these that will keep us going. What are you listening to – lies or the truth about God's power and his love for you?