

****READ THE TEXT****

INTRO-

Introductory Illustration

- John Paton was a 19th century Scottish Missionary who went to the Savage Cannibals on the Island of **Tanna** (South Pacific). **TANNA** >> in the nation of Vanuatu (a nation comprising about 80 islands off the East coast of Australia).
 - The Cannibals? The natives on Tanna were sunk to the lowest depths of paganism, walking around naked & some with an apron or body paint. — seared in conscience of right or wrong, worshipping and fearing numerous gods, living in a continual dread of evil spirits, constantly fighting among themselves, and always eating the bodies of the slain.
 - Shortly after John and his newly-wed wife arrived on the island, they had their first child. She died one month after giving birth suddenly of pneumonia. Soon after the young baby boy also died. Paton was alone. These were terrible blows to Paton, and for some time he was prostrated.
- The greatest opposition to Paton’s work was the godless traders on the island. There was so much hostility & opposition that the natives were urged to KILL or drive away all Christian missionaries.
 - From the time he landed until he left Tanna, Paton was in continual danger of losing his life. Again and again armed bands came to his house at night to kill him. He himself said that he knew of **50 times** when his life was in imminent danger, and his escape was due solely to the grace of God. >> O the Sheer mercy & protecting, sovereign hand of God!
- One biographer said of Paton: “No adequate idea can be given of his untiring zeal, his forgetfulness of self, and *his simple faith in God.* > **Simple Faith in God! We must have that!**
 - Whatever your trouble or trial or circumstance: ***we must have faith in God! TRUST!***

Background to Psalm 3

- This is like the INTRO to the body of the Psalms (after the intro of Pss 1-2). This is God’s guide to help you *Prepare to Suffer Triumphantly! Suffer well!*
 - It’s a *Psalm* [plucking/put to music], written by **David**, & the inspired heading tells us that he wrote it “When he fled from Absalom his son” (2 Sam 15-19).
 - Mark it: Even the best of parents may have the worst of Children. David had his Absalom. Hezekiah had his Manasseh. This is certainly possible.
 - Saving Grace is NOT hereditary. God is TOTALLY sovereign. [here’s a man running from his son]
 - We live in a world where verbal, psychological, even physical abuse seems to be commonplace >> it pervades news stories and it’s hard to find columns and articles without these all-too-common items.
 - When hard times come, we can sometimes take stock, turn inward, and then doubtful and then be persuaded the enemies are right & be overcome by doubt: “Maybe they’re right; GOD CANNOT DELIVER ME”!!!

O! THIS IS WHY WE NEED PSALM 3 so much.

Human beings fail and public opinion is too fickle. ONLY OUR GOD provides the shield that is both before us, behind us, and all around us. ***In severe trials, secure your trust in GOD alone.***

***Ps 3 will tell us & show us **HOW** to do this.

THESIS — When severe troubles squeeze the life out of you, what must you do? I wanna give you (3) THREE DIVINELY REVEALED HELPS (tried/true / trusted/certified helps):

1. **Tell God** all about your troubles (1-2)
2. **Trust God** with all your heart (3-4)
3. **Triumph in God** for your salvation (5-8) [Divisions from the “*Selah*”]
[pause/meditate/ponder/reflect]

I. TELL GOD! (1-2)

- A. Imagine having a SON > a powerful, influential, crafty son who rises up in jealous pride to usurp you & your position. So bad is it that you must **ARISE AND FLEE** (2 Sam 15). He ran & hid in the wilderness/desert! From his very own son! Running, fleeing, weeping, climbing, hiding, reviled, mocked, slandered, threatened (2 Sam 16-17). **What to do??**
- B. note the LORD who hears prayer (LORD)
- C. note the NUMBER of the enemies [‘many’ - 3x]
- D. note the INTENSIFYING of the enemies
- E. note the MOCKINGS & BLASPHEMY of the enemies.
 1. NEVER — ever! — believe the Tempter when he says: “There is no help for you in God!
 2. However SHARP God’s arrows of suffering may be, **CLING TO CHRIST** firmly and closely. Let every child of God often say to his very own soul: SOUL, hope in God!
- F. V.2 - “no deliverance [salvation/rescue] for him in God”
 1. v.2 - “NO DELIVERANCE FOR HIM IN GOD” -- see the parallel w/ JESUS:
 2. most of the nation rejected JESUS as their king, the foes were many, they ROSE up!
 3. They mock you, by blaspheming your God & seeking to belittle HIS ability to deliver you! **Keep trusting! Tell God about it! (5:2; 7:1-2; 9:13; 10:1-4; 12:1-4) > tell God!**

Note: when you gaze long enough at the enemy you may say: “their citadels reach high up to the sky” (Deut 1.28). **BUT!** when you turn your gaze toward GOD who fights and gives victory, you have hope (Deut 1.29-31)

>> THAT’s what happens in vv.3-4 [from circumstances **to** CHRIST / sorrows **to** SOVEREIGN / externals **to** ETERNAL]

II. TRUST GOD! (3-4)

- A. A huge shift (“BUT YOU”). Statements of TRUST do not begin with “I” but with *YOU* >> this points us to the bigness of who GOD Himself really is. The trust is centered on GOD >> not on the human being’s *confidences & promises*. TRUST GOD!
 1. RECOUNT God’s character & RESOLVE to pray/rely on Him.
- B.v.3- You’re my SHIELD (around me), my GLORY, the lifter of my HEAD (v.3)
 1. to trust God means to *know God & rely upon this God*.
 - a) remember God
 - b)rehearse his character/deeds
 - c) rejoice in His care & protection

- d)replant your confidence/mind/heart on HIM
- C. V.4 - *I cried out/prayed* >> a Workman in the WOODSHED may glue TWO boards together and he keeps them tightly clamped till the cement sets and the outward pressure is no more needed; and then he unscrews it. ****SO IT IS** with the pain, hardships, and disappointments that CRUSH US CLOSE INTO GOD. INSTANT RELIEF would not establish and cultivate the habit of prayer and settled trust in God. If we got what we asked for (quick relief and escape from all pain), we might soon come to treat GOD as a convenience or some cosmic GENIE.
- D. And rejoice confidently & boldly: And we know we can go to GOD thru Christ our Mediator & Redeemer!!
1. We trust in GOD who raises the dead (2 Cor 1.9); I will put my trust in Him (Heb 2.13). Don't fear their intimidation & don't be troubled (1 Pet 3.14). Don't fear what you're about to suffer (Rev 2:10). ***We serve a Strong Shield. A high Refuge. A covenant-Keeping Savior; a Protecting God! TRUST HIM!*** (Ps 55.23).

III. TRIUMPH IN GOD! (5-8)

- A. You tell God, you trust GOD > now you act on it. You live in confident faith, joy & hope!
- B. V.5 - I lay down, slept, & awoke. Like saying: “God’s good HAND is my pillow”
1. LIKE the story of a Christian man who found himself in a terrible situation in Africa. Imagine this: He laid down to REST at the bottom of a tree in Africa, with TWO LARGE ANIMALS on each side of him. Where he was, it was impossible to flee.
 2. So he left the animals to watch each other, he prayed and committed himself to God, fell asleep and woke up the next morning, FINDING the sun having risen and both the ANIMALS GONE! >> leave everything with GOD and fear NOTHING! Wow!
- C. V.6 - don't be afraid of those surrounding you >> v.3 - GOD is your shield around you!
- D. V.7 - military language: ARISE! - you “have smitten” “you have shattered” [smiting on cheek/slapping speaks of *humiliation* & shattering teeth refers to total crushing & smashing by God].
1. But here — this refers to the TRIUMPHANT CERTAINTY BASED ON PAST HELP EXPERIENCED. [God I know you will deliver b/c you've proven faithful before]
> I know God has delivered before & I KNOW God will deliver in the future
> God has been faithful IN THE PAST & the present & he'll deliver in the FUTURE
> God's past faithfulness/victory is the GROUND for present trust & future HOPE
- E. V.8 - remember that salvation is wholly of the LORD >> it belongs to the LORD
- F. JUST AS JONAH>>> Jonah was utterly helpless in the sea and unable to save himself. So, too, are we powerless to save ourselves from the wrath of our holy God.
- G. JUST AS DAVID >>> Just as David was helpless in the desert to protect himself against Absalom & all the many multitudes, so are we powerless to save ourselves from the POWERFUL AND RIGHTEOUS WARRIOR, GOD ALMIGHTY!
- H. > BUT JONAH TRUSTED > & DAVID TRUSTED & SO MUST YOU & ME!
Triumph!

Psalm 3 — “What You Must Do When Severe Troubles Seem to Squeeze the Life Out of You!”
詩篇第三篇--- “當極大的麻煩似乎把你的生命榨乾時你必須做什麼?”

1. the God who delivers temporally is the God who delivers eternally.
2. the God who delivers now in pain is the God who delivers eternally!
3. 2 Thes 2.13-16 // Rom 8.28-30 // John 17
 - ✓your PAST - God chose you
 - ✓your SALVATION - God saved you
 - ✓your PRESENT - God sanctifies you
 - ✓your PROTECTION - God keeps you
 - ✓your FUTURE - God will glorify you

There's someone who can relate to this troubled 'child of God' >> consider “Jesus” on Calvary

- they came to JESUS on the cross (Matt 27:38-44) >> many surrounded him like scavengers.
- they hurled abuse at Jesus
- they wagged their heads in contempt & arrogance
- they called Jesus to “save yourself” [total humiliating, blaspheming]
- they mocked him and said: he saved others; he cannot even save himself.
- He trusts in GOD; let God rescue him now, if he delights in Him
- they were insulting him >> but Jesus prayed & prayed: “Father, into your hands...”

***GOSPEL TRANSITION >>>

- Hebrews 12:1-3*** (esp v.3)
- and vv.12-13 and vv.22-24
- >> focus on Christ!
- keep rejoicing and TRUSTING THRU trials

CONCL-

Concluding Illustration

- Meet DAVID. A man who came to faith in Jesus Christ in a country dominated by ISLAM.
- Amid increased persecution, I was arrested in 2007, charged with “extremism and proselytism” (winning converts from Islam), and “illegal religious formation.” I was sentenced to four years in prison. Almost every day, it was evident God was supernaturally helping me. Much danger all around >> yet God protected, helped, heard!
- Psalm 118:17 comforted me from my first days in jail: “I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord.” Often, I was on the verge of death, and at several points I wished I could die. But God’s mercy prevailed.
- Finally, and mercifully, he was released>>>
- After my release, I was under surveillance for two years and couldn’t go to church, preach or attend a public meeting. I had to be home no later than 9 p.m. Also, I had to report to the police regularly, and our house was watched. finally, he and his family had to flee to Kiev Ukraine for safety.
- you know what he said:
- "God taught me lasting lessons during my persecution when many surrounded me, hunted me, sought me & persecuted me, not the least of which is this: GOD is always good." he said: “WHAT AM I LEARNING NOW? I still am learning to trust my loving God.”