

KEY TEXT

Psalm 3:3,8 (ESV)

Verse 3- But you, O LORD, are a shield about me, my glory and the lifter of my head.

Verse 8 – Salvation belongs to the LORD; your blessing be on your people.

INTRODUCTION

(1) Facing what lies ahead for year 2024

(2) Background of Key Text

Title

**“MY SHIELD, MY GLORY AND
THE LIFTER OF MY HEAD”**

Outline:

(I) What is Yahweh to me?

- **Yahweh is my shield**
- **Yahweh is my glory**
- **Yahweh is the lifter of my head**

(II) What has our Greater David done for us?

(III) Facing year 2024 with God as my shield, my glory and the lifter of my head

MAIN POINTS

I. WHAT IS YAHWEH TO US?

1. YAHWEH IS "MY SHIELD"

Verse 3- But you, O LORD, are a shield about me,

David had to run away from his capital city, Jerusalem of Absalom.

He had lost almost everything.

And it is in this context, then, that David wrote these words: "You, O LORD, are a shield about me."

David addressed God as **LORD**.

"LORD" in all capital letters, is **NOT** the Hebrew word *"Adonai"*, or *"lord"*

"LORD" = "YAHWEH" = the personal name of God.

It is only Yahweh; only the God of the Bible; only the personal God of the Bible; only the God of covenant; only the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who will be for you what this verse describes.

"The LORD is my SHIELD" =Yahweh is my shield.

What kind of a shield?

1. A shield of protection

A shield is an instrument of protection that a warrior keeps in front of him to keep him from the harmful weapons that might be aimed at him.

The shields used limited.

Verse 3 -You, O LORD are "a shield ABOUT me."

This word "about" = Lamentations 3:7 = Jeremiah was "walled about" (by God) so that he could not go out.

That meant that he was totally surrounded; he could not get out; he was walled in.

When David says that God is a "shield ABOUT me" = "God totally surrounds my life and protects me, as my impenetrable shield!"

David was totally "walled about", totally surrounded by God's protection.

Application: And God will be our shield, too for year 2024. Whatever danger you may face in the days to come in 2024, God is your shield that surrounds you, that walls you in. This promise is not to David only. **Psalm 18:30** says **“He is a shield to ALL who take refuge in Him.”** To **ALL!** If you have committed your life to God, then you can know that He is **YOUR** shield, too – and He is mine!

An old hymn by John Ryland that says:

“Plagues and deaths around me fly; till He bid, I cannot die.”

God is a SHIELD who totally surrounds His child. NOTHING can touch us – we are invincible — until He allows it through!

II. A shield of Purpose

If God is the “Shield” for every one of His followers, that means that there is nothing that touches our lives which doesn’t have to go through Him first.

We are indestructible until He says it is time. Nothing comes through that shield that He does not allow.

That means that whatever **DOES touch our lives, has been allowed by God for some **specific purpose!****

E.g. Job

NOTHING touches us without being allowed to come through God's "shield" first.

That means if something **DOES** happen to us, God has allowed it, so He must have a purpose in it.

If something has come through God's "shield" to touch you, then it is not an accident; He has some purpose for that thing in your life as well.

III. Look for God's Purposes

Why did this happen? Why did He allow it?

Let's look at some of the Biblical purposes which God has for letting trials through His shield:

- ***It may be to purify your life from sin.***

Psalm 119:67, "Before I was afflicted, I went astray, but now I keep Your word."

- ***It may be that God wants you to learn something in this trial that you can use in ministry to others***

2 Corinthians 1:3-4, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort; who comforts us in all our afflictions so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God."

- ***It may be to make you more like Christ***

Romans 8:28-29 - "God causes all things to work together for good to those who love Him, who are called according to His purpose. For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son."

- ***It may be to draw you to Himself, that you might know Him, or to learn more of Him.***

John 17:3 "This is eternal life, that they may know Thee."

Philippians 3:8 "I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ."

A poem - "*I Walked A Mile with Pleasure*":

"I walked a mile with PLEASURE; she chatted all the way But left me none the wiser for all she had to say.

I walked a mile with SORROW, and ne'er a word said she, But oh the things I learned from her, when sorrow walked with me."

We learn a lot of things from our walks with sorrow; but the most important thing we learn is a closer walk with the Lord through those times.

2. YAHWEH IS "MY GLORY"

Verse 3- But you, O LORD are.....my glory.

I. What is the meaning of "glory"?

"my glory" = "*Kabodi*" in Hebrew

"*Kabod*" = "glory".

The "*i*" ending = "my"

The word "*kabod*" means:

- "honor, splendor, glory."
- "weighty."
- having a "*gravitas*" about them, a "weight" of personality or importance about their being.

***"Kabodi"* means:**

- **"one's inner self, the seat of honor in a man's heart".**
- **Used sed in Psalm 7:5, of how David's "glory" might be laid in the dust by his enemies.**
- **It refers to the inner pride and honor of man, the thing he glories in the most.**
- **When David says of God here, "YOU are my GLORY", he was saying that God was his pride; his honor; the One thing he gloried in the most.**

The Bible tells us that this is the way it is to be with us and God: He is to be our glory.

In Genesis 15:1 God told Abram:

- **“I am a shield to you”,**
- **I am “your exceeding great reward.” = “Your reward shall be very great”, = “I AM your exceeding great reward.”**
- **HE HIMSELF is our glory; HE is our reward!**

Over and over the Bible tells us that GOD is to be the glory of His people.

This is what we were created for, to experience the glory of God.

It is what we **LOST when we sinned: **“For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”****

So, when we are saved, the most important thing we gain is NOT “mansions” or “streets of gold” or “pearly gates”, but **the glory of God forever in His presence – what we lost when we sinned.**

The glory of God will be our eternal joy, and it is to be our pursuit while we live on earth. God is to be our glory.

In **Psalm 3:3 David says to God, **YOU are “my glory.”****

He prized **HIM, and found glory and honor and pride in **Him** when everything else failed.**

**David had lost everything yet he could still say to God:
“YOU are my glory!”**

**God was more important to him than anything else –
than everything else together!**

“Glory” = “weighty”.

When David said that God was his “glory”, he was saying that God is the “WEIGHTIEST” thing in his life.

He was saying that you could put everything else one side of the scale, and God on the other, and He outweighs it all.

He is the glory.

Application: This is what God is to be for each of His followers: HE is to carry the most “weight” of consideration in all of our **DECISIONS:**

HE is to be the “weightiest” consideration in every decision we make! He is our Glory!

II. Substitutes for God's Glory

We all probably “know” that God is to be our glory.

But in reality, we choose to glory in other things.

We make other things in our lives “weightier” than God, which is basically **idolatry.**

So undoubtedly one of God's greatest purposes in allowing trials to touch our lives is to purify us from making other things our "glory" instead of Him.

All our setbacks in life is to REMIND us that our glory is ONLY to be in God. He is the only thing that cannot be taken away from us.

Would you be devastated if you lose the following?

- Your **retirement?**
- You **job?**
- Your **sports team?**
- Your **fame or popularity?**
- Your **family?**
- Your **beauty or physical appearance?**

III. Trials and God's Glory

If we will find our glory in God, then we have something which can sustain us even in your most difficult trials.

It sustained David here in **Psalm 3:3.**

He had lost everything else, but **NO ONE could take his Glory away from him!**

We can rejoice in our trials, if we will really make God our Glory.

E.g. Charles Spurgeon said:

"The Christian knows no change with regard to God. He may be rich today and poor tomorrow; he may be sickly today and well tomorrow; he may be in happiness today, tomorrow he may be distressed; but there is no change with regard to his relationship to God. If He loved me yesterday, He loves me today. I am neither better nor worse in God than I ever was.

Let prospects be blighted, let hopes be blasted, let joy be withered, let mildews destroy everything, I have lost nothing of what I have in God. He is my strong habitation whereunto I can continually resort. The Christian never becomes poorer, and never grows richer with regard to God. 'Here', he can say, 'is a thing that can never pass away or change.'"

God may have allowed the trial that you are enduring right now through His “shield” in order to draw you closer to Himself; perhaps revealing other things which have become more important to you than Him.

If so, one of the best prayers you can pray is that of William Cowper from his hymn: "*Walking with God*":

The dearest idol I have known

Whate'er that idol be

Help me to tear it from its throne

And worship only Thee

Application: *"Only Thee"*; only God is to be our glory. Is that really true for you?

III. YAHWEH IS THE LIFTER OF MY HEAD

Verse 3- But you, O LORD, arethe lifter of my head.

I. The Meaning of "Lifter of My Head"

The **word picture** from our body language for the phrase **"the lifter of my head"**:

The head is naturally bowed down in time of trouble. For God to be **"the lifter of your head"** means that **He will bring you out of that time of trouble, so that you are no longer bowing your head in misery and pain, because He has lifted your head!**

Our natural stance when we are in dire strait: **our heads are lowered and bowed.**

But when we get **good news, and **come OUT** of a time of trouble, our heads are lifted up, and we begin to rejoice again!**

The Hebrew **technical term for “**lifter of my head**” = **bringing someone up out of a time of trouble:****

2 Kings 25:27 says the king of Babylon **“lifted up the head of Jehoiach in out of prison.”**

In Genesis 40:13 Joseph foresaw that Pharaoh would **“lift up the head”** of the cupbearer out of prison, and restore him to his former position.

So, to “lift one’s head” means that “one’s fortunes are restored”.

It means that their heads, which were once bowed in sorrow, will then be lifted up in joy.

David says here that it is GOD who will do that for Him.

David said, "YAHWEH will be the lifter of my head; MY GOD will be the one who will turn my fortunes around, and who will turn my sorrow into joy."

He said GOD is "the lifter of my head" – HE would be the One who would help him, and deliver him.

David is reminding some of you today that you need to be looking to Him for your deliverance.

Some of you are looking all around you for who can help you with a specific situation you have.

Don't look to people for your **ultimate help.**

Look to God.

Sure, God uses people to help us, but stop looking to people to do for you what you are supposed to look to GOD to do for you.

Look to Him! HE will be “the lifter of your head.” HE will be your deliverer. HE is the one who will help you in your situation, who will turn your sorrow into joy.

Verse 8 – Salvation (DELIVERANCE) belongs to the LORD; your blessing be on your people.

E.g. Charles Spurgeon said to his congregation:

"Some of you have tried to find refuge out[side] of God. You have sought to find it in your wealth, but you have pricked your head when you have laid it on that pillow. You have sought it with a friend, but that friend's arm has been a broken reed, where you hoped it would be a wall of strength. You will never find rest except in God; there is no refuge but in Him."

Make GOD your refuge; no one else.

HE will be the One who will deliver you from your situation, whatever it is.

HE must be "the lifter of (your) head."

II. The Personal Nature of "The Lifter of My Head"

You see three of those **"i"'s**; three of those Hebrew first person pronoun endings: **"my", "my", "my."**

He is a shield about **ME**; He is **MY** glory; He is the lifter of **MY** head.

That means that this Psalm is speaking about David's very real, and **very personal commitment to God.**

There is no nominal religion here in Psalm 3.

Sometimes God allows us, like David, to be stripped of virtually everything we have.

In those times you find out how real your faith really is.

In those times, is God that real to you?

Can you confidently declare that **YAHWEH IS THE SHIELD ABOUT ME; MY GLORY AND THE LIFTER OF MY HEAD? Is He that real to you? Is He each of these things for YOU? Is it personal for YOU?**

Wherever you are in your spiritual walk today; whatever your specific need is, whether it is for salvation, or for God's help in some specific area of your life, make this verse personal.

II. WHAT OUR GREATER DAVID HAS DONE FOR US

We are creatures of bad vision.

Instead of looking up and personally trusting Yahweh to be our shield, our glory and the lifter of our head, we blindly look to other cheap substitutes to be all these to us.

Today, visualize what God is to us through Jesus, His Son.

To talk about the year where the creatures God created had failed him, there is no better year of failure than the year April 3, AD 33 – the year Jesus, the only begotten Son of God was betrayed by mankind and crucified on the cross.

When Absalom staged a rebellion against David, David had to run barefooted to the desert and with barely enough clothes on Him.

Our greater David, Jesus on April 3, AD 33 that year was also ousted by the rebellion of His own race- the Jews and they ousted Him out of Jerusalem to the wilderness called CALVARY HILL.

There on the cross, He took the harshest blows of life from Satan and from fallen sinful man.

He came from heaven. He was supposed to be shielded by God. But the spear of the Roman soldiers went past the "shield" /protection of God and pierced his sides, not mentioning the nails that pierced his hands and feet and the crown of thorns that pierced his head.

He was the king of glory, but in that year AD 33, He was stripped from all his garment and left hanging naked on the cross. SHAME AND HUMILIATION were upon him.

He went around lifting people from their sins and sickness but in that year, on the cross, his head hung low because he was too weak to lift it up. The sins of the world weighed his head down on the cross.

What did Jesus, our greater David undergo in that year? He was betrayed by his spiritual Absalom – you and me.

Absalom is a picture of a self-seeking, selfish human who loved glory and fame and the good things of this life.

Absalom points to you as the vengeful sons of God who wanted to take over the throne or rulership for our own lives. We want to build our own kingdom.

So Jesus became the greater David to undergo the betrayal of the century – the betrayal and coup d'etat of human being by being pierced, stripped and depressed for what?

So that today He can give you in exchange -His shield about you; His glory and the lifting of your head (deliverance) ...if you dare to look up to Him at the cross and trust Him to be all these to you in this new year.

If year 2024 brings in people or events to attack and pierce you, He will be a shield about you. And even if the arrow gets through the shield, it is not fatal because Jesus has taken on your behalf the fatal blow by dying for you.

If there is stripping and depressing things coming your way in 2024, it is also not going to be the end of the world but rather redeeming, purifying and transforming because our Greater David has suffered the greatest shame and death for you.

III. FACING YEAR 2024 WITH WHAT GOD IS TO US

So, if we dare to personally commit to Jesus to be “my shield, my glory and the lifter of my head”, then year 2024 will not be fatal or a defeat for us.

My testimony

CONCLUSION

What is God to you? If you know He is your shield, your glory and the lifter of your head- then you have nothing to fear for 2024.

