

Your Spirit-Filled Response to the Shattering Sting of Betrayal

In Psalm 3 we read these words: “Lord, how my foes have multiplied! Many rise up against me! Many are saying about my life, ‘There is no help for him in God’” (PS. 3:1-2).

David is grieving more than the loss of his son—not that his son had died, but that his son Absalom had turned against him.

Not only had Absalom turned against him, he went behind David’s back and began manipulating the citizens of the nation of Israel.

He had begun to turn the nation against David.

He went on to say: “I will not be afraid of multitudes of people who have set themselves against me all around” (Ps. 3:6), indicating the thousands of Israelites who were revolting with Absalom while betraying David, the king they’d loved and celebrated years earlier after Goliath’s defeat.

What short memories they had.

But rather than sinking into despair and depression ...

Rather than throwing a pity party ...

David did something quite remarkable! Something our generation desperately needs to learn in day when people are routinely offended.

Not a day goes by that some celebrity isn’t called out for some careless thing they said. Their statement is met by hordes of tweets, social media shares, news reports and articles written about what a racist and bigot they are, and

how dare they say such a careless thing!

Not a day goes by that some preacher or denominational leader isn't called out for something they said decades ago, or for a sermon they preached last week that didn't clearly depict something someone feels should have been said.

Their reputation is maligned, the culmination of their work diminished to almost nothing and they are forced to retire in utter disgrace, while the Christian community devours them with social media posts and articles calling them out for whatever it was they did or didn't do.

Our moment in history is volatile and retaliatory, but we don't see David sparring with words or retaliating against Absalom in war.

One Powerful Response to Betrayal

What we see is David battling the human tendency toward self-pity, anger and bitterness—the very emotions that fuel volatility and retaliation.

He wasn't going to give in to the temptation of the flesh.

After his first cry for help in verses one and two, he turns his focus upward and says: "But You, O Lord, are a shield for Me, my glory and the One who raises up my head. I cried to the Lord with my voice, and He answered me from His holy hill. I lay down and slept; I awoke, for the Lord sustained me" (Ps. 3:3-5).

He immediately begins to declare who God is.

- God is a shield
- God is his reputation and source of his dignity (David knew where his identity should be)
- God is the reason he could hold his head high

He went on in verse seven and eight to say:

“Arise, O Lord; save me, O my God! For You have struck all my enemies on the cheek; You have broken the teeth of the wicked. Salvation belongs to the Lord. Your blessing is on Your people. Selah” (Ps. 3:7).

Rather than calling out Absalom publicly, he called out to God for salvation. He didn't rely on his own wit and words to tear Absalom down to size, he saved his words for prayer.

Then he reminded his heart of what God had done in the past.

He went back to his storehouse of testimonies and began to counsel his heart about how God had done great things in the past, and He would come through again/

When we feel betrayed, rejected, disappointed and disillusioned, our response is very important. Will we retaliate, or will we, like David, pray and worship God and His power to save?

Our response will mean the difference between us responding in the flesh and feeding our negative emotions of anger and bitterness, from which only grow more fruit of the flesh, and responding in the spirit and finding the grace and strength to believe that God will be glorified in the end. {eoa}

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