



DAILY ENCOURAGEMENTS
Carstairs-Bancroft United Church
March 12, 2024



Photo: Our Daily Bread

SWEET SLEEP

I lie down and sleep; I wake again, because the Lord sustains me.

Psalm 3:5

READ Psalm 3

Bad memories and accusing messages flooded Sal's mind. Sleep eluded him as fear filled his heart and sweat covered his skin. It was the night before his baptism, and he couldn't stop the onslaught of dark thoughts. Sal had received salvation in Jesus and knew that his sins had been forgiven, but the spiritual battle continued. It's then that his wife took his hand and prayed for him. Moments later, peace replaced the fear in Sal's heart. He got up and wrote the words he would share prior to being baptized—something he hadn't been able to do. After that, he experienced sweet sleep.

King David also knew what a restless night felt like. Fleeing from his son Absalom who wanted to steal his throne (2 Samuel 15–17), he knew that “tens of thousands [assailed him] on every side” (Psalm 3:6). David moaned, “How many are my foes!” (v. 1). Though fear and doubt could have won out, he called out to God, his “shield” (v. 3). Later, he found that he could “lie down and sleep . . . because the Lord sustains [him]” (v. 5).

When fears and struggles grip our mind and rest is replaced by restlessness, hope is found as we pray to God. While we might not experience immediate sweet sleep as Sal and David did, “in peace [we can] lie down and . . . dwell in safety” (4:8). For God is with us and He'll be our rest.

By **Tom Felten**

PRAY & REFLECT

Dear God, thank You for providing hope and peace as I lift my prayers to You. Amen

What things are weighing on your heart and mind? What will it mean for you to truly surrender them to God through prayer?

SCRIPTURE INSIGHT

The psalm-writer David wasn't a model father, but he deeply loved his rebellious son Absalom, who usurped his throne and sought to kill him. And Absalom nearly succeeded. David fled Jerusalem with his household, his loyal officials, and others who were faithful to him (2 Samuel 15:1-17:24).

So many of the psalms were written out of deep personal or national crisis, often both. The turmoil and uncertainty of Absalom's rebellion inspired Psalm 3. Many scholars believe Psalm 4 was also written during this time, as well as Psalm 63. Intriguingly, all three psalms allude to sleep: " I lie down and sleep" (3:5); " In peace I will lie down and sleep" (4:8); and " On my bed I remember you; I think of you through the watches of the night" (63:6). David's troubles always drove him to his bedrock faith in God, where he unflinchingly found rest. – By **Tim Gustafson**

Used with permission