

## Psalm 3

### *How to Be Victorious Over Distress and Enemies, 3:1-8*

#### Psalm 3:1-8 (NKJV)

- <sup>1</sup> Lord, how they have increased who trouble me! Many are they who rise up against me.  
<sup>2</sup> Many are they who say of me, “There is no help for him in God.” Selah  
<sup>3</sup> But You, O Lord, are a shield for me, My glory and the One who lifts up my head.  
<sup>4</sup> I cried to the Lord with my voice, And He heard me from His holy hill. Selah  
<sup>5</sup> I lay down and slept; I awoke, for the Lord sustained me.  
<sup>6</sup> I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people Who have set themselves against me all around.  
<sup>7</sup> Arise, O Lord; Save me, O my God! For You have struck all my enemies on the cheekbone; You have broken the teeth of the ungodly.  
<sup>8</sup> Salvation belongs to the Lord. Your blessing is upon Your people. Selah

He uses a broken-hearted father and a humiliated king to encourage us as we face the desperate situations of life. This is, *How to Be Victorious Over Distress and Enemies*, Psalm 3:1-8.

1. Lay your distress before God (vv. 1-2).
2. Proclaim your faith in God (vv. 3-6).
3. Cry out for God’s deliverance (vv. 7-8).

#### 1. (Psalm 3:1-2) Lay your distress before God.

##### Psalm 3:1-2 (NKJV)

- <sup>1</sup> Lord, how they have increased who trouble me! Many are they who rise up against me.  
<sup>2</sup> Many are they who say of me, “There is no help for him in God.” Selah

##### Psalm 3:1 — Reverse for Clarity NKJV:

<sup>1</sup> If my troubles feel like they are multiplying, it is because many have indeed turned against me; my pressure is not imaginary—my opposition is real and increasing. **Key emphasis:** escalation, multiplication of opposition.

##### Psalm 3:2 — Reverse for Clarity NKJV:

<sup>2</sup> Those who speak against me are trying to seal my fate by declaring God has abandoned me; they want me to believe heaven is closed to my prayer and rescue is impossible.

**Selah (study pause):**

Stop and sit in the weight of the accusation: “*God won’t help you.*” Then prepare to watch God answer it. **Key emphasis:** spiritual slander, “God has forsaken you.”

The pressure of David’s situation was on the verge of crushing his spirit. Note the words *many* (v. 1), *increased* (v. 1), and *many* again (v. 2). David was outnumbered; he was in the minority. Additionally, this was not an attack from an enemy nation: this was an internal problem. His own nation and family were divided against him. Internal problems are always the most grievous and dangerous, whether in a family, business, church, or nation (Mark 3:24-25).

#### Mark 3:24-25 (NKJV)

<sup>24</sup> **If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand.**

<sup>25</sup> **And if a house is divided against itself, that house cannot stand.**

### **Mark 3:24–25 — Reverse for Clarity**

#### **Verse 24 — Reverse for Clarity**

<sup>24</sup> If a kingdom continues to stand, it is because it is not internally divided. No kingdom collapses while unified within itself. Where there is sustained power, there is structural unity. Where authority remains intact, it is not fighting itself. Therefore, any kingdom that turns against its own authority, any realm that wages civil war within its own borders, cannot remain stable, secure, or enduring. Internal division guarantees inevitable collapse.

#### **Verse 25 — Reverse for Clarity**

<sup>25</sup> Likewise, a house that remains standing is not fractured within. A household survives because it is not at war with itself. If unity is present, the structure holds. If division dominates, the foundation weakens.

Where loyalties compete and authority fractures, where members oppose one another, the house does not slowly weaken—it cannot stand at all. Division is not merely harmful; it is terminal. David had no place to turn, except to the Lord. He released the stress in his spirit before the throne of the omnipotent God. All the hurt in his heart was poured out at the feet of his Heavenly Father.

### **Modern-Day Introduction: When Pressure Multiplies and Voices Accuse**

There are seasons in life when distress does not arrive quietly—it multiplies. One problem becomes three. One critic becomes a chorus. One disappointment becomes a narrative.

That is the emotional terrain of **Psalm 3:1–2**. David is not exaggerating. He repeats the word *many*. The trouble has increased. The opposition has multiplied. And worse still, the attack is not merely physical or political—it is spiritual and psychological:

“There is no help for him in God.” This is not just conflict. It is the weaponization of theology against a wounded soul. It is the suggestion that heaven is closed, that prayer is pointless, that God has withdrawn. And notice something profoundly pastoral: David does not begin with strategy. He begins with address. “Lord...” Before he solves the crisis, he lays the distress before God. That is the first move of faith. When pressure escalates and voices accuse, the question is not “*How do I fix this?*” but “*Where do I take this?*” David takes it upward.

### **Illustration 1: The Corporate Collapse**

A CEO leads a company through economic downturn. Revenue drops. Investors panic. Board members whisper. Employees speculate. News outlets question his competence. Then the rumors begin: “He’s lost control.” “He doesn’t know what he’s doing.” “There’s no way this company survives under him.” The external pressure is bad. But the internal narrative is worse. The moment he begins to believe the accusation, leadership collapses internally *before it* collapses externally.

**Psalm 3** describes that moment—but spiritually. David is not just facing enemies. He is facing voices saying, “God has abandoned you.” The most dangerous distress is not the opposition around you, but the accusation that God is no longer for you.

### **Illustration 2: The Church Divided from Within**

A church experiences internal conflict. Not persecution from culture—but division from within. Families take sides. Long-time members withdraw. Conversations shift from fellowship to suspicion. Whispers circulate: “God’s blessing is gone.” “The Lord isn’t in this anymore.” “This church will never recover.” Notice the pattern: internal division becomes interpreted as divine abandonment.

This is exactly what David faced. His crisis was not foreign invasion—it was rebellion from within his own household and nation. Internal fracture always cuts deeper. As Jesus said: A kingdom divided against itself cannot stand (**Mark 3:24–25**). Internal opposition threatens identity. It makes leaders question calling. It makes believers question favor. And that is why **Psalm 3** begins not with denial—but with honest lament.

**Pastoral Emphasis:** Lay It Before God David does not suppress his distress. He does not spiritualize it away. He does not pretend it is smaller than it is. He names it: Many. Increased. Many again. Faith is not pretending opposition isn’t real. Faith is bringing real opposition to a real God. The enemy’s goal in **verse 2** is theological despair: “God won’t help you.” David’s response is relational dependence: “Lord...” That single word is the hinge between collapse and confidence.

**Teaching Anchor:** Before victory in **Psalm 3**, before confidence, before sleep returns, before fear dissolves—there is an act of deliberate surrender: Lay your distress before God. Not after you fix it. Not once you understand it. Not once do others validate it. Immediately. And then, like David, pause. Selah. Sit in the weight of the accusation.

#### **a. When enemies oppose and rise up against you ([v. 1](#)).**

##### **Psalm 3:1 (NKJV)**

<sup>1</sup> Lord, how they have **increased** who trouble me! **Many** are they who rise up against me.

As believers, we face many foes in our lives. Our enemies are often human, as were David’s enemies. Additionally, we encounter other types of adversaries. Physical problems such as fatigue, illness, and disease work against us. Problems of the soul and spirit—fear, discouragement, depression, frustration, anger, hatred—oppose us.

We are in an ongoing war with the temptations that arise from our own sinful desires, such as greed, pride, and lust. God’s Word instructs us, however, that all attacks are directed from one source. Satan, the great enemy of God and humanity, is behind all attempts to destroy us. He also seeks to destroy those whom the Father longs to save—all who have not received Christ.

#### **Scripture unmasks our true enemy:**

##### **Ephesians 6:10-12 (NKJV)**

<sup>10</sup> Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.

<sup>11</sup> Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

<sup>12</sup> For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers,

**against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.**

One of the sobering truths of the Christian life is this: as we grow in the Lord, our trials and troubles will increase, both in number and in severity. The carnal believer, a person who continues to walk after the flesh rather than the Spirit, is of little concern to Satan and his demonic forces. He or she is virtually no threat to Satan's evil agenda. This person will be largely ignored by Satan, for Satan has little need to waste his resources where they are not needed.

The spiritual believer, in contrast, is a great threat to the advancement of Satan's cause. The devil will direct his sharpest attacks and his shrewdest, most effective demons toward the destruction of Christ's mightiest soldiers. If we are walking with the Lord, we must expect to be opposed. We must constantly watch for Satan's attacks, his seductions and enticements.

**b. When friends say that God has forsaken you and will not deliver you ([v. 2](#)).**

**[Psalm 3:2 \(NKJV\)](#)**

<sup>2</sup> **Many are they who say of me, "There is no help for him in God." Selah**

David's false friends defended their disloyalty by claiming that God was on Absalom's side and that David had lost the Lord's favor. This false assumption satisfied their corrupt consciences and, to their minds, justified their treason against their king. And, sadly, the opinion that God was judging David was spreading. Note the words of Shimei, a relative of Saul's, who cursed David as he fled Jerusalem:

**[2 Samuel 16:8 \(NKJV\)](#)**

<sup>8</sup> **The Lord has brought upon you all the blood of the house of Saul, in whose place you have reigned; and the Lord has delivered the kingdom into the hand of Absalom your son. So now you are caught in your own evil, because you are a bloodthirsty man!**

When sincere believers face trouble, some carnal Christians and unbelievers usually question their relationship with the Lord. They wrongly conclude that God is judging those who are afflicted, perhaps repaying them for sins they have committed. This is what many in Israel concluded against David. It is the same way Job's friends responded in his dark hours of distress. We must remember that accusations and rumors are not always true. In fact, they usually spring from hearts that are not right with the Lord. If people's hearts are in tune with God, they do not gloat or rejoice when the chastening hand of God comes upon another.

Neither do they assume the place of God in passing judgment. If we are truly spiritual, we understand God's Word and purposes, and we dare not assume that trouble in the life of a righteous person is God's punishment. After describing his desperate situation to the Lord, David inserts the word "[selah](#)" (see [Deeper Study # 2](#)).

This may seem to be an unusual place for a pause, but it has a strategic purpose. When we are facing a desperate situation and turn to this psalm, the psalmist suggests that we pause here and meditate on the distress and, perhaps, the hopelessness of our situation. This interlude dramatically sets the stage for the full impact of David's triumphant statement in the next verse.

**Thought 1.** American President Abraham Lincoln said, “I have been driven many times upon my knees by the overwhelming conviction that I had nowhere else to go. My own wisdom and that of all about me seemed insufficient for that day.” We must realize that we cannot handle life’s burdens and troubles by ourselves. And God does not want us to. There is no special blessing for dealing with trials on our own and in our own strength. The Lord does not favor us for not troubling Him with our problems. In fact, the very opposite is true. He invites us to bring our problems to Him. He wants to work them out for our good and His glory.

Our Heavenly Father desires that we depend totally upon Him and that we trust Him to do what we cannot do. Turning to the Lord for help should be our first resort, not our last.

[Matthew 11:28 \(NKJV\)](#)

<sup>28</sup> **Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.**

[1 Peter 5:7 \(NKJV\)](#)

<sup>7</sup> **Casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.**

[Psalm 55:22 \(NKJV\)](#)

<sup>22</sup> **Cast your burden on the Lord, And He shall sustain you; He shall never permit the righteous to be moved.**