

Psalm 3

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

Psalm 3:1-8 (NKJV)

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

2. (Psalm 3:3-6) Proclaim your faith in God.

Psalm 3:3-6 (NKJV)

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Theological Introduction

Psalm 3 is not written from a palace of peace but from a field of betrayal. Historically, David is fleeing from his son Absalom (**2 Samuel 15-18**).

The king has become a fugitive.

The anointed ruler is surrounded.

The father is betrayed.

Yet in the middle of panic and public humiliation comes one of the most powerful theological pivots in Scripture: “**But You, O Lord...**” That small conjunction is spiritually seismic. That small word “**BUT**” is a conjunction. I used to drive the congregation crazy every time I would go to explain a grammatical rule. Why is it important? Because God is the one who gave us language. It’s the method by which God chose to communicate with His creation.

Psalm 3:3 (NKJV)

- ³ But You, O Lord, are a shield for me, My glory and the One who lifts up my head.

A conjunction is a coordinating or subordinating word whose grammatical function is to connect linguistic units—words, phrases, clauses, or entire sentences—while clarifying the logical relationship between them. In formal grammar, conjunctions serve three primary purposes:

1. To Join Equal Elements (Coordination)

A coordinating conjunction connects elements of equal grammatical rank (word-to-word, phrase-to-phrase, clause-to-clause).

Common coordinating conjunctions:

***for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so* (FANBOYS)**

Examples:

- Shepherds teach and guard.
- The church grew, but the people did not mature.
- We can pray or we can panic.

Here, the conjunction creates structural balance and signals the relationship (addition, contrast, alternative, cause).

2. To Show Dependency (Subordination)

A subordinating conjunction introduces a dependent (subordinate) clause and links it to an independent clause. Common subordinating conjunctions: ***because, although, since, if, while, when, unless, though***

Examples:

- We are blessed because we obey.
- Although the battle was fierce, David trusted the Lord.
- If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just.

These conjunctions establish logical relationships such as:

- Cause
- Time
- Condition
- Contrast
- Purpose
- Result

They create hierarchy in the sentence—one idea depends on another.

3. To Link Correlated Ideas (Correlative Conjunctions)

These function in pairs to connect balanced elements.

Examples:

- Either...or
- Neither...nor
- Not only...but also
- Both...and

Example:

- Not only must pastors preach truth, but also live it.

They emphasize parallel structure and rhetorical force.

Why Conjunctions Matter

Without conjunctions, language becomes fragmented: We prayed. We fasted. We waited. God answered.

With conjunctions:

We prayed and fasted, and we waited, and God answered.

Conjunctions:

- Clarify relationships
- Improve flow
- Establish logic
- Create emphasis
- Prevent choppiness

They are the structural ligaments of language—holding ideas together so meaning can move coherently from one thought to the next. Why is this so important to us? Because many times when we read and study God’s Word, we discover that golden nuggets of truth are revealed to us in the conjunctions. These nuances are where many times the revelatory nature of God’s Word are manifested. We see with greater clarity the Spiritual logic of God’s Word. These become our come to JESUS moments of AH HA!

[Psalm 3:1-8 \(NKJV\)](#)

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Here are all of the conjunctions found in **[Psalm 3:1-8 \(NKJV\)](#)**, identified precisely according to grammatical function:

Conjunctions in the Passage

1. But ([Verse 3](#))

“But You, O Lord, are a shield for me...”

- Type: Coordinating conjunction
- Function: Adversative (contrast)
- Purpose: Marks a dramatic shift from lament ([vv.1-2](#)) to confidence ([vv.3-8](#)).

- It contrasts the enemies' accusations with David's declaration of faith.

2. and ([Verse 3](#))

"My glory and the One who lifts up my head."

- Type: Coordinating conjunction
- Function: Additive
- Purpose: Connects two predicate nominatives describing the Lord.

3. And ([Verse 4](#))

"And He heard me from His holy hill."

- Type: Coordinating conjunction
- Function: Additive / Sequential
- Purpose: Links David's cry to God with God's response.

4. for ([Verse 5](#))

"I awoke, for the Lord sustained me."

- Type: Coordinating conjunction
- Function: Causal
- Purpose: Explains *why* David awoke safely — because the Lord sustained him.

5. For ([Verse 7](#))

"For You have struck all my enemies..."

- Type: Coordinating conjunction
- Function: Causal / Explanatory
- Purpose: Grounds David's prayer for deliverance in God's past action.

2. (Psalm 3:3-6) Proclaim your faith in God.

[Psalm 3:3-6 \(NKJV\)](#)

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The word **"But"** functions as a covenantal hinge. It interrupts despair. It corrects perspective. It shifts authority from circumstance to sovereignty. David does not deny the reality of enemies; he redefines reality in light of Yahweh. David addresses God as Yahweh (Jehovah)—the covenant name of God. This is not accidental.

Yahweh is the self-existent, promise-keeping God ([Exodus 3:14](#)).

[Exodus 3:14 NKJV](#)

¹⁴ And God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM." And He said, "Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.'"

When David says, “**But You, O Lord,**” he is not appealing to a generic deity; he is appealing to the covenant-keeping God who had pledged him the throne ([2 Samuel 7](#)).

[Psalm 3:3](#) reveals three covenantal assurances:

- “A shield for me” — Divine protection
- “My glory” — Divine identity and honor
- “The One who lifts up my head” — Divine restoration

David’s theology is not abstract; it is anchored in covenant fidelity. His enemies speak in [verse 2](#).

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

² **Many are they who say of me, “There is no help for him in God.” Selah**

Fear whispers.

Circumstances shout.

But faith proclaims Yahweh.

Notice the progression:

- He cries ([v. 4](#)) — prayer
- He sleeps ([v. 5](#)) — trust
- He awakens sustained ([v. 5](#)) — providence
- He refuses fear ([v. 6](#)) — confidence

This is covenant faith in motion. David did not remove his enemies; he removed his gaze from them. His stability came from the character of God, not the absence of opposition. And that is where proclamation becomes essential. Faith must be spoken.

[Psalm 3](#) is not silent meditation—it is vocal declaration: “I cried... He heard... I will not be afraid.” Proclaiming faith is how theology moves from the page to the heart.

Modern-Day Introduction

We live in a culture that magnifies enemies—political, social, economic, digital. The modern believer can be surrounded not by armies, but by headlines, diagnoses, financial pressures, church conflicts, cultural hostility, and personal betrayal. The enemies today may not carry swords, but they carry accusations, uncertainties, and anxieties.

And yet the decisive spiritual word is still: “**But.**”

- But God is still sovereign.
- But God is still faithful.
- But God still keeps covenant.

[Psalm 3](#) teaches us that faith is not the denial of difficulty; it is the declaration of covenant confidence in difficulty. The modern crisis is not primarily circumstantial—it is perceptual. We look too long at the enemies and too little at Yahweh. When the believer proclaims, “**You, O Lord, are my shield,**” they are not practicing denial; they are practicing theology.

Modern-Day Illustration #1: The Corporate Leader Under Public Attack

Imagine a CEO whose company is under public scrutiny. The media cycles run constantly. Share prices fluctuate. Critics speak loudly. Internally, staff morale wavers. If that leader spends every hour reading criticism, they will collapse under pressure. But if they return to the company's founding charter—its mission, vision, and contractual commitments—they regain stability.

David returned to God's covenant charter. In the same way, when a believer is under attack—whether through slander, opposition, or hardship—the stabilizing factor is not public opinion but covenant promise. The shield is not found in reputation management; it is found in Yahweh.

Modern-Day Illustration #2: The Hospital Room at Night

Consider the believer lying awake in a hospital room after a serious diagnosis. Machines beep. Uncertainty fills the room. Doctors have given information, but not guarantees. Fear multiplies in the darkness.

Yet [Psalm 3:5](#) says:

“I lay down and slept; I awoke, for the Lord sustained me.”

Sleep is one of the purest acts of trust. You cannot defend yourself while asleep. You surrender control. When that believer rests—not because the prognosis improved, but because Yahweh is faithful—they are proclaiming [Psalm 3](#) in real time. The sustaining power of God does not always remove the illness, but it sustains the soul.

Concluding Emphasis

[Psalm 3:3-6 \(NKJV\)](#)

³ **But You, O Lord, are a shield for me, My glory and the One who lifts up my head.**

⁴ **I cried to the Lord with my voice, And He heard me from His holy hill. Selah**

⁵ **I lay down and slept; I awoke, for the Lord sustained me.**

⁶ **I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people Who have set themselves against me all around.**

[Psalm 3:3–6](#) calls us to do what David did:

- Shift perspective
- Speak covenant truth
- Cry out in prayer
- Rest in trust
- Rise without fear

Your enemies may be many. Your situation may be complex. But your covenant Lord remains unchanged. The most powerful word in your crisis may be one small conjunction:

“But.”

“But You, O Lord...”