

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)

- 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...” “But” is the simple, yet powerful, word that transitions the mood of this psalm from helplessness to hope, from darkness to light, from weakness to power.

Just as this psalm does not end with David’s desperate situation, our overwhelming circumstances are not our doom. We are not left to hopelessly suffer defeat at the hands of our enemies. “But” informs us that the tone of this psalm is changing with the words “But You, O Lord.”

David took his eyes off his enemies and focused them upon the Lord. We are not alone in our battles, and we are not without help when we are attacked by insurmountable trouble. It is important to note that throughout this psalm David addresses God as *Yahweh* (Hebrew), *Jehovah* (Greek).

The only exceptions are when David quotes his enemies (**v. 2**),

Psalms 3:2 (NKJV)

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

and when he responds to their taunts (**v. 7**).

Psalms 3:7 (NKJV)

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.

Yahweh (Jehovah) is God’s covenant name, the name that is used to symbolize His faithfulness to His people. The Lord had made a covenant with David, a promise that pledged the throne of Israel to him (**2 Samuel 7**). After the promise was given, David was not controlled by his fears or his feelings. Instead, he stood firm in the God who does not break His covenant or promises.

Psalms 3:3 is one of the most-beloved verses in all the psalms.

Psalms 3:3 (NKJV)

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

David’s *faith-filled* words continue to raise a triumphant spirit in troubled hearts today.

a. God is your protector (shield) (**v. 3**).

Psalms 3:3 (NKJV)

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

David’s troubled mind turned to the familiar promises of God’s Word, promises such as these:

Genesis 15:1 (NKJV)

¹ After these things the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision, saying, “Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your exceedingly great reward.”

Deuteronomy 33:29 (NKJV)

²⁹ Happy are you, O Israel! Who is like you, a people saved by the Lord, The shield of your help And the sword of your majesty! Your enemies shall submit to you, And you shall tread down their high places.

The betrayed king’s confidence was not in his skills as a warrior, his armies, or his friends. He knew that His Protector—his **shield (magain)**—was the Lord. Two types of shields were used by Hebrew warriors. One was a large rectangular shield which the soldier could hide behind and be covered. The other was a small, hand-held shield which was used to fend off arrows and absorb sword strikes. The Hebrew word, *magain*, is the latter. Note the significance of this word. David was not afraid of a mortal shot or blow from his enemies. The Lord was his shield. The Lord would not just protect David from being struck by his foes, but also, He would personally take the shots or blows intended for David. He *personally* would rise up in front of David and absorb

the impact. This reminds us of the smitten Lamb at Calvary who absorbed the impact of sin for us:

Isaiah 53:4-6 (NKJV)

⁴ Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted.

⁵ But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed.

⁶ All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

This great truth is fully understood by remembering that David's bloody household—his family problems—were the result of his terrible sin with Bathsheba:

2 Samuel 12:9-12 (NKJV)

⁹ Why have you despised the commandment of the Lord, to do evil in His sight? You have killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword; you have taken his wife to be your wife, and have killed him with the sword of the people of Ammon.

¹⁰ Now therefore, the sword shall never depart from your house, because you have despised Me, and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife.

¹¹ Thus says the Lord: 'Behold, I will raise up adversity against you from your own house...

¹² For you did it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel, before the sun.'"

Yet when David's own son raised his sword against his father—a consequence of David's sin of murdering Uriah the Hittite —David declared that God would intercept the blow and bear the strike that was meant for him. What a prophetic picture of the substitutionary death of the Lord Jesus Christ! God's Son stepped between us and the penalty for our sin. Like a shield, He absorbed the painful punishment that should have been ours. Note this also about the *shield*: it is the piece of the Christian's armor that pictures our faith in God and His Word:

Ephesians 6:16 (NKJV)

¹⁶ Above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one.

The Lord is our shield. When we raise the shield of faith, we declare our unwavering confidence that God will protect us. We bear strong witness to His power and immeasurable strength.

b. God is your source of glory (y. 3).

Psalm 3:3 (NKJV)

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

David was known as a "man of war" (**2 Samuel 17:8**).

2 Samuel 17:8 NKJV

⁸ For," said Hushai, "you know your father and his men, that they *are* mighty men, and they *are* enraged in their minds, like a bear robbed of her cubs in the field; and your father is a man of war, and will not camp with the people.

He had ascended to the throne of Israel after being victorious over the giant Goliath and in other military campaigns. He had ruled gloriously over God's chosen people. But his glory was

stripped from him and turned to shame when he suddenly fled from Jerusalem barefoot, weeping, and with his head hung low (2 Samuel 15:14-30; Psalm 4:2).

2 Samuel 15:14-30 NKJV

¹⁴ So David said to all his servants who *were* with him at Jerusalem, “Arise, and let us flee, or we shall not escape from Absalom. Make haste to depart, lest he overtake us suddenly and bring disaster upon us, and strike the city with the edge of the sword.”

¹⁵ And the king’s servants said to the king, “We *are* your servants, *ready to do* whatever my lord the king commands.”

¹⁶ Then the king went out with all his household after him. But the king left ten women, concubines, to keep the house.

¹⁷ And the king went out with all the people after him, and stopped at the outskirts.

¹⁸ Then all his servants passed before him; and all the Cherethites, all the Pelethites, and all the Gittites, six hundred men who had followed him from Gath, passed before the king.

¹⁹ Then the king said to Ittai the Gittite, “Why are you also going with us? Return and remain with the king. For you *are* a foreigner and also an exile from your own place.

²⁰ In fact, you came *only* yesterday. Should I make you wander up and down with us today, since I go I know not where? Return, and take your brethren back. Mercy and truth *be* with you.”

²¹ But Ittai answered the king and said, “As the Lord lives, and *as* My lord the king lives, surely in whatever place my lord the king shall be, whether in death or life, even there also your servant will be.”

²² So David said to Ittai, “Go, and cross over.” Then Ittai the Gittite and all his men and all the little ones who *were* with him crossed over.

²³ And all the country wept with a loud voice, and all the people crossed over. The king himself also crossed over the Brook Kidron, and all the people crossed over toward the way of the wilderness.

²⁴ There was Zadok also, and all the Levites with him, bearing the ark of the covenant of God. And they set down the ark of God, and Abiathar went up until all the people had finished crossing over from the city.

²⁵ Then the king said to Zadok, “Carry the ark of God back into the city. If I find favor in the eyes of the Lord, He will bring me back and show me *both* it and His dwelling place.

²⁶ But if He says thus: ‘I have no delight in you,’ here I am, let Him do to me as seems good to Him.”

²⁷ The king also said to Zadok the priest, “*Are you not* a seer? Return to the city in peace, and your two sons with you, Ahimaaz your son, and Jonathan the son of Abiathar.

²⁸ See, I will wait in the plains of the wilderness until word comes from you to inform me.”

²⁹ Therefore Zadok and Abiathar carried the ark of God back to Jerusalem. And they remained there.

³⁰ So David went up by the Ascent of the *Mount of Olives*, and wept as he went up; and he had his head covered and went barefoot. And all the people who *were* with him covered their heads and went up, weeping as they went up.

Psalm 4:2 NKJV

² How long, O you sons of men, *Will you turn* my glory to shame? *How long* will you love worthlessness *And* seek falsehood? *Selah*