

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).

3. (Psalm 3:7-8) Cry out for God’s deliverance.

Psalm 3:7-8 (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.
⁸ Salvation belongs to the Lord. Your blessing is upon Your people. Selah

THEOLOGICAL INTRODUCTION

Psalm 3:7-8 marks a decisive shift in David’s spiritual posture—from distress to confidence, from being overwhelmed by opposition to being anchored in divine sovereignty. This is not merely a cry for relief; it is a declaration rooted in covenant theology: “Salvation belongs to the Lord.” David’s appeal is not based on personal merit, military strength, or emotional resilience.

It is grounded in the character of God—

His faithfulness,

His justice, and

His covenantal commitment to His people.

The language of striking enemies and breaking teeth reflects not personal vengeance, but divine intervention that renders opposition powerless.

Theologically, this passage teaches three foundational truths:

1. **God alone is the source of deliverance**

Salvation is not achieved—it is received. It belongs exclusively to the Lord.

2. Prayer is the ordained means of experiencing God's deliverance

David does not strategize first—he prays first. Prayer is not a last resort; it is the first response.

3. Peace is the evidence of God's answer

Deliverance often begins internally before it manifests externally. God grants peace before He grants visible victory.

This text ultimately points forward to Christ, where the fullest expression of “**Salvation belongs to the Lord**” is seen—not in the defeat of earthly enemies, but in the crushing of sin, death, and Satan through the cross and resurrection. David's cry in **verse seven** is different from his previous cry. This is the cry of confidence rather than of desperation and helplessness. Apparently, God gave David a special sense of His presence and care. Sensing this wonderful truth, David calls out for God's help.

MODERN-DAY INTRODUCTION

In today's world, people are surrounded by voices that echo the same accusation David heard: “**There is no help for him in God.**” (**Psalm 3:2**)

These voices come through:

- cultural skepticism,
- personal failure,
- relational conflict,
- and internal doubt.

Modern believers often attempt to solve spiritual battles with natural tools—**self-help**, **control**, **distraction**, or **avoidance**. Yet **Psalm 3** confronts us with a clear reality: Victory does not come from managing circumstances—it comes from trusting God.

The modern Christian must relearn what David practiced:

- to **cry out boldly**,
- to **depend fully**,
- and to **rest confidently** in God's deliverance.

This passage calls us away from self-reliance and back to God-centered dependence, where prayer becomes our strategy, faith becomes our posture, and peace becomes our confirmation.

a. Cry out for personal deliverance and for the defeat of your enemies (v. 7**).**

Psalm 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.

David's cry is a response to those who jeered and mocked him, those who proclaimed that God was against him (**v. 2**).

Psalm 3:2 (NKJV)

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

Boldly, David called upon the Lord to *arise* on his behalf, to prove that those who judged and ridiculed him were wrong. Notice also a contrast to verse one: many rose up against him, but David called only upon One to rise up for him.

Psalm 118:6 (NKJV)

⁶ The Lord is on my side; I will not fear. What can man do to me?

1. The Overwhelmed Leader

A pastor or leader faces criticism, division, and resistance within the church. Meetings become battlegrounds, and voices of doubt increase.

Like David, the temptation is to defend, argue, or withdraw. But true victory comes when he steps away—not to strategize—but to pray, declaring:

“Arise, O Lord... Save me.”

Psalm 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.

2. The Student Under Pressure

A young person is surrounded by cultural voices mocking their faith—teachers, peers, and media all subtly saying: “Your trust in God is outdated.” Instead of compromising, they turn to God in prayer, anchoring themselves in truth. Their peace becomes their testimony.

3. The Family in Crisis

A household is under attack — financial strain, illness, or relational breakdown. Anxiety dominates the environment. Instead of panic-driven decisions, the family gathers to pray, trusting that: Deliverance is not in their control—it belongs to the Lord. Peace begins to replace chaos before circumstances change.

4. The Believer Battling Internal Fear

Not all enemies are external. Some are internal—fear, guilt, shame, and anxiety. Like David’s enemies, these thoughts say: **“There is no help for you.”** But through persistent prayer, the believer experiences God breaking the **“teeth”** of those lies—rendering them powerless.

5. The Workplace Opposition

A Christian stands for integrity in a workplace where compromise is rewarded. This leads to isolation, ridicule, or even threat of loss. Rather than retaliating or conforming, they trust God to defend them. Over time, God either vindicates them or redirects them—but always sustains them.

6. The Waiting Season

Someone is praying for a breakthrough—healing, restoration, or direction—but nothing seems to change. The question arises: “How long should I pray?” **Psalm 3** answers clearly (supported in your notes): Pray until God gives peace. The breakthrough may not come immediately—but the peace of God signals that He has heard and is working.

David used two common phrases in praying for his enemies’ destruction. **“Striking the enemy on the cheek—a ‘slap in the face’—was an act of humiliation.**

Psalm 3:7-8 (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.**

⁸ Salvation belongs to the Lord. Your blessing is upon Your people. Selah

David saw the rebellious army as a pack of animals that needed their teeth broken. He called upon God to make his enemies as powerless as toothless lions (**Psalm 58:6**).

Psalm 58:6 (NKJV)

⁶ Break their teeth in their mouth, O God! Break out the fangs of the young lions, O Lord! b. Proclaim your faith: That deliverance comes from God (**v. 8**).

Psalm 3:8 (NKJV)

⁸ Salvation belongs to the Lord. Your blessing is upon Your people. Selah

The embattled king dared not take credit for the victory that he was sure he would receive. He gave God the glory for His salvation, praising the faithful God Who keeps His covenant, in spite of his (man's) sinful failures. With great confidence he pronounced God's blessing upon his kingdom and its people—the recipients of God's covenant promises. God would show himself strong not only on David's behalf but on behalf of the people He had promised to bless.

Thought 1. David's victory came through...

- taking his distress (burden, trouble) to the Lord and turning to Him for help
- prayer
- unwavering faith in God and His Word

At some point, while David was praying and crying out to God, the Lord gave him peace about the victory. David did not always have this assurance. There was a time when he felt that God might choose not to favor him. **In fact, he resigned himself to whatever God determined (2 Samuel 15:25-26).**

2 Samuel 15:25-26 NKJV

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."

But in the present psalm he prayed until God answered, and then rested in God's peace. Sometimes, when we face some problem or trouble, we ask how long we should pray for a solution. We should continue to pray until God answers by giving us His peace (**Philippians 4:6-7**).

Philippians 4:6-7 NKJV

⁶ Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God;

⁷ and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

The peace of God is the factor that should rule our hearts and decisions (**Colossians 3:15**).

Colossians 3:15 NKJV

¹⁵ And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful.

When God gives us His peace, we can then proceed with confidence. But until He grants peace, we should continue in fervent prayer.

Luke 22:41-44 NKJV

⁴¹ And He was withdrawn from them about a stone's throw, and He knelt down and prayed,

⁴² saying, "Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done."

⁴³ Then an angel appeared to Him from heaven, strengthening Him.

⁴⁴ And being in agony, He prayed more earnestly. Then His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

James 5:16-18 NKJV

¹⁶ Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.

¹⁷ Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain; and it did not rain on the land for three years and six months.

¹⁸ And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth produced its fruit.