

## “WHEN DARKNESS CREEPS IN”

(Psalm 143:1-12)

“For the enemy hath made me to dwell in darkness ... therefore is my spirit overwhelmed within me.” (Psalm 143:3, 4)

### — INTRODUCTION —

**Psalm 143 is the cry of a soldier in battle:**

- It is an appeal from someone in combat.
- It is an intense prayer for a renewal of spirit.
- It is David’s prayer in the midst of enemy fire.

### What’s the Dilemma?

“For the enemy hath persecuted my soul.” (v. 3)

**Fact:** Saul was jealous because of David’s exaltation (or)

**Fact:** Absalom was envious of his father’s kingdom (or)

**Fact:** Satan was hurling fiery darts at the psalmist.

## Questions with Answers

1. Why was David “overwhelmed” in spirit?
2. What does it mean to be “persecuted in my soul”?
3. How did David respond to his challenges?
4. How does the enemy discourage saints today?
5. What’s the secret to being “lifted” when clouds surround you?

### I. The PERSECUTION of a Soldier

“The enemy hath persecuted my soul; he hath smitten my life down to the ground; he hath made me to dwell in darkness ... My soul thirsteth after Thee as a thirsty land.” (v. 3, 6)

#### 3 Battle Scars (of David and Soldiers Today)

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##### #1. David is **DOWN**

“The enemy has smitten my life down to the ground.” (v. 3)

The word smitten means: 1. To be **broken, crushed, bruised, trodden down.**

##### #2. David is **DARK**

“He hath made me to dwell in darkness.” (v. 3)

**Fact:** David is being persecuted by Saul and Absalom.

**Fact:** David has been driven to hide in the mountain caves.

**Fact:** David is unsure of his footing and future (in hiding).

**Question:** Ever feel “in the dark,” (you cannot see all that God is doing behind the scenes)?

**Question:** Ever unsure of the direction God wants to lead you in?

**Question:** Ever needed specific direction to make the right decision? (Psalm 32:8)

#3. **David is DRY**

“My soul thirsteth as a thirsty land.” (v. 6)

**Fact:** David refers here to the dry ground that cracks in the heat of summer.

**Fact:** The ground opens up (cracks) and cries out for rain.

**Fact:** David cries out as the ground does, (which means) “Nothing will satisfy me, Lord, but Your presence.”

**Question:** Ever find yourself in a dry season?

**Question:** Ever been desperate for God to pour water upon your soul?

II. **The PLIGHT of a Soldier**

**Question:** What can happen during the dry seasons?

**Question:** What happens when you feel enemy floods?

**Question:** What can happen when darkness surrounds you?

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**3 Common Byproducts**

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#1. **An OVERWHELMED Spirit**

“Therefore is my spirit overwhelmed within me.” (v. 4)

**Fact:** David is confounded by thoughts within himself.

**Fact:** David is despairing (as to where help would come from).

**Fact:** David is consumed with anxious thoughts.

**Question:** Ever feel overwhelmed with all that’s before you?

**Question:** What’s the secret to “resting in the Lord”?

#2. **A DESOLATE Spirit**

“My heart within me is desolate” (v. 4)

**Fact:** David feels like he is in the desert.

**Fact:** David can’t see God working at this time.

**Fact:** David fails to see the good of a “wilderness” season.

**Question:** What does the Hebrew word for desert (MIDBAR) mean?

**Answer:** “To Speak To”

**Never Forget This:** The husbandman is never so close as when he is **pruning his branches.**

#3. **A FAILING Spirit**

“Hear me speedily, O Lord; my spirit faileth.” (v. 7)

**Fact:** David feels his strength is declining.

**Fact:** David feels weakened in the battle.

**Fact:** David’s heart is faint because answers to prayer seem so distant.

**Question:** Ever feel faint, weakened, low or down because you cannot see God in the immediate picture? (Isaiah 40:27-31)

## **Then Enough is Enough !**

What do you do when you are down, dark or dry?  
What do you do when overwhelmed in spirit?

## **We Do What David Did !**

### **III. The PLEA of a Soldier**

#### **A. David Remembers**

"I remember the days of old" (v. 5) which means:

- God has been faithful in the past.
- God has proven true in all of my yesterdays.
- God has never failed me once.

**Question:** Can we trust the Lord as David did?

**Question:** Can we believe what God himself has said:

"Great Is Thy Faithfulness" (Lamentations 3:23)

**Question:** Can we "remember" (pause and just reflect) upon the "days of old" when God proved true and faithful?

#### **B. David Reaches**

"I stretch forth my hands unto Thee" (v. 6) which means:

- David has been affected by thinking on past victories.
- David, therefore, now seeks the Lord who is faithful.
- David looks in the right direction (upward).

#### **C. David Runs**

"Deliver me, O Lord, for I flee unto Thee to hide me" (v.9) which means:

- I place myself under your protection.
- I place myself in your care.
- I relinquish my burden over.
- I commit my lot totally to you.

**Question:** Can we cast our cares upon the Lord?

**Question:** What happens when we do?

**Answer:** The Peace of God reigns in the heart!

### **The Result of A, B, & C**

"Thy Spirit is good" (v. 10) and "Quicken me, O Lord" (v. 11)

- David finds God's grace equal to his circumstances.
- David finds refreshing and renewing as a drooping flower in need of water.
- David is lifted in his soul by the Spirit of God.
- David is changed following prayer and relinquishing his cares over to God.

“The God of all comfort” (II Cor. 1:3)

“Who comforts us in all tribulation” (v. 4)

“As any suffering abounds, so shall you be partakers of God’s consolation” (v. 7)

**(Which means:)** God’s grace will always be equal to your test !!  
Your need can never outweigh God’s grace to sustain you.

## **It’s Still True !**

“But thou, O Lord, art a shield for me; my glory and the ‘lifter up’ of mine head.” (Psalm 3:3)

### **How Are We “Lifted” (When Darkness Creeps In?)**

- We remember our days of old when God always proved faithful.
- We reach in the right direction (vertically) in prayer.
- We relinquish our burdens over to the Lord.
- We receive God’s grace that is equal to our need (always).

***AMEN !***  
**Pastor Bill Kirk**