

Psalm 27

Lord, we come to You now. We are going to take time to focus on You and Your word. Your word changes us. So now we breathe in and breathe out to prepare our minds for prayer.

Father God,

You are the strength of our lives, the One in whom, we live and move and have our being. So, come what may, we are safe and we will be saved. You are with us, no matter what. You are the protector of our fragile, exposed lives, You keep us from being slain, You are and You will be the strength of our lives, every day of our lives and You will also be our light in the darkest times. You keep us from fainting, sinking, and dying away. Thank you, Lord, for staying at our side, now and forevermore.

Many of the Psalms of David were written during times of deep personal distress. The Holy Spirit moved David's heart deeply enough for him to pour himself out and write the Psalms. David had been under extreme pressure, a pressure deep enough that it brought forth speech, and emotion, and David cried out about all his troubles during his journey. He would continually seek God and ask for Him to help him.

For David had a life of many troubles. If you are acquainted with the Scriptures, you will recall that, when David was a young man, Saul the king hated him, hunted him, and tried to kill him. David's life was filled with one trouble after another. When he became an older man, his own son Absalom tried to kill him and take his crown. Repeatedly throughout David's life, even dear friends would betray him, turn on him as traitors.

Yet each time he struggled, David came to see that his help was from the Lord, that his strength was not coming from himself, his deliverance was not due to his cleverness or strength, but it was the Lord Who would ultimately save and deliver him.

This psalm starts with his deep confidence in God, and two great declarations, but at the same time, there is some very real threat. We do not know what it is, but we hear it in the verses. David moves us from fear to peace, beside the Lord. So let's turn now to Psalm 27....

Psalm 27 from the NIV

*1 The Lord is my light and my salvation –
whom shall I fear?*

*The Lord is the stronghold of my life –
of whom shall I be afraid?*

*2 When the wicked advance against me
to devour me,*

*it is my enemies and my foes
who will stumble and fall.*

*3 Though an army besiege me,
my heart will not fear;*

*though war break out against me,
even then I will be confident.*

*4 One thing I ask from the Lord,
this only do I seek:*

*that I may dwell in the house of the Lord
all the days of my life,*

to gaze on the beauty of the Lord
 and to seek him in his temple.
⁵ For in the day of trouble
 he will keep me safe in his dwelling;
 he will hide me in the shelter of his sacred tent
 and set me high upon a rock.
⁶ Then my head will be exalted
 above the enemies who surround me;
 at his sacred tent I will sacrifice with shouts of joy;
 I will sing and make music to the Lord.
⁷ Hear my voice when I call, Lord;
 be merciful to me and answer me.
⁸ My heart says of you, "Seek his face!"
 Your face, Lord, I will seek.
⁹ Do not hide your face from me,
 do not turn your servant away in anger;
 you have been my helper.
 Do not reject me or forsake me,
 God my Savior.
¹⁰ Though my father and mother forsake me,
 the Lord will receive me.
¹¹ Teach me your way, Lord;
 lead me in a straight path
 because of my oppressors.
¹² Do not turn me over to the desire of my foes,
 for false witnesses rise up against me,
 spouting malicious accusations.
¹³ I remain confident of this:
 I will see the goodness of the Lord
 in the land of the living.
¹⁴ Wait for the Lord;
 be strong and take heart
 and wait for the Lord.

God is near to the brokenhearted; He hears our prayers. David *cried out* to the Lord. David remembered the Lord's help, even when he was in despair, he remembered what God had done for him in the past. He recalled His past faithfulness. David asked God to guide him and teach him. He did not withdraw into self-pity; he went on and he turned to God's word to learn more about His ways. David believed that He would see God's goodness.

Our confidence in God's goodness helps us to look beyond our current situation and our current emotions. David waited for the Lord; He knew that God would bring him out of the shadow of isolation. His loneliness was painful, but it was also an opportunity to draw near to the Lord and to grow.

Our God is an everlasting light to His people, His light will show us the way even when we are in clouds of doubt or in the fog of fear. He will lead us to comfort and joy, He will hold us when our hearts are in sorrow. It is in His light that that we walk in as we make our way through times of struggle and fear.

So, is Psalm 27 a psalm of trust or a prayer for help?

Some scholars argue that it is two psalms that were combined at some point, because the psalm begins with praise in verses 1-6, moves to lament and uncertainty in 7-12, and then returns to praise again in verses 13-14. But that adds to its authenticity, as it is cyclic, just as our lives are.

We praise, we cry, we fall, we rise, we praise again. This is the stuff of our existence. This is our faith walk. Our faith muscles are stronger for the strain when we remember God coming to our rescue in our past, so we can count on Him in our future.

The enemy will consistently try to tear us down, but we can find our source of power as we seek Him. We find Him and we can know the peace and comfort that only has its source in God.

One more time, we will hear the word in Psalm 27, this time from the Good News Translation.

Psalm 27

The Lord is my light and my salvation; I will fear no one.

The Lord protects me from all danger; I will never be afraid.

When evil people attack me and try to kill me, they stumble and fall.

Even if a whole army surrounds me, I will not be afraid;

even if enemies attack me, I will still trust God.

I have asked the Lord for one thing; one thing only do I want:

to live in the Lord's house all my life, to marvel there at his goodness, and to ask for his guidance.

In times of trouble he will shelter me; he will keep me safe in his Temple and make me secure on a high rock.

I will triumph over my enemies around me.

With shouts of joy I will offer sacrifices in his Temple;

I will sing, I will praise the Lord.

Hear me, Lord, when I call to you! Be merciful and answer me!

When you said, "Come worship me," I answered, "I will come, Lord."

Don't hide yourself from me! Don't be angry with me; don't turn your servant away.

You have been my help; don't leave me, don't abandon me, O God, my savior.

My father and mother may abandon me, but the Lord will take care of me.

Teach me, Lord, what you want me to do, and lead me along a safe path, because I have many enemies.

Don't abandon me to my enemies, who attack me with lies and threats.

I know that I will live to see the Lord's goodness in this present life.

Trust in the Lord. Have faith, do not despair. Trust in the Lord.

Right now, in this moment, we will pause and strengthen ourselves in Him. Whatever we are facing, we can gather it, bring it to Him and place it at His feet. We can find release and relief. We can wait and let Him move. We can see His power and walk in His Light Everlasting.

Lord Jesus,

We ask you to give us all peace in our mind, body, soul and spirit. We call on Your great name and we want Your help, we want to ask You to heal and remove the things that are causing such great stress, grief, and sorrow in our lives. Give us wisdom through this struggle. Let us trust in You, if You ask us to wait, we will wait. We know all things work together for good for those who trust in You. The greater good may be different than what we consider good. We yield our minds, hearts and our will to You. Yours is greater. You are our God and King. Please guide our path through life and make our enemies be finally at peace with us. In Your Great Name, Abba

Amen