

Psalms 27:0 ¶ *A Psalm of David.*

Yet another song written by Israel's shepherd poet king.

Psalms 27:1 ¶ *The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?*

David begins this song declaring the LORD to be his light, his happiness (from the Hebrew) and his salvation, his deliverance, safety and prosperity (all from the Hebrew and all applicable). He also declares the LORD to be his strength, his defense, the fortress that protects him. Because he trusts in the LORD, he has no reason to fear.

David is on a spiritual mountain top at this point and looking through spiritually enlightened eyes. He is praising the LORD with confidence based on past experience as stated in the next verse. Remembering how the LORD has provided for us in the past is one way of strengthening one's faith in times of adversity.

This verse reminds me of the words of Paul.

Romans 8:31 "If God be for us, who can be against us?"

Psalms 27:2 *When the wicked, even mine enemies and my foes, came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell.*

Psalms 27:3 *Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear: though war should rise against me, in this will I be confident.*

David remembered times that the LORD had delivered him from his enemies and caused them to fall in defeat. He is confident that even if surrounded by an army and war break out against him, he would not be afraid; he would stay confident that the LORD would deliver him.

Psalms 27:4 *One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to enquire in his temple.*

David declares that the thing most important to him, the thing that he wants above everything else and strives for is to dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of his life. Why? Most importantly, to behold the beauty of the LORD, to see the LORD with his own eyes, and to inspect and admire (from Hebrew for "behold") His temple, the place of His dwelling to enjoy its wonders (from Webster's definition for "admire").

I guess we would all answer differently if we were asked what we most looked forward to when getting to heaven. I would have to agree with David that to see the beauty of the LORD is first, with the addition of the fact that I will see Him clothed in His righteousness and with no taint of sin about me.

To be able to explore his dwelling place I think is a reference to all the wonders that the LORD has prepared for His people once He brings us into His presence.

Psalms 27:5 For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me; he shall set me up upon a rock.

Psalms 27:6 And now shall mine head be lifted up above mine enemies round about me: therefore will I offer in his tabernacle sacrifices of joy; I will sing, yea, I will sing praises unto the LORD.

David is confident that in time of trouble, the LORD will provide a cover of protection (from Hebrew root for “pavilion”) over him. The next part of verse 5 basically repeats the first part for emphasis. He then goes on to say that the LORD will raise him up in strength, pictured as being set upon a rock. The LORD will exalt him over his enemies; he is confident of victory in the LORD. Because of the LORD’s provision, David purposes to offer sacrifices of joy in the tabernacle. I think these sacrifices are in the form of songs of praise that he sings to the LORD. The writer of Hebrews affirms that such praise is recognized as a sacrifice.

Hebrews 13:15 “By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name.”

Psalms 27:7 ¶ Hear, O LORD, when I cry with my voice: have mercy also upon me, and answer me.

Psalms 27:8 When thou saidst, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, LORD, will I seek.

As so often seen in the psalms, David seems to have a mood swing. David calls out to the LORD to listen to him and answer him with mercy. To seek God’s face is a reference to prayer, continuing in context from the previous verses. David knew that the LORD delights in the prayers of His people, and he taught that truth to his son Solomon as recorded in Proverbs.

Proverbs 15:8 “The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD: but the prayer of the upright is his delight.”

For that reason alone we should strive to have a strong prayer life; and if my experience is any indication, it takes desire, discipline and commitment. I do much better at having a running conversation with the LORD throughout the day rather than setting aside blocks of time for concentrated prayer. After some sixty years, I am still working at that.

Beautiful comment from Spurgeon on verse 8: “In this verse we are taught that if we would have the Lord hear our voice, we must be careful to respond to His voice. The true heart should echo the will of God as the rocks among the Alps repeat in sweetest music the notes of the peasant’s horn.”

Psalms 27:9 Hide not thy face far from me; put not thy servant away in anger: thou hast been my help; leave me not, neither forsake me, O God of my salvation.

Psalms 27:10 When my father and my mother forsake me, then the LORD will take me up.

Though David completely trusted God's faithfulness, he was well aware of his own weakness. He was concerned that God not respond to him in anger (because of sin would be implied). He pleads with the LORD not to leave Him and addresses Him as the "God of my salvation," from a position of personal relationship. David is confident that though he might be forsaken by those who should love him the most, his parents, the LORD would gather him in as His own.

Psalms 27:11 Teach me thy way, O LORD, and lead me in a plain path, because of mine enemies.

Psalms 27:12 Deliver me not over unto the will of mine enemies: for false witnesses are risen up against me, and such as breathe out cruelty.

David asks the LORD to teach him and guide him to stay on the path of righteousness (from Hebrew for "plain") as opposed to his enemies. He asks the LORD not to give him over to his enemies in light of false testimony against him.

Another beautiful comment from Spurgeon: "This prayer evinces an humble sense of personal ignorance, great teachableness of spirit, and cheerful obedience of heart. *"Lead me in a plain path."* Help is here sought as well as direction; we not only need a map of the way, but a guide to assist us in the journey."

Psalms 27:13 I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living.

The words "I had fainted" have been added by the translators for clarification. The key truth is that David was confident that he would experience God's goodness in his lifetime on this earth. The implication is that this truth is what motivated David.

Psalms 27:14 Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD.

I thought the Hebrew for "wait" was interesting—"to bind together...to expect:—gather (together), look, patiently, tarry, wait (for, on, upon)." It seems to be a call to the people hearing this song to gather together in expectation of the LORD's provision for them. He calls for them to be strong and courageous and the LORD will give them strong hearts that will prevail in times of adversity. He then closes with a word of exclamation to that truth.