

# Psalm 27



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## PSALM 27 - The LORD Is My Light and My Salvation

- 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 evildoers assail me  
to eat up my flesh,  
my adversaries and foes,  
it is they who stumble and fall.
- 3 Though an army encamp against me,  
my heart shall not fear;  
though war arise against me,  
yet I will be confident.
- 4 One thing have I asked 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 gaze upon the beauty of the LORD  
and to inquire in his temple.
- 5 For he will hide me in his shelter  
in the day of trouble;  
he will conceal me under the cover of his tent;  
he will lift me high upon a rock.
- 6 And now my head shall be lifted up  
above my enemies all around me,  
and I will offer in his tent  
sacrifices with shouts of joy;  
I will sing and make melody to the LORD.
- 7 Hear, O LORD, when I cry aloud;  
be gracious to me and answer me!
- 8 You have said, "Seek my face."  
My heart says to you,  
"Your face, LORD, do I seek."
- 9 Hide not your face from me.  
Turn not your servant away in anger,

- O you who have been my help.  
Cast me not off; forsake me not,  
O God of my salvation!
- <sup>10</sup> For my father and my mother have forsaken me,  
but the LORD will take me in.
- <sup>11</sup> Teach me your way, O LORD,  
and lead me on a level path  
because of my enemies.
- <sup>12</sup> Give me not up to the will of my adversaries;  
for false witnesses have risen against me,  
and they breathe out violence.
- <sup>13</sup> I believe that I shall look upon the goodness of the LORD  
in the land of the living!
- <sup>14</sup> Wait for the LORD;  
be strong, and let your heart take courage;  
wait for the LORD!<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Ps 27:title–14). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

<sup>2</sup> John Piper, "Suffering That Strengthens Faith," [Desiring God](#), last modified July 30, 2012, accessed July 30, 2018, [RESERVED](#).

## Psalm 27 - STUDY QUESTIONS

David went through more than most of us could imagine. Yet, he speaks with such confidence about God IN hard times and IN pain. Though this Psalm is not “in the deep waters” it is full of what he KNOWS from years and years of deep waters. Lets not take lightly the clear words of a man who suffered greatly and ran for his life for many years.

### NO FEAR

vs 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?

David states 3 specific things about God that help him to not fear.

1. **God is our light** – darkness is often literally and symbolically associated with fear. Fears are deep and amplified in darkenss. Fears just take root and grow a thousand feet tall in the dark. We see darkness and light often in the Psalms. Here David is affirming that in life God IS our light. God IS the one thing that can make the unknown darkness that drives our fears become irrelevant.
2. **God is our salvation** (deliverance / rescue / safety) - obviously in our 21<sup>st</sup> century Christianity, the term salvation is so central ... we don't seem to ever use it in this sense. We see this term (yesha) used all thourgh the Old Testament and it is not necessarily that different from the New Testament idea. It refers to deliverance or rescue or safety. Just as “salvation” provided by the death of Christ is our deliverance and rescue from the wrath of God against sin ... in the same way David is saying that God is our rescue and deliverance from fear.
3. **God is our stronghold** (fortress / protection / defense / safety) - again David is continuing his theme about why he does not fear. He never claims that God crushes the enemies nor takes away the threat or the presene of the threat. But David is certain that God IS a fortress against any harm. Nothing touches me that God does not allow for a distinct reason.

So David ... who has run for his life like none of us will ever do ... STILL claims that God is his light and his salvation and his refuge? How can a man who is running for his life have this view of God? How can you IN your struggle and IN your “dark” circumstances truly see God as safety and protection? Be specific. Include truth with your answers.

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for all these reasons ... David IN the struggle says “WHO shall I fear?” what are the fears you face? What person, what circumstance, what unknowns? What are the SPECIFIC fears you think about? Why should you NOT be afraid? Don't say “because God protects me” ... after each fear, specifically respond to why that fear is unfounded and unbiblical to dwell on ... why you should have NO fear?

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### NO FEAR OF MAN

- 2 When evildoers assail me  
to eat up my flesh,  
my adversaries and foes,  
it is they who stumble and fall.
  
- 3 Though an army encamp against me,  
my heart shall not fear;  
though war arise against me,  
yet I will be confident.

This is an example of where I feel the ESV does not translate the perfect tense well. I believe the tense and the context are both referring to what David HAS experienced and is confident in God because of that. So it is better translated as in the KJV and NAS

*<sup>NAS</sup> Psalm 27:2 When evildoers **came** upon me to devour my flesh, My adversaries and my enemies, they **stumbled and fell.** (Ps. 27:2 NAS)*

So in verse 2 we see David has been attacked those who sought to do harm to him (we know this to be true for many years of David's life). Many of the other versions use the term "devour" to translate what they sought to do. Yet he has seen the hand of God work for him and knows that inevitably they will be shown to be wrong and suffer the reward of their actions at the hand of God. Remember that David had gone years waiting for God to work ... yet he remains confident that God will protect him in HIS way and at HIS timing

When you face unjust circumstances or people ... or even when you feel life is unjust, or when you face those who seek to make your life worse and not better, how do you react? List 4-5 common reactions inside and actions you are tempted to take?

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David obviously attributes the resulting actions to God and not himself. He did not take vengeance nor action against his enemies. What does this teach you about how we should react inwardly and outwardly to enemies? What is the biblical mandate to be like Christ in these situations?

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In verse 3 David now looks ahead hypothetically to some of the worst possible circumstances he can imagine. I think its easy for us to look at this description and not even come close to feeling anything because its so far fetched in our minds. Perhaps if you have a Jewish grandfather who lived IN the holocost he might get this. To see an army invading your homeland knowing that they desire to exterminate you and your family. THAT kind of fear. THAT kind of dread. This is exactly the kind of thing that happened in David's day. This is the kind of thing he faced against the King of Israel and his own home country's army hunting him down to kill him for years. David truly knew that as king he could still face the overwhelming dread of an attacking army that could take his children and wives and decimate his rule, his land, his future.

We haven't gone far yet in this chapter. From what David has already said he has no reason to fear. Why now does David say that he is confident and will not fear no matter how immense the pressure of life becomes?

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From scripture and most particularly from this Psalm ... what do you think he expects God to do on his behalf?

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What is he NOT expecting God to do for him??

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## ONE THING

- <sup>4</sup> One thing have I asked 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 gaze upon the beauty of the LORD  
and to inquire in his temple.

First I think it is notable the singlemindedness of David. It is not for happiness, or peace, or deliverance, nor for any personal benefit or relief. ONE thing I have (past tense) asked AND ONE thing I will (continuing on in the future) seek. THIS IS THE KEY!!!! Nothing else. ONE THING.

Don't miss the dual divine and human part of his pursuit either. He asks God for this ... but he also presses hard after it. I think we need to be very alert to this in our lives. It is very common to simply throw our sanctification on God's back and pray he will "make us" holy and obedient and in love with Him. To some extent ... He will.

However, he has always desired us to pursue Him with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength. He has always commanded and expected this whole hearted pursuit that David is showing in this Psalm.

*<sup>ESV</sup> **Jeremiah 29:13** You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart.*

*<sup>ESV</sup> **Deuteronomy 4:29** But from there you will seek the LORD your God and you will find him, if you search after him with all your heart and with all your soul.*

He breaks down his desire to truly have God as his one thing in three descriptions

1. DWELL in the house of the Lord: obviously this has nothing to do with a desire to live at the temple. If you remember, the temple was the place of God's glory and God's presence. Davids request and pursuit in life is to be constantly in the presence and fellowship and relationship of his God.

He now gives 2 reasons that this presence of God is so desireable to him:

2. GAZE upon the beauty of the Lord : obviously we know that David would not be physically seeing God in the temple. This is a case where the NLT does a good job translating the meaning of the expression as "delighting in the Lord's perfections". Excellent understanding of this phrase. You see David doing this very thing in so many of the Psalms
3. INQUIRE in his temple: another translational issue arises here. The term translated "inquire" in the ESV and KJV is not translated in this way in other versions. It seems the other versions better translate the idea in terms like "seek Him" in his temple or "meditate" in His temple.

To what degree do you really long to know God and love God and desire God above all in your life? What prevents this from being your ONE pursuit?

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Asking God to help us love Him above all is fine, but David also SEEKS after this goal. list at least 4-5 specific ways you could make God your deepest pursuit in every day life. Be VERY specific.

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When David says that His desire is to "delight in the perfections of the Lord" what do you think that would look like in real life today? What about who God is amazes you and why?

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Lastly David talks about wanting to just sit and think on God and learn him and know him better. What are 3-4 practical ways that you can really think on God and who He is in your daily life? How would you do that? When should you do that?

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## WORSHIP IN the storm

- 5 For he will hide me in his shelter  
in the day of trouble;  
he will conceal me under the cover of his tent;  
he will lift me high upon a rock.
  
- 6 And now my head shall be lifted up  
above my enemies all around me,  
and I will offer in his tent  
sacrifices with shouts of joy;  
I will sing and make melody to the LORD.

We now see David again expressing confidence in the care and protection of God. AGAIN ... not FROM trouble ... but IN trouble. It is so important to see this. There is a common thread in Scripture and it is NOT that God eliminates or removes suffering, rather, that he is orchestrating, present, and working IN suffering. The enemies are still there, but we are lifted above their reach.

David is basically saying in verse 5 that God will keep us beyond the full unlimited reach of the things we fear so badly. The temptations to fear and the things that tempt us to fear will be all around, but we will not be crushed, or driven to despair, abandoned, nor destroyed (2 Cor 4:8-10). What are the things you fear and what truths from Scripture and about God's character that assure you that you are safe?

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I don't think David is sacrificing and singing when the storm is past. It seems in this context that his confidence in God and God's care IN the storm is what brings on the worship. "Dancing IN the rain" so to speak. Why is it hard to sing and worship IN suffering? What needs to change in my thinking and beliefs to be able to truly do this from my heart?

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I recently read a devotional that had this quote "If you think your suffering is pointless, or that God is not in control, or that he is whimsical or cruel, then your suffering will drive you from God, instead of driving you

from everything but God — as it should.”<sup>2</sup> Interact with this very insightful quote. What stands out to you the most. What do you learn from this? Do you agree? Why or why not?

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## I NEED God more than ANYTHING

- 7 Hear, O LORD, when I cry aloud;  
be gracious to me and answer me!
- 8 You have said, “Seek my face.”  
My heart says to you,  
“Your face, LORD, do I seek.”
- 9 Hide not your face from me.  
Turn not your servant away in anger,  
O you who have been my help.  
Cast me not off; forsake me not,  
O God of my salvation!
- 10 For my father and my mother have forsaken me,  
but the LORD will take me in.

I think we can all relate to verse seven, but I think we need to see the whole section to not get our focus skewed. David does not simply stop with a plea to be heard and answered, but he follows that up with 2 things that are very revealing of his heart and motives (as we saw earlier in verse 4).

First we see that he is still singularly focused on his pursuit of God as he cries out to be heard. He acknowledges not only that God wants to be sought wholeheartedly, but that he is obeying this and running hard after God.

Then you see his requests. Again, he is not just saying “God, im in a bind and I really need you to fix this.” No ... once again, david is fixated on intimacy with God and his heartfelt pleas show this. “don't hide from me”, “don't turn me away”, “don't cast me off.”

This Psalm keeps revisiting this issue of seeking God. How strongly do you desire to make God your focus and pursuit EVERY day? What are you doing to grow this pursuit to be more and more central in your heart and desires daily? What should you be doing to increase this?

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<sup>2</sup> John Piper, “Suffering That Strengthens Faith,” *Desiring God*, last modified July 30, 2012, accessed July 30, 2018, <https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/suffering-that-strengthens-faith>.



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## Let me LEARN in my suffering

**11** Teach me your way, O LORD,  
and lead me on a level path  
because of my enemies.

I'm not sure how many of us IN our suffering and IN our pain actually stop and say "God ... I really want to learn and get the lessons you have for me. I think that is the very thing God is looking for our hearts to plead IN our suffering, and we see David modeling that for us in his plea to God.

What are the requests you most often have IN your hard times? What should be the requests of your heart to God when you suffer ... if God is really trustworthy?

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Why do we often not have much interest in seeking out God's Word when we are suffering and attacked?

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What specific ways can you really INGRAIN truth into your heart in suffering?

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**12** Give me not up to the will of my adversaries;  
for false witnesses have risen against me,  
and they breathe out violence.

**13** I believe that I shall look upon the goodness of the LORD  
in the land of the living!

**14** Wait for the LORD;  
be strong, and let your heart take courage;

wait for the LORD!

Finally after so many requests for nearness and worship ... he just now lays out a personal request he believes to be inline with what would glorify God. "Don't let those who want to do me harm fulfill THEIR will for me." There are those lying about him and desiring to hurt him.

But, again, he immediately goes right back to proclaiming his faith and strong confidence in God. I LOVE that he does NOT say "I will see God's goodness AFTER I DIE". For most of us that is no comfort. "duh, of course after death ... but what about now?". David, like the beginning of this Psalm has truth and experience on his side. He is confident, not blindly or stupidly.

So in light of all this ... the summary. WAIT ... be strong ... take courage. Wow ... what an ending. The ending ISN'T "the sun will come out tomorrow" but rather "God is PERFECT TODAY". So in light of God ... WAIT for him to act in his perfect timing and way. Knowing he will, be strong and take heart. Keep stepping one step at a time. Keep trusting one step at a time.

I want to briefly revisit the same idea as in verse 2. David knew he could count on God to do what is right, to protect him IN suffering (not FROM it), and to give him the "goodness and mercy" of the Psalm 23 shepherd. Think hard and long and list how God has proven to be faithful to you IN suffering (not by bringing you out... but WHILE in it)

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WAITING ... super hard. What do you think David means when he says "wait on the Lord".

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Waiting is not the concept of sitting around doing nothing, but rather, trusting God to do his part and not letting our thinking NOR our actions go where only God should be working. We do what is RIGHT and biblical, then ... we WAIT on God to do HIS work and not interfere or try to "fix" things for Him. What are your normal reactions to people and circumstances that are causing you suffering. Do you try to change them? Attack them? Run from them? What are your normal feelings and temptations?

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What do you think it would look like to "Wait on God" when you suffer? What are key scriptures that would help you to "wait" for God to do His work in His timing?

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**WHAT ARE THE PRIMARY LESSONS YOU HAVE LEARNED FROM PSALM 27?**

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**WHAT ARE THE PRIMARY CHANGES YOU NEED TO MAKE IN YOUR THINKING AND ACTIONS BASED ON PSALM 27?**

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**Psalm 27**  
*A psalm of David.*

- <sup>1</sup> The LORD is my light and my salvation—  
so why should I be afraid?  
The LORD is my fortress, protecting me from danger,  
so why should I tremble?
- <sup>2</sup> When evil people come to devour me,  
when my enemies and foes attack me,  
they will stumble and fall.
- <sup>3</sup> Though a mighty army surrounds me,  
my heart will not be afraid.  
Even if I am attacked,  
I will remain confident.
- <sup>4</sup> The one thing I ask of the LORD—  
the thing I seek most—

is to live in the house of the LORD all the days of my life,  
delighting in the LORD's perfections  
and meditating in his Temple.

<sup>5</sup> For he will conceal me there when troubles come;  
he will hide me in his sanctuary.

He will place me out of reach on a high rock.

<sup>6</sup> Then I will hold my head high  
above my enemies who surround me.

At his sanctuary I will offer sacrifices with shouts of joy,  
singing and praising the LORD with music.

<sup>7</sup> Hear me as I pray, O LORD.

Be merciful and answer me!

<sup>8</sup> My heart has heard you say, "Come and talk with me."  
And my heart responds, "LORD, I am coming."

<sup>9</sup> Do not turn your back on me.  
Do not reject your servant in anger.  
You have always been my helper.

Don't leave me now; don't abandon me,  
O God of my salvation!

<sup>10</sup> Even if my father and mother abandon me,  
the LORD will hold me close.

<sup>11</sup> Teach me how to live, O LORD.  
Lead me along the right path,  
for my enemies are waiting for me.

<sup>12</sup> Do not let me fall into their hands.  
For they accuse me of things I've never done;  
with every breath they threaten me with violence.

<sup>13</sup> Yet I am confident I will see the LORD's goodness  
while I am here in the land of the living.

<sup>14</sup> Wait patiently for the LORD.  
Be brave and courageous.  
Yes, wait patiently for the LORD. <sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Tyndale House Publishers. (2013). [Holy Bible: New Living Translation](#) (Ps 27). Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers.