

LEARNING TO WAIT ON THE LORD
Psalm 27:14

Intro: Soon after we are saved we all learn, or start to learn, the truth of Isa. 55:8,

For my thoughts are not your thoughts,
neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord.

God simply works in ways that are strange to us, and often confusing to us. And so we also have to learn the truth of Isa. 55:9, which says,

For as the heavens are higher than the earth,
so are my ways higher than your ways,
and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Notice David's prayer in Psa. 27:11.

You would almost think from the first six verses of this Psalm that David knew the ways of the Lord, but then there is a sudden change in verse 7. A new danger has arisen. There are new lessons to learn. And it almost seems as though David had not learned anything before.

Finally, David seemed to get his composure back, and the Psalm end on a note of triumph--verse 14 giving us his excellent advice to himself, and to all believers, in any time of need.

Vv. 1-6 form the first part; vv. 7-12, the second part; vv. 13, 14, the third part.

We do not have the time tonight to take up the whole Psalm in detail, but I do want you to see the gist of the Psalm in the hope that it will be helpful to you and to me when we face the trials of our lives. With a little alteration, I am going to use an outline suggested by a missionary to Japan who was arrested and confined by the Japanese during World War II. He spent many profitable hours in the Psalms during his imprisonment.

In vv. 1-6 we have . . .

I. DAVID'S TESTIMONY (Psa. 27:1-6).

When David wrote this Psalm, he was no beginner in the school of God. He had seen the Lord do some wonderful things in his life, and consequently he felt fearless (v. 1), and he felt that he could overcome even though his enemy was much greater in the future than he had faced in the past.

And through his past experience, or experiences, the Lord had brought him to the desire which he expressed in that wonderful fourth verse. (Read.)

This sounds like something that you and I might have writ-

ten, does it not? The Lord has blessed us with a great victory of some kind, or possibly great victories, and we feel ready to face anything. And we want to know everything about the Lord that we can possibly learn.

But let me tell you something. That is when we need to be on the lookout for a fresh attack from the enemy. He hates such confidence in the Lord, and he hates for such desires to be in the hearts of the Lord's people.

And it is often at a time like this that our guard is down.

I do not know how long a time elapsed in David's life between vv. 6 and 7, nor what the testing was, but I do know that soon after his testimony, given in vv. 1-6, there was a fresh trial. And so we read of . . .

II. DAVID'S TESTING (Psa. 27:7-12)

This whole section is a prayer.

David seemed in great distress. He was pleading with the Lord because of this fresh assault from his enemies. What he apparently, from v. 3, he thought would be easy, now has become very difficult, almost like he had not been through this before.

All six of these verses are very instructive, but since our time is limited, let me just point out two things.

- A. David never expected that the desire which he had expressed in v. 4 would be fulfilled, at least in part, in these circumstances. Read v. 8.

The greatest, deepest truths that we learn about the Lord are usually learned through some trial. It surely was that way with David.

- B. Look at v. 11.

After David's first experience, or experiences, he felt that he knew how the Lord would work. But the Lord obviously was not working that way this time. And so he cried out for fresh light on the way of the Lord.

This proves that neither David nor we know anything the way we should. Fresh trials bring deeper insights into the ways of the Lord.

David, too, was learning more about prayer. What a wonderful prayer we have in these six verses!

But then, at the end of the Psalm, we come to . . .

III. DAVID'S TRIUMPH (Psa. 27:13, 14).

There is no indication that the trial was over. David often wrote his psalms while he was in the thick of the battle. He did not wait until it was over. And the point that he was making is that the victory is assured when we do the right thing in the conflict.

What should he do? Should he run to others for help? Should he take matters into his own hands? What should he do?

Note: This was a triumph of his faith. See v. 13 and the word, "believed." He could not see the victory yet, but he believed that God would in some way show him His "goodness."

That was the first thing. The second was this: "Wait." "Wait on the Lord." "Wait on the Lord: be of good courage." "Wait on the Lord . . . and he shall strengthen thine heart." "Wait on the Lord . . . wait, I say, on the Lord."

One thing that is important in warfare is that you need to act, and to act powerfully, before your enemy does. Death can be the result of waiting too long to do what needs to be done. That is one place where the ways of the Lord and the ways of man are different. We do not just wait. That could be fatal. But we are waiting on the Lord. And notice that we are to wait cheerfully. And we are to expect that the Lord will give us that inward help so that we can wait in confidence.

The Lord will not fail us. He is Lord over all. His purposes will be accomplished. He works in us as well as working for us. When we learn these things, then we can have peace right in the midst of the battle.

Concl: What kind of a struggle are you involved in tonight? You have made great claims about God in the past, do you still believe them? Do you believe that this present test was specifically designed by the Lord to answer your previous prayers, and to show you that He is even greater than you have thought that He was?

What about us as a church? We started out with great expectations. Things have not gone altogether as we thought that they would. What is the condition of our faith tonight? Are we still waiting on the Lord?

May the Lord enable us to see from this Psalm that our testimony will be tested, but that this can only lead, by the grace of God, to greater triumphs--all to God's glory!