

## LIFE AND STRENGTH TO MEET LIFE'S TRIALS

### Psalm 27

**Intro:** If any of you were to read over this Psalm several times looking to the Lord to help you to understand King David's message in this Psalm, I am sure that you would see that we have here three divisions.

In the first, which goes down through verse 6 we see that David is telling us about his relationship with the Lord.

In the second part, verses 7 through 12 he allows us to listen as he prays for himself.

The third and last part we see how he speaks to us, and you have that in the last two verses of the chapter.

It is easy for us to put most of the people we read about in the Bible on a pedestal as though they were above and beyond most of us. And so we might be inclined to think that we can't be like they were, and so we don't need to try. Now there is no question but that we meet some mighty wonderful and exceptional people as we read through the Bible, but the fact is that basically they were all just like we are. The difference between us is basically that they had learned some important things that we need to learn. They all had their faults. They all had their failures. They all could wish that they were different from what they were, but that was not a hindrance to them; that was what made them trust the Lord like they did. And they become examples for us to follow, not because that is what they tell us to do. They become examples to us as we listen to what they tell us and learn what became the most important things in their lives. The reading of biographies is some of the most important reading that we can do, but it is extremely important when we read what is told us in the Bible about men and women, and young people, who had learned, or were learning how to walk in fellowship with God.

Now all through these psalms of David which are given to us in the book of Psalms, we are constantly being told that he had troubles, that he had enemies, and that there were times when he failed. But the Holy Spirit led David to write so that we could profit from what he had learned in his walk with the Lord. The only One Who never had any faults, never made any mistakes, was our Lord Jesus Christ. But even His life is to be an example for us because we have been saved to be like the Lord Jesus.

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And even today as you go about your life and as I go about my life, some book giving us the life of some godly man or woman will fall into our hands, and we find ourselves telling ourselves that we want to be like that person.

I have been more and more impressed in these later years of my life that there are many people who profess to be Christians who never have realized that the Christian life is a life, first of all, of personal fellowship with God, and secondly, a life of fellowship with the Lord's people. They may talk about the Lord as their Savior, but they don't talk about Him as a Friend. Even He said, "Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you" ((John 15:14). They don't talk about the Lord as the first Person that they speak to when they get up in the morning, and the Person that they are communing with all day long, and the last Person that they speak to when they go to bed at night. The Apostle Paul told the Corinthian church, and the same applies to us, that they were called by God "unto the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord" (1 Cor. 1:9). That means that we have a relationship with our Lord, and with God the Father too, in which they speak to us through the Word and we speak to Them in prayer.

Now let us look at Psalm 27 to see what we can learn that will be of help to us as we read about King David and his relationship with the Lord. So let me call the first six verses of Psalm 27,

### **I. DAVID AND HIS LORD (Psa. 27:1-6).**

Notice that the first thing that David tells us about the Lord is, "The Lord is My Light and My salvation . . ." And then he added in the middle of that first verse, "The Lord is the Strength of my life."

The very first thing that he tells us in the Psalm is what, or Who, the Lord is to him. "My Light." "My salvation." "The Strength of my life." Now David was not just giving us a lesson here in theology that we might learn in the classroom, or from a sermon in church. He is telling us what the Lord had become to him as a result of his fellowship with the Lord.

Now we all know, or should know, that "God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all," as the Apostle John said in 1 John 1:5b). Now there the Apostle John was telling us that God is without sin. He is absolutely perfect, totally holy and godly. I am sure that King David knew that and believed it with all of his heart. But I think here in Psalm 27:1 King

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David was trying to tell us something else. This like many other of David's Psalms is a Psalm about his troubles. It is a Psalm about his enemies and what harm they want to do to him. So I believe that what David was telling us here was that as bad as circumstances got for him, he always had the Lord as his Light, meaning, his Hope. Regardless of how dark our troubles may be to us, we always have the Lord as the Light, as our Hope, in any situation.

Now King David did not learn that just by reading it, or by being told it by some prophet, but he had learned it by being the underdog in many situations, and always finding out again that the Lord was always with him as his Light, and that this is what gave him hope. He was David's Light because He was King David's salvation!

But not only that but King David tells us in this first verse that "the Lord was the Strength of his life." Now King David was a powerful King, but no King was sufficient in himself to face the wicked men who wanted to kill him. Look at verses 2 and 3. What I believe King David was telling us here is that with all of the wicked men he faced in his life, knowing how much they hated him and would have been happy to kill him like a bunch of lions, yet he faced them in a different way because he knew that the Lord was his Light, his hope, and that by habit he had made "the Lord . . . the Strength of his life."

What was it that the Apostle Paul told the Ephesian believers about the battle they faced every day. He said, "Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might" (Eph. 6:10). David had to learn this, and we have to learn it too.

So you and I should read the first three verses of Psalm 27, put our Bibles down for a moment and say not, *what a great King David was, but what a great God David had*. That he wanted us to think. But he also said this so that we would know that we have the same God, who is always Light in our trials, and sufficient Strength in place of our weakness.

I am sure that most of you will remember those wonderful verses with which Isaiah concluded his superlative fortieth chapter of Isaiah, but let me read them to you because it tells us a lot about our weakness and the Lord's strength. Listen as I read Isaiah 40:28-31:

28 Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not,

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neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding.

29 He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength.

30 Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall:

31 But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.

Now to be able to write verses 1, 2, and 3, and to mean in his heart what he was saying, led to tell us what he said was the one thing that he desired from the Lord.

Did you ever ask yourself in the light of David's words here in verse 4 what your answer would be if the Lord were to ask you what one thing you would like for Him to do for you, what your answer would be?

Now here is a good example of what many Bible teachers will tell you about any verse in the Bible, that it always means more if you read it in its context. It was because of what King David was able to write in Psalm 27:1-3, that he said what he did in verse 4. (Read.)

Many of the Lord's people have a life verse. This was King David's life verse. The reality of his desire was seen in what he did about it. It was not just an emotion of the moment, but it was such a strong and continuing desire that he added, "that will I seek after." *Spiritual blessings usually come to us as the result of diligent seeking.*

But what did King David mean? Did he mean that he was going to move out of the palace and move into the house of the Lord, and stay there for the rest of his life? Obviously not. "The house of the Lord" was the place where God dwelt among His people. David used that expression to say that as long as he lived he wanted to dwell in the presence of the Lord to keep looking at the Lord so as to learn all that he could possibly learn about "the beauty of the Lord," or, the character of the Lord. What King David had learned about the Lord, as expressed in verses 1 through 3, made him want to learn more, and he knew that "all of the days of his life" would not be long enough to learn all that there is to learn about the Lord. But he was going to devote all of the time that he could to learn all that the Lord would teach him. "To enquire" means that he wanted to be able to search out all that he could possibly learn about the Lord, *i.e.*, all

that the Lord would teach him.

We all ought to ask ourselves the question, Is that what I want the Lord to do for me? Is it? Or is this something that you have never thought about?

The Apostle Paul had the same desire, and he expressed it in the words which we find in Philippians 3. Paul had just mentioned the things that had been the most important to him before he was saved, about his birth, and his position as a Pharisee, and his obedience to the Law. But then he went on to say this which is in Philippians 3:7-11:

7 But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ.

8 Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ,

9 And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:

10 That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;

11 If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.

But then Paul went on to say, “I press toward the mark for the high calling of God in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 3:14).

We are not saved by works, and neither was King David. But we are all saved “unto good works” (Phil. 2:13). I am certain that we all are missing blessings which we need because we are so casual about our walk with the Lord. One of the main purposes for the trials that we have as Christians is that we may be brought into a greater knowledge of our God, and so to become more like Him. King David knew the Lord in a very special way, but what he learned about the Lord in his troubles and trials, increased his desire to know the Lord better.

This means that we need to engage daily in the diligent, prayerful reading of the Word, believing what we read, and obeying what God wants us to be and to do. That is why we have seen that it was characteristic of King David to pray, as we saw in Psalm 25, and what we see again here in Psalm 27:11, “Teach me Thy way, O Lord.” Knowing the Lord’s ways is how we learn to know the Lord better.

Now look at verses 5 and 6 before I close.

King David knew that as he set his heart on knowing the Lord better, the Lord would hide him “in his pavilion,” which is another word for His tabernacle, which was a place of safekeeping for the King. And there the Lord would set him “up upon a rock.” In those days this was one position an army would seek to achieve to get the advantage over the enemy.

And in verse 6 David expresses the fact that this is the place of victory. So what does he say that he will do? “Therefore will I offer in His tabernacle sacrifices of joy; I will sing, yea, I will sing praises to the Lord.

So linking verse 6 with verse 1. King David said, “Since the Lord is my Light, my hope, and my Strength, “Whom shall I fear, or of whom shall I be afraid.” In Psalm 56, another of David’s Psalms, he wrote,

3 What time I am afraid, I will trust in Thee.

4 In God I will praise His Word; I will not fear what flesh can do to me (Psa. 56:3-4).

Isaiah said it even better in Isaiah 12:2:

2 Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the Lord JEHOVAH is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation.

**Concl:** We will save the rest for next week, the Lord willing. We must not take King David’s words as meaning that he did not feel the opposition of his enemies, and feel what they did to him deeply. But what we are to learn is that what King David experienced in his troubles was where the Lord taught him more about Himself, that is, the Lord, and what he learned in his trials only caused him to want to know the Lord even better. And it was in the Lord that he found peace first, and then protection from his enemies. Isaiah has given us words which we need to remember in Isaiah 26:3-4:

3 Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.

4 Trust ye in the Lord for ever: for in the Lord JEHOVAH is everlasting strength.