

LISTENING IN AS THE KING PRAYS

Psalm 27 - Part 2

Intro: Last week as we considered the first six verses of Psalm 27, I pointed out to you that in that first part of the Psalm, King David was telling us about his relationship with the Lord. Obviously that is a very personal subject which many people would be very hesitant to put in writing. But we know that the Holy Spirit was the One Who constrained and inspired King David in what he wrote because He, the Holy Spirit, knew that it would be a great help to the Lord's people down through time who would read this Psalm. And, as it has turned out, Psalm 27 is among those Psalms which have become favorites of the Lord's people. It has become a favorite because it has been one of many places in the Word of God which has been very helpful to the people of God. Since David was a man after God's heart, it is not surprising that we find all of his psalms profitable to us in our relationship with the Lord.

I doubt if any of us can possibly get over King David's words in verse 4, the one thing that he wanted from the Lord more than anything else. As I have continued to think about that verse I have thought of the question that is often asked about wealthy, prominent people if you want to give them a gift. I am sure all of you have heard the question, "What do you give to the man who has everything?" It would have been very difficult to buy a gift for the King of Israel. But in verse 4 he himself has told us, not what he wanted any of his subjects to give to him (because it is not within their power to give him such a gift, and it can't be purchased with money anyway. But here the King of Israel who had everything from a human point-of-view which anyone could desire, tells us that the one thing that he was asking the Lord for was a growing knowledge of his God.

Now it can't be said about any of us that we have everything, but this priceless gift, this holy privilege, can be ours like King David got it – by asking first, and then by spending time with the Lord, with our Bibles open, asking the Lord to make Himself known to us. He didn't ask the Lord for this because he wanted to be known as a great theologian (even though he certainly became that). He asked the Lord for this because he loved the Lord so much that he wanted to know all that can be known about the Lord because, first, because he knew that that is what the Lord wanted to do for him, and, second, because he knew that that is what would make him the best possible King that he could be for his people. I

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think that he also knew that such a relationship with the Lord would be very contagious, and that other Jewish people who knew the Lord would be making the same request for themselves when they saw the results it made in their King.

Now let me ask those of you who know the Lord, hasn't reading what King David wanted more than anything else, made you think about making the same request for yourself? I hope it has. Remember David was not going to resign as King. He was going to fulfill all of his duties just like he had been. But he wanted the Lord to have a greater place in his life, in his thoughts, and in his affections than he had had up to that time in his life when he wrote this Psalm. If you want to know what made King David the man of God that he was, you have the answer right here in Psalm 27:4. David had a very wonderful relationship with the Lord, but he told us, his readers, about it because he wanted us to know that the same blessing can be ours as well.

But now, as we go on to the second part of this Psalm, he is going to tell us what it will take. And what is it? It will take a life of constant prayer, or to use the words of the Apostle Paul, it means that we need to learn to pray without ceasing. And so, from verse 7 on down through verse 12, and maybe verse 13 we see:

II. How King David prayed for himself (Psa. 27:7-12).

Let me read the first part of the Psalm showing King David's concern for himself. These are the words of a man who has come to realize how needy he is, and how what he needs can only be pointed out by the Lord, and that the Lord is the only One Who can meet those needs.

Reading from verse 1 and down through verse 6, "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? (And so on down through verse 6 . . .)

I remember having to write an essay in school (and this was an assignment for the whole class) in which we were not to use any reference to ourselves – no I's, no me's, no my's, no mine's. And, as I remember the subject was one in which we would be inclined to refer to ourselves. It was not an easy assignment to fulfill.

But now when we go on down from verse 7 you find the same thing.

Look at the list:

In verse 7:

- 1) "Hear" (me, understood).
- 2) "I cry."
- 3) "Have mercy upon me."
- 4) "Answer me."

In verse 8:

- 5) "My heart said."
- 6) "Will I seek.

In verse 9:

- 7) "From me."
- 8) "Thy servant," referring to himself.
- 9) "My help."
- 10) "Leave me not."
- 11) "Neither forsake me."
- 12) "My salvation.

In verse 10:

- 13) "My father . . . my mother . . . take me up."

In verse 11:

- 14) "Teach me."
- 15) "Lead me."
- 16) "Mine enemies."

In verse 12:

- 17) "Deliver me not."
- 18) "Mine enemies."
- 19) "Against me."

If King David had been a student in my class, and had turned in this Psalm as his essay, he would have flunked the assignment.

But there is nothing proud, or self-confident in these words. Instead we get the impression of weakness and dependence.

But then look at what he asked the Lord to do for him. Now we have here a series of ejaculatory prayers. What is an ejaculatory prayer!

It is a sudden, usually short, urgent request that we offer to the Lord, when a sudden need arises, or some danger, or even an expression of gratitude for some mercy experience, or worship of God when experiencing some evidence of His glory.

Here we have six ejaculatory prayers in the space of six verses.

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- 1) Three in verse 7.
- 2) One in verse 8 in response to one command from God.
- 3) Four in verse 9.
- 4) One in verse 10.
- 5) Two in verse 11.
- 6) One in verse 12.

Now what is King David doing here. He is praying in such a way as to bring the Lord into all of the circumstances of his life at this particular time. He was doing what he said that he had the habit of doing in Psalm 16:8:

I have set the Lord always before me: Because He is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.

Psalm 54 is another Psalm of David in which he spoke about his enemies, and it sounds very much like Psalm 27 in this respect except for the fact that he said that his enemies had made the terrible mistake of not setting God before themselves. **(Read Psalm 54.)**

In this prayer from verse 7 through 12 we see that David has eyes upon the Lord as was his prayer in Psalm 27:4. We need to form the habit of keeping our eyes upon the Lord at all times, and doing as David did in Psalm 27, pouring out His heart to the Lord, recognizing that God was always present with Him and able to meet his need even when he was greatly outnumbered by his enemies.

Now David prayed in verse 4 that He wanted always to behold the beauty of the Lord. Now from verses 7 through 12 what can we see of the beauty of the Lord. What is the beauty of the Lord? It has to be what He is, and what we learn about His attitude toward us. Let us look at what King David wrote to see some of the beauty that he saw in the Lord.

We have to be aware that David in this Psalm was very concerned about his enemies. He mentioned them in verses 2, 6, 11, and 12. And they were in his mind when he wrote verse 3. According to verse 5 this was a time of trouble, real trouble, for King David. And so he was drawing on all he knew about God in this time of distress.

One of the beautiful things about the Lord is his availability. When King David said to the Lord, "Hear," he could always be sure that the Lord was already on the line, waiting to hear from him. You see our God knows our circumstances and what we need even before He hears from us.

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Every child of God has a private line to God, as people are inclined to say in these days, twenty-four seven. I don't know how God does it, but if He should hear from all of us on the same day and at the same time, He listens to each one of us just like He would if you, or I, was the only one calling Him. He loves each one of us so much that He wants to keep in touch with us as many times a day as we want to come to Him. One thing that we read about false gods in the Bible is that they have ears, but they hear not. Not so with our God. He hears even when we are just thinking about Him. He hears us even when our lips do not move. And He answers. And David knew, because he had experienced it time and time again, that God looks upon us in our miseries with His mercy. But He likes it when we count on Him.

Now look at verse 8. Do you know that the Lord wants us to seek Him, to seek His face. The Lord loves that face to face contact that He enjoys with us. He can hear us at a distance, but He loves for us to come directly to Him even when we are not in trouble. The Lord is terribly busy with all that He has to do, but He is never so busy that He does not have time for us. He is speaking to our hearts every day telling us that He wants us to seek Him.

When we come to verse 9 we see that our God knows that there are times when we are not as conscious of His presence as we are other times. Those may be times when we have sinned by displeasing Him in some way. And although He has promised that He will never leave us, nor forsake us, He quite evidently wants us to tell Him not to leave us nor to forsake us. One of His titles is that He is "the God of our salvation." And that brings up a lot of other thoughts, doesn't it? That title reminds us of how undeserving we are of the Lord's love and care for us. He sent His Son to die for us, not after we got rid of our sins (because we couldn't do that, but "while we were yet sinners." God the Father, and God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit have joined together to redeem us forever from the penalty of our sin, and also from the power of our sin. David knew that God loves to be called "the God of our salvation." The term means that there is no other Savior, and as the God of our salvation He is making sure that we cannot lose it, and that some day the work of salvation in our hearts will really be complete when we are made like our Lord Jesus.

But there is still more. The closest ties that we have here on earth, or should be, are the ties that we have with our fathers and mothers. But

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there are times when they are not enough. All of us have enjoyed the love of our parents, but parents are not omnipresent. They can't always hear us. Nor can they always help us. But how wonderful are those words in verse 10. "When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up." **Illus:** Dr. and Mrs. Vansteenbergh of Belgium and the last time they saw their son before he was shot to death by the Nazis, and how the Lord ministered to them from Psalm 27:10.

When we come to verse 11 we are reminded when our enemies are around us, or when there are other troubles, that God's ways are not like our ways, and so often we are confused by the circumstances that we are going through. But King David had learned that the Lord leads, and delivers, and we have to admit that His ways are better and higher than our ways. And that He never fails. After all, God is our heavenly Father, and He cares for us just like we as parents care for and love our children. We must never be afraid to ask God to teach us because He knows so much more than we do, and learning His ways from His Word, is the true pathway to peace and joy. God is infinite in His wisdom, and He has never made a single mistake. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy (One) is understanding."

So we have seen God's availability to all of us, that He is merciful, that He is always with us, always hears us even before we call, will never leave us nor forsake us, stands by us when our parents are not able to. We learn of His infinite wisdom. After all He is omniscient! And now in verse 27 we learn of His power.

God's will is always, always, always, superior to man's will. God's power is unlimited. After all, He just spoke the word day after day for six days, six twenty-four hour days, and our universe was brought out of nothing to a completely functioning heaven and earth. He didn't need millions of years to do it because He is God!

But there is still one feature of the beauty of the Lord that King David shared with us before he gave us a final exhortation, and put his pen down. What is it? It is the goodness of the Lord. (Read verse 13.) God is good, and He works all things together for our good. Psalm 107 tells us over and over again, "Oh that men would praise the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men." If anyone has any question about the goodness of God, that question ought to be answered positively by the time that person gets to the end of Psalm

27.

But there is still one verse to go, isn't there? Verse 14. (Read.) This verse holds two commandments, one of which is repeated, and then a glorious promise.

The command which is repeated is the command to wait on the Lord. This is not just a command to wait for Him, but to wait upon Him patiently and expectantly. There is some question among expositors as to whether King David was speaking to himself, or to his readers. I believe we are on safe ground to say that he meant it for himself, and for us too. One of the greatest dangers in the Christian life is that we are inclined to run ahead of the Lord instead of waiting with, upon, and for Him.

Concl: Have you noticed that this Psalm begins with King David saying that "the Lord is the strength of my life," and it ends by telling us if we wait on the Lord and are of good courage, "He shall strengthen thine heart." God deals with the heart. In verse 8 it was David's heart which responded to the Lord when the Lord said, "Seek ye my face."

The waiting time is when God is teaching us. The waiting time is when God is strengthening our faith. The waiting time is when we learn to behold the beauty of the Lord and to delight ourselves in Him.