
PSALM 27

Introduction

“To every *thing there is* a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven.” (Ecclesiastes 3:1 AV)

The Preacher describes many things, often opposites, for which we should expect to occur during the seasons of our lives. Even the world understands the profound wisdom of those words found in the following seven verses. Birth and death; planting and harvesting; killing and healing; tearing down and building up; weeping and laughing; mourning and dancing; casting away and gathering stones; embracing and refraining; getting and losing; keeping and casting away; rending and sewing; silence and speaking; loving and hating; war and peace.

Today, we'll look at a Psalm a little more thoroughly than the 10-15 minutes used by our brothers most Lord's Days will allow. And in the case of this Psalm, a wide-ranging sermon is preached. It has often been the basis for such sermons in my home with my wife and children during our Family Worship time. As my children can attest, I have many times said, "This Psalm is a sermon in itself!" Today, I will prove that statement!

There is a time for verse-by-verse analysis which can teach us many wonderful things, as we are doing in Peter now with our brother's diligent labors. And there is a time to let the entire work preach the sermon. David, by inspiration of the Holy Ghost, has done that for us in Psalm 27. With 14 verses, we can only spend an average of 3 minutes 12 seconds on each verse to get through this in 45 minutes, of which I have already burnt up several introducing this Psalm!

So let's get going!

Division

1-3 Confidence in God

4-6 Love of communion with God

7-12 The Prayer of one in such a case

13-14 Acknowledgement of sustaining faith and exhortation to follow his example

Overview

The overarching theme of this Psalm is clearly courage and cheerful hope of the Christian facing Trials and Enemies, having learned to lean on the Everlasting Arms of Jesus.

Psalm 27

A Psalm of David.

¹THE 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?

Is there fear in your soul, dear brother; dear sister? Consider the Lord! What is He to you? Are you weak and heavy laden? Here is medicine for your soul! Here you will find strength to persevere.

"The Lord is my light..."

Yes, the Lord gives light, but here, He *is* the light!

“And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.” (Genesis 1:3 AV)

“For the LORD God *is* a sun and shield: the LORD will give grace and glory: no good *thing* will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.” (Psalms 84:11 AV)

The context of Isa 60: Isaiah prophesying of the coming unity of the Church when Jesus Christ tears down the middle wall of partition and the Gentiles come in.

“The sun shall be no more thy light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee: but the LORD shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory.” (Isaiah 60:19 AV)

Light is so easily accessed today, we may not appreciate the presence of light as a marvelous thing. Very little can be done in the absence of light.

But this light is not just any light. It is "my light". Personal. Near by. Useful to me. He is my light! No darkness can come near unto me with His light upon me! When I draw near, His light surrounds and warms me.

Walking down into a dark basement can be a fearful thing. What lurks beneath the stairwell? What is behind that shadow in the corner? Are there unseen dangers awaiting me as I enter?

Lo, but with the flick of a switch, light is sent into the darkest corners, and all becomes easily seen, and safety is in the light.

"And my salvation..."

Here we have the word "salvation". To save. Christians rightly think first of the word "Save" as it pertains to salvation from sin, death, and hell. But we know that the word save does not always and only mean that. We must rightly divide:

“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” (2 Timothy 2:15 AV)

Context is our master. What is the context? Wicked personal enemies intending to do harm. And while we can spiritualize this to some degree and not stray too far from its intent, we ought first to consider the primary meaning, then explore secondary and tertiary meanings for our profit.

God is not just the source of salvation, He **is** salvation! And He is not just generally saving, but He is **your** salvation! Our God is personal!

"Whom shall I fear..."

Verse 1. The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? Alice Driver, martyr, at her examination, put all the doctors to silence, so that they had not a word to say, but one looked upon another; then she said, "Have you no more to say? God be honoured, you be not able to resist the Spirit of God, in me, a poor woman. I was an honest poor man's daughter, never brought up at the University as you have seen; but I have driven the plough many a time before my father, I thank God; yet, notwithstanding, in the defence of God's truth, and in the cause of my Master, Christ, by his grace I will set my foot against the foot of any of you all, in the maintenance and defence of the same; and if I had a thousand lives they should go for the payment thereof." So the Chancellor condemned her, and she returned to the prison joyful. *Charles*

Bradbury. Also https://en.m.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Alexander_Gooch_and_Alice_Driver&article_action=watch#Alice_Driver.27s_last_statement

Courage (*Joshua 1:9* "Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.")

Boldness (*Proverbs 28:1* "The wicked flee when no man pursueth: but the righteous are bold as a lion.")

Unamazed (*1 Peter 3:6* "Even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement.")

The Lord was surely the light and salvation of Mrs. Driver!

"The Lord is the strength of my life..."

Strength is necessary for the life of a Christian, for we continue in the battle with our flesh, all our days! In the face of fear or temptation, we need strength!

Isa 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, 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.

(KJV)

Have you seen the marvelous example of strength brought before us recently? Many have faced trials and temptations, and many have stories of the strength of the LORD in our lives. The LORD allows trials to strengthen our faith, and remind us to wait upon Him for renewal of our strength. Many think of Samson when great strength is considered. But there is greater strength in a woman facing a life-threatening disease, who must make choices based on imperfect advice from physicians, and without any assurance that the treatment will work. With grace and strength, facing the indignities of chemotherapy and radiation, while maintaining her relationships with her husband, her many children, and many, many grandchildren (some of whom are going through their own trials), and cheerfully greeting and oft serving us, her brothers and sisters in the church!

This morning, if you will allow me, and if the LORD will understand my intent, I wish to dedicate this Psalm to our dear sister, who is a living example of the grace found in this Psalm. It was her reference to it in a prayer meeting which encouraged me to stick with this, rather than another topic I was studying. Thank you, dear sister, for your wonderful example to me!

"Strength for today, and bright hope for tomorrow; blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside: Great is Thy Faithfulness, Oh, God my Father! There is no shadow of turning with Thee!"

"Of whom shall I be afraid?"

Light, Salvation, Strength: With these, why fear any?

Rom 8:28-39

²⁸ And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. ²⁹ For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. ³⁰ Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

³¹ What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? ³² He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? ³³ Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. ³⁴ Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. ³⁵ Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? ³⁶ As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.

³⁷ Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. ³⁸ For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, ³⁹ Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

(KJV)

2 WHEN THE WICKED, EVEN MINE ENEMIES AND MY FOES,
CAME UPON ME TO EAT UP MY FLESH, THEY STUMBLED AND
FELL.

Many are the enemies of the righteous! The Lord Jesus Christ told us we would face them.

Our study of 1 Peter 4 has reminded us of the enemies of God's people, and the persecution which many have suffered.

But these enemies of various kinds, who, like ravening wolves will eat up our bodies, are instead cast down by stumbling and falling!

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.

Often, the anticipation of a coming battle is more heart-wrenching than the battle itself. Waiting in the trenches during World War I, where soldiers were commanded to foolishly jump up and charge out to meet a hail of machine gun fire would cause most men trouble.

But for the Christian, faith brings the confidence in knowing there is One who fights battles for us.

“15 And when the servant of the man of God was risen early, and gone forth, behold, an host compassed the city both with horses and chariots. And his servant said unto him, Alas, my master! how shall we do? 16 And he answered, Fear not: for they that *be* with us *are* more than they that *be* with them. 17 And Elisha prayed, and said, LORD, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the LORD opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain *was* full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha.”
(2 Kings 6:15-17 AV)

If you are a maturing Christian, you have experience of deliverance from prior battles. God saw you through them, and faith has delivered you.

“3 And not only *so*, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; 4 And patience, experience; and experience, hope: 5 And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.” (Romans 5:3-5 AV)

Gird up the loins of your minds today, while waiting for the next battle, or while in the midst of your current trial! Your hope in God will not make you ashamed. There is no way you will lose if you are a child of God and fix your sights on Him who raised His standard and leads the host in battle!

“35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? *shall* tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? 36As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. 37Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.” (Romans 8:35-37 AV)

“Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God *is* with thee whithersoever thou goest.” (Joshua 1:9 AV)

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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.

"One thing have I desired of the Lord..."

Luke 10:42 **But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.**

Singleness of heart. One thing. Duplicity will create distraction, weakness and disappointment for the Christian. But give me one book, one pursuit, one focus, and I will be a success!

And this desire is asked of the Lord, not just longed for, but prayed for!

"That will I seek after..."

If you have a real desire, it will result in seeking after it! Young men don't sit back and wait for a young woman to come propose to him. No, he desires to have one, so he seeks her!

But what is far more important than the pursuit of a wife? The pursuit of the beauty of the LORD!

"But without faith *it is* impossible to please *him*: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and *that* he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."

(Hebrews 11:6 AV)

The motive to seek the LORD is a desire that should come from reverent fear, and a strong desire to please Him for who He is and what He has done for you. But God is also a rewarder of those that seek him diligently! What a good Father!

"That I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life..."

We are well established in the identity of the house of the Lord in the New Testament. His church should be a very precious thing to you, if you love Him,

for Jesus is the Bridegroom, and His bride is very precious to him! So precious was she, that He gave his own life for her!

David oft wrote of his love for the house of God, to praise, publish, offer, rejoice, tell, pay, cry, glorify, declare, speak, pray, and bless in the temple.

Psalm 122 portrays Jerusalem as the object of His affection, which represents the Church. Psalm 133 reminds us of how wonderful a peaceful church of brethren dwelling together in unity is.

The hyperbole “All the days of my life...” adds to the beauty and the fervent desire David had for the House of God. In another Psalm David said,

“For a day in thy courts *is* better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.” (Psalms 84:10 AV)

“To behold the beauty of the LORD...”

Moses was the first to learn the name of the God of the Bible, when God appeared to him in a burning bush. And Moses’ countenance shined so brightly after being in the presence of God, he had to shield his face for the people to look upon him. At the end of the Psalm ascribed to him, he declares the beauty of the LORD is something that can be “upon” men.

“And let the beauty of the LORD our God be upon us: and establish thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish thou it.” (Psalms 90:17 AV)

His beauty is often ascribed to his holiness, and is worthy of a worshipful sense of beholding Jehovah:

“Give unto the LORD the glory *due* unto his name: bring an offering, and come before him: worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.” (1 Chronicles 16:29 AV)

“O worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness: fear before him, all the earth.” (Psalms 96:9 AV)

“And to enquire in His temple...”

One of the principle purposes of being in the house of the LORD is to be enquirers. Your length of time following the LORD does not change the need to enquire. Even the greatest apostle did not have it all figured out:

“Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but *this* one thing *I do*, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 3:12-14 AV)

And sticking to the theme of this Psalm, we are right now enquiring of the LORD how we might be courageous in the face of our enemies!

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.

Comfort for the believer lies here!

There will be times of trouble, no doubt, in every Christian's life, for:

“Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.” (2 Timothy 3:12 AV)

But preparation for such times begins in the worship of God. Enter into his house, behold his beauty, enquire within. When trouble comes, your soul will be better prepared with faith to face the trial or persecution.

The believer is hidden. He is protected.

The king's pavilion was placed in the center of the army, surrounded by all the mighty men, standing watch with vigilance. None dare enter into the fray, seeking that which was in the pavilion, lest they meet their doom.

This secret place is unknown to outsiders. No enemy has the plans. No spy satellite can penetrate its camouflage.

But this is not mere subterfuge! This is the tabernacle of the King! And in it He does not merely provide protection, but offers to entertain His guests to keep them joyful and filled with His loving hospitality.

“5 And the LORD will create upon every dwelling place of mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night: for upon all the glory *shall be* a defence. 6 And there shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the daytime from the heat, and for a place of refuge, and for a covert from storm and from rain.” (Isaiah 4:5-6 AV)

Though it be a tent, this structure has a sure foundation. The house is built upon a Rock. And when set upon a rock, no storms of doubt and fear can assail the sure foundation upon which the believer leans for repose.

“Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner *stone*, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste.” (Isaiah 28:16 AV)

“48 He is like a man which built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock: and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it: for it was founded upon a rock. 49 But he that heareth, and doeth not, is like a man that without a foundation built an house upon the earth; against which the stream did beat vehemently, and immediately it fell; and the ruin of that house was great.” (Luke 6:48-49 AV)

“Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.” (2 Timothy 2:19 AV)

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.

Far from bowing down before your enemies, the Lord will lift up your head. A lowered or bowed head signifies defeat. A lifted head is triumphant! There is no shame to cast down the head.

For thou O Lord art the lifter of my head! You must sing!

The sacrifices of Joy are from the lips!

“13¶ I will go into thy house with burnt offerings: I will pay thee my vows,¹⁴ Which my lips have uttered, and my mouth hath spoken, when I was in trouble.¹⁵ I will offer unto thee burnt sacrifices of fatlings, with the incense of rams; I will offer bullocks with goats. Selah. ¹⁶ Come *and* hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul. ¹⁷ I cried unto him with my mouth, and he was extolled with my tongue.” (Psalms 66:13-17 AV)

Sing praise unto the LORD!

“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.” (Hebrews 13:15 AV)

“Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.” (1 Peter 2:5 AV)

7 HEAR, O LORD, WHEN I CRY WITH MY VOICE:
HAVE MERCY ALSO UPON ME, AND ANSWER ME.

Here, the psalm changes to prayer. "Hear, Lord!" is the cry.

Balance between praise and prayer are the cycles of the Christian experience.

There are different tools for different jobs. All praise with no prayer is mindless and even arrogant!

All prayer, without praise, is just as vain!

A proud Pharisee cried to be heard of men, but David's cry is to be heard of God. A good man wants the Lord's ear, not men's.

And although one can cry in spirit, this is the voice of David crying out loud. Prayer closets are good, but they need not be silent!

Hannah's lips moved with her prayer, though it was in silence, enough that Eli perceived she was drunk. Her heart was right before God, and Eli was uncharitable in his assumption. Hear Lord! was her cry. And He did!

"...have mercy..."

A prayer spoken without deference to the Mercy of God is vain, for none deserve anything! It is only by His abundant mercy that sinful wretches may ask anything of the LORD. So the good man begs for mercy often.

David may well assume an answer, but he does not leave out that he awaits one! We often may write an email or send a text, expecting an answer. Would we sit back and wait without thought to it? Neither would we when lifting up a petition important enough to address the LORD God in His throne!

8 WHEN THOU SAIDST, SEEK YE MY FACE; MY HEART SAID
UNTO THEE, THY FACE, LORD, WILL I SEEK.

We have just called upon the LORD and asked for an answer. Shall we not listen for His voice?

The call to seek is general, but each must individually answer, "I will seek".

David's heart was moved at the sound of the Voice that effectually worketh.

Psa 63:1

A Psalm of David, when he was in the wilderness of Judah.

¹ O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee:
my soul thirsteth for thee,
my flesh longeth for thee
in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is;
(KJV)

Isa 55:6

⁶ Seek ye the Lord while he may be found,
call ye upon him while he is near:
(KJV)

After 70 years, the LORD would call to His people to come out of Babylon. He calls you today out of your captivity. Seek Him!

Jer 29:11-14

¹¹ For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. ¹² Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. ¹³ And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart. ¹⁴ And I will be found of you, saith the Lord: and I will turn away your captivity, and I will gather you from all the nations, and from all the places whither I have driven

you, saith the Lord; and I will bring you again into the place whence I caused you to be carried away captive.
(KJV)

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.

“Hide not thy face far from me...”

“And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? which is, being interpreted, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” (Mark 15:34 AV)

Our Lord felt the severe wrath of Jehovah, turning away His Holy face from His only Son, because He bore our iniquities and carried our sorrow! There is nothing more painful for the Christian than to have God turn away his face even to a small degree, let alone far from him!

“Put not thy servant away in anger...”

David had seen other servants put away in God’s anger. Saul was certainly a recipient of this treatment, and David, aware of his many faults, to beg for the longsuffering and merciful favor of the LORD.

Our prayer rightly should contain this humble acknowledgment, and in light of our depravity, and the sinfulness of our flesh, how fitting to beg the favor and longsuffering of our Righteous Father.

“Thou hast been my help...”

A sense of gratitude should permeate our prayers. Acknowledging the many, many times the LORD has helped me in my life is very appropriate. The longer the walk on the Pilgrim Pathway, the more acutely a child of God knows He has been the recipient of divine assistance.

“Leave me not, neither forsake me...”

The Lord may leave one for a season, withdrawing His presence to test the faith of His loved child. But there is a distinction between leaving and forsaking inherent in this phrase. A leaving for chastisement may also occur. But forsaking appears to be more final, and severe.

In another sense, it is a continuance of the call for help and sustaining grace bound up in the totality of the verse.

“O God of my salvation...”

Perhaps a “Selah” could be inserted here, for this title of God ought to be cause for much meditation and consideration. To whom do you attribute your salvation? To your “sinner’s prayer”, prayed at the age of 3? To your parents’ praying and teaching? To the preaching of the evangelist? Was it a website that saved you? I trow not!

10 WHEN MY FATHER AND MY MOTHER FORSAKE ME, THEN
THE LORD WILL TAKE ME UP.

“When my father and my mother forsake me...”

Does this surprise you? David says it is a forgone conclusion that this may very well happen.

“Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of *my* hands; thy walls *are* continually before me.” (Isaiah 49:15-16 AV)

“Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. And a man’s foes *shall be* they of his own household. He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.” (Matthew 10:34-38 AV)

“The Lord will take me up...”

“He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry *them* in his bosom, *and* shall gently lead those that are with young.”

(Isaiah 40:11 AV)

11 TEACH ME THY WAY, O LORD, AND LEAD ME IN A PLAIN
PATH, BECAUSE OF MINE ENEMIES.

“Teach me thy way, O LORD...”

This humble phrase teaches us something about prayer. It is the LORD’s way we should pray for, and not our own! Meekness is submitting to God’s sovereign will. Throughout the Psalms, David asks the Lord to teach him.

Psalms 25 is filled with this idea, that the LORD wants us to ask Him to teach us. It shows humility to understand as a babe, I am not fit to determine my own way. Therefore, I beseech the LORD to teach it to me.

“Shew me thy ways, O LORD; teach me thy paths. Lead me in thy truth, and teach me: for thou *art* the God of my salvation; on thee do I wait all the day.”

(Psalms 25:4-5 AV)

“Good and upright *is* the LORD: therefore will he teach sinners in the way. The meek will he guide in judgment: and the meek will he teach his way.” (Psalms 25:8-9 AV)

“And lead me in a plain path...”

Beyond being taught the way, the mercy of God is requested. A plain path is one free from obstacles, such as fallen trees, potholes, or other hazards a traveler may encounter. And a plain path is one that is made obvious and simple. Either division is instructive.

An open, honest, straightforward path will be free from an intricately mapped, tortuous, and dangerous pathway which will cause one to get lost easily.

We pray for simplicity in our path, because we ought to be as babes before the LORD. Lady Wisdom says her words are easy to understand to those willing:

“They *are* all plain to him that understandeth, and right to them that find knowledge.” (Proverbs 8:9 AV)

“The way of the slothful *man is* as an hedge of thorns: but the way of the righteous *is* made plain.” (Proverbs 15:19 AV)

There is work associated with gaining knowledge, and slothful men will have a difficult go of it.

But the words of Comfort to a Christian, so easily remembered from Handel’s Messiah, come to mind when thinking of a rough place made plain:

“The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain:” (Isaiah 40:3-4 AV)

“Because of mine enemies...”

Plain paths of truth and honesty are confusing to our enemies, who work desperately to catch us by lies and deceit. But the old proverb, “Honesty is the best policy,” could not be a better way to outwit our enemies!

David had experience with many who tried to catch him with deceit.

“Every day they wrest my words: all their thoughts *are* against me for evil. They gather themselves together, they hide themselves, they mark my steps, when they wait for my soul.” (Psalms 56:5-6 AV)

And so a plain path, taught by the LORD, is the best path to be on. It is the straight and narrow path which Jesus taught.

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.

Enemies are around us, but God is for us! If their will was allowed by God, we would be undone. Their slander is an old tool of the devil. Jesus was the most slandered man who ever lived, for there was no sin at all in Him, yet His enemies breathed out cruel mockings and lies to cause His execution.

And if He was reviled, He said we should not count it strange if we are:

“Blessed *are* they which are persecuted for righteousness’ sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when *men* shall revile you, and persecute *you*, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great *is* your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.” (Matthew 5:10-12 AV)

13 I HAD FAINTED, UNLESS I HAD BELIEVED TO SEE THE
GOODNESS OF THE LORD IN THE LAND OF THE LIVING.

“I had fainted...”

RABBIT TRAIL

These words are in italics in our King James Bibles. Why? Because David did not supply them. Many commentators lament the damage done to the “elegant, abrupt form of the expression employed by the psalmist, who breaks off in the middle of his discourse without completing the sentence, although what he meant to say is very evident.” (Editorial note to Calvin)

Comments like this make my skin crawl, because I used to think and study this way. And how often have you heard preachers today, who have looked up the word from Strong’s lexicon and found other meanings to the word in question, upon which they arrogantly say, “But the Greek says...”

Do these fools think that the 400 years of fruit from God’s preserved word needs their critique? Pastors are certainly called to rightly divide the word, and we know there are a multitude of places that word gets misdivided and causes egregious error. But our stand is bold! We believe in the inerrant word of God given to us in English, contained in the King James Bible!

Those italics words are very valuable! Jesus, Himself, argues from the italicized word “Am” in Mark 12:26-27:

“And as touching the dead, that they rise: have ye not read in the book of Moses, how in the bush God spake unto him, saying, I *am* the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living: ye therefore do greatly err.” (Mark 12:26-27 AV)

END OF RABBIT TRAIL

“I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the LORD
in the land of the living.”

Even the strong king David, who slew a bear, a lion, and Goliath, had faintness of heart at times. The life of the believer is not one of ease. We are in a battle! And we can be overcome at times with fear. But faith overcomes fear!

David first believed. He then believed to see. And finally, it was the goodness of God that was the focus of his meditation that gave him relief. And we can take note that this meditation is consistent with others to encourage our soul when it is cast down.

“Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and *why* art thou disquieted in me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him *for* the help of his countenance.” (Psalms 42:5 AV)

14 WAIT ON THE LORD: BE OF GOOD COURAGE, AND HE SHALL
STRENGTHEN THINE HEART: WAIT, I SAY, ON THE LORD.

As we reach the closing verse of Psalm 27, we have here a synopsis of the whole.

“Wait on the LORD...”

Wait, not in the sense of standing around waiting for Him to act, but wait, as in service, and with expectant hope. Isaiah gives an example of waiting which shows it is an active “looking”:

“And I will wait upon the LORD, that hideth his face from the house of Jacob, and I will look for him.” (Isaiah 8:17 AV)

Even in the way of judgments we wait for the LORD:

“Yea, in the way of thy judgments, O LORD, have we waited for thee; the desire of *our* soul *is* to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee.” (Isaiah 26:8 AV)

“Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart...”

As Joshua was called to fill the shoes of Moses, a big job to be sure, the LORD understood his need for courage. He called Joshua to be courageous, but he didn’t leave him without a reason to have courage!

“This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success. Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God *is* with thee whithersoever thou goest.” (Joshua 1:8-9 AV)

Good success and a prosperous way are promises of God when we keep the book of the law in our mouths and meditate on it day and night, obeying all that is written!

“The wicked flee when no man pursueth: but the righteous are bold as a lion.” (Proverbs 28:1 AV)

Courage and boldness result from a man who reads, meditates, speaks, and obeys the Bible! Young men, do you want to be bold and courageous? Forget about the pathetic video games where you kill some of the slowest moving targets I've ever seen! Forget about exploits on the field, court, course, or track! You think an advanced degree from our best universities will give you courage? Give me a break! What about making a hundred grand a year? No way!

“Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, answered and said to the king, O Nebuchadnezzar, we *are* not careful to answer thee in this matter. If it be *so*, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver *us* out of thine hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.” (Daniel 3:16-18 AV)

These three friends of Daniel were not moved at all by the power of the most terrible king! They were so bold and confident in Jehovah that they would not be backed down. Just like our martyr, Alice Driver, they had no fear for their lives.

Conclusion

Strong Christians can have fainting hearts at times, but courage and strength are at the ready if preparations are made in advance! Constant attendance to the house of the LORD where enquiry is made. Reading, meditating, hiding, and obeying God's word. Praying for strength and deliverance from enemies. These things are the preparations of a wise Christian. And you can have perfect peace!

“Thou wilt keep *him* in perfect peace, *whose* mind *is* stayed *on thee*: because he trusteth in thee. Trust ye in the LORD for ever: for in the LORD JEHOVAH *is* everlasting strength.” (Isaiah 26:3-4 AV)

Closing Hymn

Red 699 - Like a River Glorious