

SINGING AND SIGHING

Psalm 27

In Psalm 27 David is sharing his personal experience with inward struggles. All of us have inward struggles from time to time. They are an unavoidable part of being human. Those times of inward turbulence can result in triumph if and when they draw us nearer to God.

David's transparency is evident in this Psalm as it is in all of his psalms. He shares his turbulent life with us quite freely. Shared experiences can be either a help or a hindrance. All of us have had the experience of some friend unloading all of their frustrations upon us, leaving us feeling burdened down with their problems.

However, David, instead of just telling us only of his struggles, leaves us with the solution to his and our own struggles. Therefore, a study of this entire psalm will be an uplifting experience for us if we apply David's remedy to our own situation.

We must remind ourselves that the psalms are songs. Psalm 27 contains the lyrics that David sang. This is a sermon in song. It has three stanzas:

**Stanza one is David's Confession - Faith Testifying;
Stanza two is David's Cry - Faith Tested;
Stanza three is David's Counsel - Faith Triumphant.**

Let us extract from these 13 verses some life lessons as follows:

DAVID'S CONFESSION or FAITH TESTIFYING

In verses 1-6, David is on top of the mountain singing. His confidence in the Lord is evident throughout these first 6 verses.

A. His Relationship To The Lord. (v. 1)

"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?"

David's relationship to the Lord is expressed as follows:

- "my light"
- "my salvation"
- "my strength"

Do you know the Lord in like manner? Can you say with confidence what David said? If you cannot, then neither can you say, "Of whom shall I be afraid?"

B. His Reliance Upon The Lord. (vs, 2-3)

"When the wicked came against me to eat

up my flesh, My enemies and foes, They
stumbled and fell. ³ Though an army may
encamp against me, My heart shall not fear;
Though war may rise against me, in this I will be
confident.”

C. His Refuge In The Lord. (vs. 4-5)

“One thing I have desired of the LORD,
That will I seek: 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 inquire in His temple.
For in the time of trouble He shall hide me in His
pavilion; in the secret place of His tabernacle He
shall hide me; He shall set me high upon a rock.”

D. His Resolve Before The Lord. (v.6)

“And now my head shall be lifted up above my
enemies all around me; Therefore I will offer
sacrifices of joy in His tabernacle; I will sing,
yes, I will sing praises to the LORD.”

Sometimes praising God takes a extra effort. As we experience pain, we still must exhibit praise if we truly believe that “All things work together to them that love God, to those who are the called according to his purpose” (Romans 8:28).

We should be thanking God in every thing that we go through. We need to praise him through the pain, praise him though the disappointment, praise Him when all seems lost! Praise Him ,for God has not lost control!

DAVID’S CRY
or
FAITH TESTED

There is a change that takes place beginning in verse 7. In verse 7 he said,
“Hear, O LORD, when I cry with my voice!”

David’s *cheers* turned to *tears*, his *singing* turned to *sighing*. In verses 1-6 he is singing and praising, in verse 7-13 he is sorrowing and sighing.

That is the rhythm of life isn’t it? Life is comprised of praiseful singing and also of painful sighing. Some days we are on the mountain top and others we are in the valley; some days have sunshine, some shadows; we experience both joy and sadness—that’s life!

David’s humanness is on display in all of his psalms and is here displayed unashamedly in the following verses. We see:

A. His Recourse in Times of Invasion.

In verse twelve David says,

“Do not deliver me to the will of my adversaries;
for false witnesses have risen against me,
and such as breathe out violence.”

So, what does David do? He cries out to God as recorded in verse seven:

“Hear, O LORD, when I cry with my voice!
Have mercy also upon me, and answer me.”

Have you ever called out to God saying, “Have mercy upon me?” I have. There have been times of unnerving experiences, physical danger, emotional exasperation, etc. when I have cried out to God as David did. And then, when I experienced God’s mercy in whatever situation, I praised Him for His mercies.

C. H. Spurgeon said, “When we bless God for mercies, we usually prolong them. When we bless God for miseries, we usually end them. Praise is the honey of life which a devout heart extracts from every bloom of providence and grace.”

Job reminds us that “Man is born to trouble, as the sparks fly upward” (Job 5:7). There are no trouble-free lives! When experiencing troubles, we should follow David’s example and turn to the Lord, calling out to Him.

B. His Response To God’s Invitation. (v.8)

“When You said, “Seek My face, ”My heart
said to You, “Your face, LORD, I will seek.”

There are numbers of times various writers of scripture counsel us to “seek the Lord.” But when did the Lord say, “Seek My face?” or “Seek me”? Here are several references:

2 Chronicles 7:14 – “If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and *seek My face*, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.”

Hosea 5:15 – In Hosea chapter 5 God promises judgment upon Ephraim and Judah because of their sinfulness. He says, “I will return again to My place till they acknowledge their offense. Then they will *seek My face*; in their affliction they will earnestly seek Me.” Here is clear evidence that God uses affliction to get the attention of His wayward children. Affliction is a tool of correction, not in all cases, but some cases.

Therefore, when troubles of any nature assail us, let us hastily turn to the Lord for He promises: “Those that seek me early shall find me” Proverbs 8:17), and He furthermore says, “You will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart” (Jeremiah 29:13).

David was quick to respond to the Lord’s invitation for he said, “When You said, “Seek My face, ”My heart said to You, “Your face, LORD, I will seek.” Let us do likewise!

C. His Requests for God’s Intervention.

His requests are in two categories:

1. He asks God to safeguard him. (vs.9-10)

“Do not hide Your face from me;
Do not turn Your servant away in anger;
You have been my help; Do not leave me nor
forsake me, O God of my salvation. When
my father and my mother forsake me,
Then the LORD will take care of me.”

David pretty well covers all bases in requesting God to safeguard him. He said, “Do not hide”, “do not turn...away”, “Do not leave”, do not “forsake me”. We pray similarly when we are in dire straights, don’t we?

2. He asks God to shepherd him. (vs. 11-12)

“Teach me Your way, O LORD, And lead me in a
smooth path, because of my enemies. Do not
deliver me to the will of my adversaries; for false
witnesses have risen against me, and such as
breathe out violence.”

From voicing what he does not want God to do, he then speaks of what he does want God to do: “teach me” and “lead me”—“teach me Your way”, “lead me in a smooth path.”

Peter Marshall, former Chaplain of the S.S. Senate, said, “It is a fact of Christian experience that life is a series of troughs and peaks. In His efforts to get permanent possession of the soul, God relies on the troughs more than the peaks. And some of His special favorites have gone through longer and deeper troughs than anyone else.” (Erwin Lutzer quotes Marshall in Pastor to Pastor, Kregel, 1998, p. 30.) Hasn’t that been our experience throughout life?

“Every adversity that comes across our path, whether large or small, is intended to help us grow in some way. If it were not beneficial, God would not allow it or send it, “For he does not willingly bring affliction or grief to the children of men” (Lamentations 3:33). God does not delight in our sufferings. He brings only that which is necessary, but He does not shrink from that which will help us grow.” (Jerry Bridges, Trusting God, 1988, p. 177.)

“Let all true Christians remember, that their best things are yet to come. Let us count it no strange thing, if we have sufferings in this present time. It is a season of probation. We are yet at school. We are learning patience, gentleness, and meekness, which we could hardly learn if we had our good things now. But there is an eternal holiday yet to begin. For this let us wait quietly. It will make amends for all. “Our light affliction which is for the moment, works for us more and more exceedingly an eternal weight of glory” (2 Cor. 4:17). (J.C. Ryle, Commentary on Matthew 14.)

To Whom do you turn in times of testing? Where do you go for safeguarding and shepherding? Dottie Rambo, like David, wrote a song that points us in the right direction. The song is:

I GO TO THE ROCK

“Where do I go, When there's nobody else to turn to?
Who do I talk to, when nobody wants to listen?
Who do I lean on, when there's no foundation stable?
I go to The Rock, I know He's able, I go to The Rock.

Chorus:
I go to The Rock of my salvation,
I go to the Stone that the builders rejected,
I run to the Mountain and the Mountain stands by me!
When the earth all around me is sinking sand,
On Christ the Solid Rock I stand; When I need a shelter,
When I need a friend I go to The Rock.”

DAVID'S COUNSEL
or
FAITH TRIUMPHANT

David begins his song on the mountain top; he then has a valley experience but in the concluding two verses he is back on top of the mountain! He's testified, been tested and now we see him triumphant. Examine closely the postlude to this psalm in verses 13 and 14.

A. The Past Experience That He Had. (v.13a)

“I would have lost heart, unless I had believed....”

David had a tough life in the wilderness when Saul was hunting him intent upon killing him. He was on the run, living off of the land, sleeping in caves and threatened from all sides. He confesses that at that time he almost “lost heart.” What enabled him to endure? Let him tell us: “I would have lost heart, unless I had believed...” – his faith in his faithful God saw him through.

When we are going through wilderness experiences in our world, be encouraged by the words of the writer of Hebrews who reminds us as follows:

“Do not cast away your confidence, which has great reward. 36 For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise: “For yet a little while, and He who is coming will come and will not tarry. Now the just shall live by faith; but if anyone draws back, my soul has no pleasure in him” (Hebrews 10:35-38).

Forget the past, as much as is humanly possible, and focus upon living in the present with faith reaching forth to grasp the promises of God.

B. The Present Expectation That He Had. (v.13b)

“...that I would see the goodness of the Lord
In the land of the living.”

“The land of the living” is where David was when he wrote the psalm. He expected to see the goodness of the Lord in his lifetime. He was not living in the past and bemoaning his past troubles, but he was moving on and enjoying the Lord.

I disagree with H. G. Wells who said, “We live in reference to past experience and not to future events.” Yes, the past is prologue but, for the believer, the future prospect and promises of the Lord color our perspective upon our present lifetimes.

While living *in* the present, we live *for* the future. Paul wrote: “Forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 3:13-14).

C. The Prescriptive Exposition That He Gives. (v.14)

“Wait on the LORD;
be of good courage,
and He shall strengthen your heart;
wait, I say, on the LORD!”

David is talking both to himself and to others in this verse and he shares the secret of the overcoming saint—it is this: “Wait on the LORD; be of good courage.” This dual action will result in strength—“He shall strengthen your heart.”

CONCLUSION

We learn from David’s experience expressed in this psalm:

- that our testimony is only as genuine as the testings we endure;
- that sighing is as much a part of life as singing;
- that, as Job said, “When he has tried me, I shall come forth as gold” (Job 23:10)—that’s triumph!

Life is a tapestry. One side of the tapestry appears to be a mish-mash of jumbled, disorganized threads; the other side a beautiful array of colorful weavings. A poet explains the matter as follows:

Just A Weaver

“My life is but a weaving,
Between my Lord and me,
I do not choose the colors,
He worketh steadily.

Ofttimes he weaveth sorrow,
And I in foolish pride
Forget He sees the upper,
And I the underside.

Not till the loom is silent,
And the shuttles cease to fly,
Will God unroll the canvas,
And explain the reasons why

The dark threads are as needful

In the skillful weaver's hand
As threads of gold and silver
In the pattern He has planned.”
- Benjamine Malachi Franklin

When the threads of our lives seem to get all tangled or unraveled and the pattern blurred, remember Who the Weaver is. “He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ” (Philippians 1:6)!

Take heart! That is, receive the encouragement that is in this psalm. As the Hebrews writer says, “Therefore strengthen the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees....” (Hebrews 12:12) and, “Look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near” Luke 21:28).

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