

July 26, 2020

Psalm 27

New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)

¹ The **Lord** is my **light** and my salvation;
whom shall I fear?
The **Lord** is the stronghold of my life;
of whom shall I be afraid?
² When evildoers assail me
to devour my flesh—
my adversaries and foes—
they shall stumble and fall.
³ Though an army encamp against me,
my heart shall not fear;
though war rise up against me,
yet I will be confident.
⁴ One thing I asked of the **Lord**,
that will I seek after:
to **live** 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.
⁵ For he will hide me in **HIS**
SHELTER
in the day of trouble;
he will conceal me under the cover
of **HIS TENT**;
he will set me high on a rock.
⁶ Now my head is lifted up
above my enemies all around me,
and I will offer in **HIS TENT**
sacrifices with shouts of joy;
I will sing and make melody to
the Lord.
⁷ Hear, O Lord, when I cry aloud,
be gracious to me and answer me!
⁸ “Come,” my heart says, “seek his
face!”
Your face, Lord, do I seek.
⁹ Do not hide your face from me.

Psalm 27

The Message Translation

¹ Light, space, zest—
that’s God!
So, with him on my side I’m fearless,
afraid of no one and nothing.
² When vandal hordes ride down
ready to eat me alive,
Those bullies and toughs
fall flat on their faces.
³ When besieged,
I’m calm as a baby.
When all hell breaks loose,
I’m collected and cool.
⁴ I’m asking God for one thing,
only one thing:
To live with him in his house
my whole life long.
I’ll contemplate his beauty;
I’ll study at his feet.
⁵ That’s the only quiet, secure place
in a noisy world,
The perfect getaway,
far from the buzz of traffic.
⁶ God holds me head and shoulders
above all who try to pull me
down.
I’m headed for his place to offer
anthems
that will raise the roof!
Already I’m singing God-songs;
I’m making music to God.
⁷⁻⁹ Listen, God, I’m calling at the top
of my lungs:
“Be good to me! Answer me!”
When my heart whispered, “Seek
God,”
my whole being replied,
“I’m seeking him!”
Don’t hide from me now!

Psalm 27 is a cry for and ultimately a declaration of belief in the greatness of God and trust in the protection he provides. It may be a sequel of the preceding psalm. Verses 1-6 are an expression of confidence in God, whereas verse 7-14 seem to be one of complaint or lament.

During the Jewish month of Elul through Shemini Atzeret (at the end of the year), many Jews have the custom to recite it at the end of the morning and evening services.

Light אור [ore] bright, clear, day, lightning, morning, sun. From [’owr]; illumination or (concrete) luminary (in every sense, including lightning, happiness, etc.

House [of the LORD] בַּיִת pronounced [bayith] house. From [Banah] abbreviated; a house (in the greatest variation of applications, especially family, etc.). The **HOUSE OF THE LORD** is an expression used greatly to represent the Temple in Jerusalem, the space in which God dwells on earth.

Live יָשַׁב pronounced [shibit] meaning to sit, remain, dwell. It comes from a primitive root; properly, to sit down (specifically as judge. In ambush, in quiet);

HIS SHELTER סֶתֶר pronounced [say’-ter] under the cover of a mountain, or of the clouds), hiding place, secrecy or secret place (such as that of the womb in Psalm 139:15), it also means shelter, protections as in Deuteronomy 32:38

Do not turn your servant away in anger,
you who have been my help.

Do not cast me off, do not forsake me,
O God of my salvation!

¹⁰ If my father and mother forsake me,
the Lord will take me up.

¹¹ Teach me your way, O Lord,
and lead me on a level path
because of my enemies.

¹² Do not give me up to the will of my
adversaries,
for false witnesses have risen against me,
and they are breathing out violence.

¹³ **I BELIEVE** that I shall
see the goodness of the **Lord**
in the land of the living.

¹⁴ **WAIT** for the **Lord**;
be strong, and let your heart take courage;
WAIT for the **Lord**!

QUESTIONS FOR THE PRACTICE OF EXAMEN & CONTEMPLATION

- What part of today's psalm grabs you?
- What is the poet facing? How is it described? How can you relate to that?
- What does it mean to be confident (v 3)?
- What is the one thing that the poet desires (v. 4)?
- How does the poet get to the "I believe" in verse 13 after such fear? Can you relate?
- What Bible stories can you think of in which this prayer may have been prayed by the protagonists?
- The word wait is an active verb, not passive. How do you struggle with waiting for what God is doing or will do today in this time of pandemics?
- What are you waiting for these days? Are you waiting in a passive and/or active sense?
- What invitation to act, speak, be or become do you hear in today's psalm?

⁹⁻¹⁰ You've always been right there for me;
don't turn your back on me now.
Don't throw me out, don't abandon me;
you've always kept the door open.
My father and mother walked out and left me,
but God took me in.

¹¹⁻¹² Point me down your highway, God;
direct me along a well-lighted street;
show my enemies whose side you're on.
Don't throw me to the dogs,
those liars who are out to get me,
filling the air with their threats.

¹³⁻¹⁴ I'm sure now I'll see God's goodness
in the exuberant earth.
Stay with God!
Take heart. Don't quit.
I'll say it again:
Stay with God.

HIS TENT יְהוָה pronounced [ohel] meaning a covering, dwelling-place, home, tabernacle (the worship space in the desert before the Temple was created), tent From 'ahal; a tent (as clearly conspicuous from a distance) -- covering, (dwelling)(place), home, tabernacle, tent.

seek his face this expression is used throughout the First Testament, in particular in the story of Moses. It's an expression of sitting together, looking and seeing each other in an intimacy and deep authenticity.

WAIT : קָוָה pronounced [qavah] gather together, look, patiently, tarry, wait for, on, upon – from a root word meaning: to bind together (perhaps by twisting), i.e. Collect; (figuratively) to expect -- gather (together), look, patiently, tarry, wait (for, on, upon). Used also in Psalm 37:34; Proverbs 20:22; & Jeremiah 8:15. Active, not passive, it means more than just sitting around and waiting for something to happen.

Lord God's name is almost always translated LORD (all caps) in the English Bible. But the Hebrew would be pronounced something like "Yahweh," and is built on the word for "I am." Impossible to translate exactly it means I am who I will be, or I was who I will be, it transcends time pointing to the vast presence, power and purpose of God. Today's psalm ends with this invocation.