

STORM SHELTER

A STUDY IN PSALMS

THE SHELTER OF GOD'S SALVATION

BIG IDEA: God Himself is my light, my salvation and my stronghold.

DATE: Sunday, August 24, 2025

SCRIPTURE: Psalm 27:1-6

OPENING QUESTION

Everyone wishes for independence. It starts when we are toddlers stomping our feet because we think it will convince our parents to give us what we want. As older children, we think we can get our way through begging, pleading, and whining. Then the teenage years come along, and our will kicks in even stronger. Increasingly we try to assert our own authority and make our own decisions. We are craving independence.

When did you first taste that independence or feel “on your own”? (driver’s license, first car, going off to college, first job, first house?)

As much as we want to go it alone, we never reach a point where we don’t need others. For all our efforts to gain independence in the world, there’s one thing that holds us captive: our own sinful nature. While we are busy trying to gain our own place in the world, God has already given us His Son so that we can come back to the place He intended for us to be all along: secure and loved under His rule.

THE SETTING

Some Bible scholars believe Psalm 27 comes from the time of Absalom’s rebellion when David had to flee Jerusalem. In any case, this portion of the psalm reflects David’s great confidence in God and the high priority he placed on worshiping God in His house. Whether fleeing from Absalom or another threat, or securely entrenched in Jerusalem, David’s great desire was to worship the Lord and gaze on His beauty “in His temple”.

SCRIPTURE READING

PSALM 27:1-6 (NIV)

Now 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 the wicked advance against me to devour me, it is my enemies and my foes who will stumble and fall. ³ Though an army besiege me, my heart will not fear; though war break out against me, even then I will be confident.

⁴ One thing I ask from the LORD, this only do I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to gaze on the beauty of the LORD and to seek him in his temple.

⁵ For in the day of trouble he will keep me safe in his dwelling; he will hide me in the shelter of his sacred tent and set me high upon a rock. ⁶ Then my head will be exalted above the enemies who surround me; at his sacred tent I will sacrifice with shouts of joy; I will sing and make music to the LORD.

DISCUSSION

READ PSALM 27:1

Psalm 27 shows us a God who wants to personally deliver salvation to us. God wants to be the real answer to all the circumstances of our lives. Many of us have decided that we want to be our own light, our own salvation, and our own stronghold. But at the end of the day, we need God to be these things – to provide what we can't possibly provide for ourselves.

As David began this psalm, he identified God in three ways: his light, his salvation, and the stronghold of his life. God's presence in David's life in those ways meant something else was removed: *his fear*.

In what kinds of situations do you often feel afraid?

God can remove our fear as well. That's great news, since we all experience fear. It can come on our hearts like a sudden heart attack or build up slowly to harass us. Fear can come in the form of finances falling short, relationship problems, spiritual separation, and more.

But then along comes the Savior.

Psalm 27:1 gives us insight into how God Himself has provided salvation in such a way that it removes any fear we might have. When God shows up, He brings light. It's not just light to lead us down the trail so we can do our best to find Him. Rather, it's the light of salvation; He is the light. Jesus said in John 8:12: "I am the light of the world. Anyone who follows Me will never walk in the darkness but will have the light of life." The light God provides is His salvation that brings us back into a right relationship with Him. It eliminates the ultimate fear of eternal separation from God.

The reason we can trust this light-this salvation, this stronghold-is because it comes to us not as a thing, but as a Person. God doesn't have a treasure chest in heaven where He keeps forgiveness, life, and love stored away and hidden. Rather, God Himself is the salvation and light that we need. We gain salvation, light, forgiveness, love, and life because God gives Himself to us.

Because of this good news - the gospel - we can walk away from fear. That's why David asks two great rhetorical questions: "Whom shall I fear?" And "Of whom shall I be afraid?"

We know the answer to these questions because God had arrived on the scene. In His presence, we have absolutely nothing to fear.

READ Psalm 27:2-3

What are some similarities and differences between self-confidence and confidence in God? (God-confidence)

God's salvation doesn't just deal with the negative-with the removal of our fear. God's salvation also does something positive in our lives: it gives us confidence.

David highlighted the evildoers, foes, enemies, and an entire army who were deployed against him. Yet David's heart was not afraid; he was still confident. These great hordes of enemies confronting David began to fail, stumble, and fall. The only way such a thing was possible was because a greater Hero was on David's side. David had decided to take delight in the Lord. He trusted in God because he knew the Lord's power to be so much greater than his enemies.

As the scriptures tell us, David trusted in his God, and "The Lord made David victorious wherever he went" (2 Sam. 8:14).

We deal with adversaries as well. They're pretty similar to the ones David faced. Financial problems, family stress, cultural craziness, and even wars around the world all plague us at one time or another. But just like David, we can gain confidence from our salvation, knowing that the enemies in our lives cannot overcome the victory God brings to us.

What are some positive and negative ways to face our foes?

Our confidence in Christ doesn't mean we should lightly dismiss our foes. A quick trip through the Bible reminds us that we have a spiritual enemy who is real and must be faced and dealt with. But a review of the whole of scripture also shows us that God is the main character of the story. And His story is also our story. He is active in saving us, and He wants us to enjoy a renewed relationship with Him.

READ PSALM 27:4-6

What's the "one thing" you want out of life? We all want something-some achievement or milestone that stands out in our minds: to fulfill a childhood dream, work in a certain career, find a spouse or an ideal family, etc.

Many of us look at this "one thing" as the answer to *all* of our problems and the hope for *all* of our joy. Will these accomplishments bring real security?

But ask your group to consider someone who has achieved something similar to what you're hoping for. The question you have to ask is whether or not that person's accomplishments have brought *real* security.

David decided to ask God for one thing that would keep him secure. What was it? (v. 6)

David recognized that he could only find security through the presence of God. No human achievement, level of morality, or power-grab can deliver true security. Therefore, David decided to ask God for the one thing that would keep him secure: David wanted to dwell in God's presence. He wanted to be in a relationship with God so that he could gaze upon God's beauty.

When we ask for that same thing, we submit to the opportunity to live under God's grace. His beauty is the representation of His character, which is full of mercy and forgiveness. We all need shelter, and that's exactly what God provides to those who will trust in Him. To give us this "one thing" we truly need—a home in God's presence—is why Jesus came to earth in the flesh. Jesus has done everything for our salvation and has given us everything we need to experience freedom from fear, confidence in victory over our enemies, and security through His presence.

That calls for one response from us: grateful and joyful worship.

How can we connect David's expressions of worship to our daily lives? Encourage your group to memorize this verse and God will bring it to mind when you are struggling with wanting "more" out of life. It will draw

SUMMARIZE & CHALLENGE

The gospel message that Jesus Christ died on the cross in our place for our sins is an amazing truth. He did not arrive on the earth simply to be a good example or to help make us the most moral people around. He is our light, our stronghold, and our salvation.

Live it Out: Consider the following suggestions for responding to the truth that God Himself is your salvation:

- **Accept the Savior.** Trust Jesus Christ. Let His salvation give you the freedom, confidence, and security nothing else can.
- **Surrender your fears.** Make a list of circumstances that cause you to feel worried or afraid. Talk with God about your list through prayer, and then throw it away.
- **Share your faith.** Your friends and family have the same need for security and freedom from fear. Share with them the confidence and security you have found in Christ.

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COMMENTARY

VERSE 1

We know that David was the author of this psalm, but we don't know the specific circumstances in which he wrote. Allusions in the psalm suggest David was facing a storm regarding relationships with others. Some believe this was the time David had to face the rebellion of Absalom, his son (2 Sam. 15–18), or the time David fled from King Saul—but we don't know for sure. The opening words The Lord is my light highlight the Lord's deliverance in David's life. God often guides His children through the spiritual light His Word provides (Ps. 119:105). Just as a flashlight illumines a path on a dark night, God's Word lights our way as we face the storms of life, whatever they are. David also called the Lord his salvation. He knew God would save him from all his troubles! The word often described physical rescue from difficult circumstances; God could put the afflicted in a place of safety (see Ps. 12:5 "safe place"). The term could also denote deliverance through difficult circumstances, such as those the prophet Habakkuk faced when he foretold Babylon would eventually conquer Judah (Hab. 3:18). The word could also denote spiritual salvation. David probably had this in mind when he asked God to restore the joy of David's salvation after David

sinned with Bathsheba (Ps. 51:12). Interestingly, the Hebrew word for salvation is related to the name Jesus (Matt. 1:21). The whole reason Jesus came to earth was to bring us eternal salvation!

The question whom should I fear? is clearly rhetorical—not expecting an answer—because the answer was obvious. David seemed to have reason to fear, but he would fear no one because the Lord was his light and salvation. No one could step between David and his Lord. David's words remind us of Romans 8, where Paul asked a series of rhetorical questions concerning who can stand against believers or separate us from God's love in Christ (Rom. 8:31-35).

The expression stronghold of my life also stressed David's confidence in God. A stronghold denotes a place of refuge, providing a sense of shelter, protection, and security for whoever enters. The Lord was not merely David's stronghold periodically or on various occasions; rather, He provided security throughout David's life, at every turn. God also provides such security today for all those who place their faith in Him.

The question of whom should I be afraid? is the second rhetorical question of the verse, and the answer is the same. Because of God's guiding light, physical and spiritual salvation, And provision of shelter and security, David did not need to fear anyone or any circumstance.

VERSE 2

Evildoers describes people who seek to do injury or to bring evil on someone. The words came against me literally can mean "drew near around me" and suggest a large number came against David with hostile intent. The expression devour my flesh clearly describes the evildoers' intent to tear David apart, perhaps likening them to wild animals going after their prey. In the Book of Daniel, the similar expression "maliciously accuse" literally means "eat the pieces of." It describes those who accused Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego (Dan. 3:8) and those who accused Daniel himself (6:24). In both contexts, the image of animals devouring prey fits well.

Foes translates a strong Hebrew word. It describes those who show a clear hostility toward others, vexing or harassing them (2 Sam. 24:13). However, God's protective provision meant David's enemies stumbled and fell. The term stumbled often comes in the context of judgment that comes to someone, while fell clarifies that the judgment was final. Indeed, the latter term occurs to describe a nation's final defeat (Isa. 21:9). David's enemies fell defeated in the face of God's protection. The apostle Paul later used this imagery to describe the Jewish nation's refusal to embrace Jesus as their Messiah. They had stumbled, to be sure, but Paul insisted they had not "stumbled in order to fall" (Rom. 11:11). One day, they too would believe (vv. 25-26).

VERSE 3

David's confidence grew as he began verse 3. He would not fear an entire army (literally a "camp") of enemies! The words deploys against me literally mean "encamp against/around me." They may imply a situation in which David's enemies had surrounded him. Indeed, David was in real trouble—except for the fact that God was with him!

The Hebrew term translated is not afraid is the negative of the word translated "fear" in verse 1. David's heart would not waver in fear and unbelief. God stood with him; therefore, David would prevail through Him. Fear disappears when we remember the One who is with us is greater than our enemies—greater even than Satan, our greatest enemy (1 John 4:4).

The first part of verse 3 describes David's enemies encircling him. The second part of the verse describes war that breaks out against David. The battle has begun! Nonetheless, David remained confident because of God's past faithfulness to him. The Hebrew word appears in Proverbs 3:5: "Trust in the Lord" It describes a confident trust one has in God. We trust Him because we know He will walk with us through all our trials. He is powerful enough to walk with us and to deliver us.

VERSE 4

If you could ask one thing from the Lord, what would it be? David's answer was to dwell in the house of the Lord. During David's day, Jerusalem had no temple; the ark of the covenant sat in a tent in the city of David (2 Sam. 6:16-17). Clearly then, house did not imply a permanent structure; it described the place David could go to worship God. The term dwell implies a regular, customary habit of worship. David knew worshiping God was the most important thing he could do. All the days of my life further stresses David's desire for a lasting relationship with the King of kings.

VERSE 5

David again affirmed God's protection from stormy relationships: He will conceal me. The word conceal is related to the Hebrew word for treasure and may suggest God's personal interest in protecting David as someone valuable to Him. The word is used of Moses' mother concealing him after he was born (Ex. 2:2) and to designate the gathering of knowledge (Prov. 10:14). The day of adversity denotes a general time when bad things might happen to David. The Hebrew word translated adversity is related to the word "evildoers" in verse 2. The day of adversity might bring trouble or evil, but God would shield David from such things.

When David said, He will hide me under the cover of His tent, David probably alluded to his intimate fellowship with God and sense of protection he experienced as he worshiped at God's tent. In Psalm 23, the Lord prepared David a table covered with a good meal in the presence of David's enemies. Here, David affirmed God would protect him by inviting him into His tent. The image of setting David high on a rock stands in stark contrast to the tent image. In the first part of the verse, the Lord offered His servant protection by concealing him; in the latter part, He established David high on a rock. Such a position—high on a rock cliff—allowed David to see enemies approaching long before they got close.

VERSE 6

Then often occurs when the speaker is getting to the bottom line of what he wants to say (Gen. 44:33; Josh. 24:14). Here, David transitioned into a declaration of the results of God's favor on his life. David's declaration my head will be high above my enemies around me calls to mind three images. First, God lifted up David's head, thereby showing him favor (Ps. 3:3). Second, God put David on high ground, giving him advantage over his enemies. Third, God's favor demonstrated to David's enemies that they were no match for God. As the verse proceeds, David indicates his desire to offer sacrifices to God. Such sacrifices could never repay God for all He had done; rather, they served to demonstrate David's gratitude and his desire to please God in every way. David declared that shouts of joy would emerge from his mouth as he offered his sacrifices, and that he would sing and make music to the Lord. His worship was a celebration of his relationship with the Lord and a celebration of all God had done for him and would continue to do throughout David's life.