

WHOM SHALL I FEAR?

PSALM 27:1-3

Introduction:

David provides a wonderful testimony of serenity. Serenity is inner calm when everything without is turbulent. It is inner assurance when under assault. What is the secret? It is knowing and trusting the Lord God!

Graham Scroggie, the famous Bible expositor of the last generation proposed an interesting theory about this Psalm. He suggested the possibility that David's parents died in Moab while David was still being pursued by Saul. He thinks that when David received the message about their death he wrote this Psalm. The reference to his parents in the later part of the Psalm might support this. "When my father and my mother forsake me, Then the Lord will take care of me." (Psalm 27:10, NKJV) There is no reference to the death of Jesse or David's mother after their movement to Moab. It may be that they forsook David through death during those years of trial. There was one less source of support for him.

I can still remember the death of my Father about ten years ago. He had gone through a long illness, and in many ways we welcomed his death. But when he died that morning just before the sun came up, it hit me like a brick.

I thought I was ready for his death, and that I would be fine, but I really felt a sense of loss. He would no longer be available to me in a time of need.

Fortunately for me I had not had to seek his assistance in my adult years, but I knew that I could if I needed to! I knew that he would help me to the extent of his ability. But now he had forsaken me; he had died.

In this moving prayer David opens with a bold affirmation that he has nothing or anyone to fear. He is serene in the midst of a stormy world. What is his secret? His secret is found in the opening verse. How could he fear in light of what he knows to be true of Yahweh, the God of the covenant?

I. THE LORD IS OUR LIGHT.

We need light because we are surrounded by darkness. The affirmation made David must be considered carefully.

It is the LORD who is his light. This the personal name of the God of the covenant in the Old Testament. So it is the One who had made a covenant with us through our Lord Jesus Christ that is our Light. The use of the personal pronoun “my” should be noted. It is not a simple affirmation that God is Light, but rather that He is “my” Light. By His revelation to me and by my choice of Him, He is my Light.

Charles Spurgeon has a helpful comment on the significance of how God is our light. He wrote; “As the *light*, he manifested to us at first our lost estate, and now he reveals the Lord Jesus to us and in us, and guides us in the way of righteousness. Enlightened by his pure celestial ray, we are no more darkness but light in the Lord.”

Spurgeon, C. H. (2006). *Morning and evening : Daily readings* (Complete and unabridged; New modern edition.) (June 19 AM). Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers.

Just the light of the sun provides for the needs of our physical life, God is the light that provides for our spiritual life. In the physical realm the scientists tell us that light is actually magnetic energy emanating from a star or the great star of our world—the sun. Life cannot continue on the earth as we know it without the presence daily of this light.

How is God our light in a dark world? How are we to apply the beautiful metaphor to the living God?

1. He is our light within through His Word and His Spirit.

As Spurgeon suggests, the Light came to you first to make you aware of your sin and condemnation. Enough of the Light entered you to bring you to faith in God. When you became a believer, you were baptized in the Holy

Spirit. This means that the Light of God lives in you through the Holy Spirit. So from within the Holy Spirit illumines to you the presence of God, the needs of your life, and the truth that you need for the living of life. I would never know who God is and what He can do if the Holy Spirit had not come to illumine God to me. I would never have known how desperately I need God if the Holy Spirit had not come to fill me with the light within. Then it delights the Spirit to illumine to my understanding the word of God. Truly His word is a lamp to our feet and light to our paths. While the unsaved world around us stumbles along in darkness, the child of God walks confidently through the darkness because they have an understanding within. This understanding is nothing less than the presence of the true Light of the world, the Lord Jesus, through the Holy Spirit.

2. He is our light without through His people and His providences.

When we have the light of God within, it is easier to see the presence and hand of God in the events that go on around us. We know that the world is not out of control, but rather under His control. He works all things so that they accomplish good for us and glory for His name.

So when I don't understand, I turn to God. "The Lord is my light." Maybe I once was inclined to turn to my earthly father, but now I turn to my heavenly

Father. So I can now affirm with David, “Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for You are with me.”

II. THE LORD IS OUR SALVATION.

We need salvation because we are in danger. Again it is the LORD of the covenant—the one revealed in Jesus our Lord. He is “my salvation.”

Salvation is built on the idea of rescue, deliverance, and healing. There is both a positive and a negative element in this salvation. There is a danger from which we are saved, but there is a blessing and freedom to which we are saved. In our case the greatest experience of God as salvation is His mighty deliverance from sin. The moment He set us free from the condemnation that our sin had brought upon us, and blessed us with the wonderful gift of eternal life—we knew God as our salvation. If your God is the God who delivers from all danger, why should you be afraid?

1. He is greater than any danger we face.

Do you remember how strong you thought your Dad was when you were a child? I remember thinking that my Dad must be the strongest man in the world. But then something happened as I grew older. I became painfully aware of my Dad’s limitations. There are forces in the world for which my earthly Dad was no match. When I became aware of the burden of sin upon

my life, and my alienation from God, this was a burden my Dad could not lift. It was a situation for which my Dad was no match.

But David had come to know One who is stronger than any trouble or danger that he might face—the Lord of the covenant. Somewhere in David’s life he became aware of the power of the Lord to lift the burden of sin from the human heart. When you read the Psalms, you hear his songs of praise for the salvation, the deliverance of the Lord.

2. He is faithful in His love and power.

When David learned that the Lord was mighty enough to deliver from sin, it led to a deep life conviction—surely He can deliver from whatever danger I may face.

Do you see the impact of this? If the Lord is “my salvation”, then I am not expected to save myself. If the Lord is “my salvation”, then I need look only to Him for deliverance. He will not disappoint when I look to Him.

III. THE LORD IS OUR STRENGTH.

We need a stronghold because we have foes. The Hebrew word is translated “stronghold” or “fortress” by some. The Hebrew dictionary has this comment about the word, . “1 place or means of safety, protection, refuge, stronghold. 1a place of safety, fastness, harbor, stronghold. 1b refuge (of God) (fig.). 1c human protection (fig).”

Consider some implications of this for our lives--

1. He surrounds us so that any enemy must come through Him to get to us.

The New Testament greatly expands the idea of the Lord as our strength from the Old Testament. A favorite idea in the New Testament is that when God saves us we are placed “in Christ”. Actually it affirms that we are “in Him” and He is “in us”. This means that no enemy can approach my life without coming through Him. If He is my fortress, and I am hidden in Him, any enemy must break through the wall of His presence.

Can you not see why David declares that there is nothing to fear? He is hidden in the Lord. He sheltered by the Lord. The Lord is His protection. And so He is for each of us.

2. He has grace and strength that matches any circumstance that we face.

But there is another aspect of this strength. It is the aspect affirmed by Paul in the familiar statement, “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.” (Phil. 4:13)

Paul experienced this personally. When he found himself suffering from a “thorn in the flesh”, he was told, “My grace is sufficient for you.” The pressure of the circumstances that surround our lives will never be greater

than the strength that lives in us through Christ. Christ is around us to protect us, but He is also within us to sustain us.

In December 2006, the Rational Response Squad made headlines with their "Blasphemy Challenge." This group of atheists says their mission is to confront what they call irrationalism. Their Internet-based project, known as the "Blasphemy Challenge," calls for participants to make a video recording of themselves committing blasphemy against the Holy Spirit and then post their footage on YouTube. Believing this is the ultimate violation against a God they're convinced doesn't exist, the RRS thinks such a demonstration is the perfect litmus test for proving one's disbelief. They say they will "accept the consequences" if it is determined after they die that God does in fact exist. The web site gives these parameters for the challenge: "You may damn yourself to Hell however you would like, but somewhere in your video you must say this phrase: 'I deny the Holy Spirit.'" By utilizing the Internet, RRS is making a strong appeal for young people to take this bold stand against God. The first 1001 participants were given a free DVD of Brian Flemming's documentary, *The God Who Wasn't There*. To most people, the whole idea seems blasphemous, even if you doubt the existence of God. And it is! But of equal concern are the many people who quietly, and politely, do the exact same thing by simply leaving God's gift of eternal life

on the table. Whether we brazenly deny our Creator or just neglect to consider His role in creation and salvation, we are condemning ourselves to the greatest atrocity of all - life without Him (see John 3:16-18). *National Liberty Journal, March 2007, p.5*

But you do not have to make the choice. You can join David in his heart-felt declaration—the Lord is my light, my salvation, and my strength. I will not be afraid of the present or the future because of my confidence in Him.

Amen

Or you can join the atheist in their blasphemy. If there is no Light, no Salvation, and no Strength by human strength, then you have much to fear. In fact men's hearts will fail them for fear when they see trouble coming upon the earth, but not the child of God. He or she has Light, Salvation, and Strength. Amen.