

Pillar Passages – Ps 27
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Well, welcome to another edition of Pillar Passages. Today we are looking at a Psalm 27. David is dealing with his fear. And we have a lot to learn from David's response to his own fear.

Fear is always in the future. You can see here the tenses. The Lord *is* my light and my salvation; whom *shall* I fear? Fear is always in the future. Of whom *shall* I be afraid? Fear is always projecting and prophesying into the future.

David stops himself and reflects about the present. What is true about the present and not about himself, but about God. God is his light—the light that lights up his path—and his salvation. God Himself is—not just the source, but He is it. He is these things. He is light. He is salvation. And He is David's personal light; David's personal salvation. And He is also David's personal stronghold—refuge of David's life. God is that personally, and He is that today.

In verses 2 – 5, David takes this present reality of God and then extrapolates it into the future. Now he can see the future. He can think about the future differently than when his fears were controlling him. Those who want to eat him up, they are the ones who will stumble and fall. Though he is outnumbered, now he can be courageous. He can be confident.

David stops for just a moment in this shift of his weight from fear on to God. He reflects for a moment, on what then does he then have left to request of God but to stay in the presence of God. He's—as one commentator says—he's not asking to be a Levite here and literally serve in the House of the Lord. What he's saying is, I want to remain in the presence of the Lord, because that is where I find security. That is where I find—not necessarily say in circumstances changing, not just yet—but in God. In the presence of God. It's as if he says, what more do I have to ask but this, to gaze upon the beauty of the Lord and to inquire in His temple. That is really all I need for security.

Then he gets back to reflecting on the future. Because this God's beauty is evidenced in, He will protect me (verse 5). Nothing comes to me that does not come through Him first. You've heard the phrase; 'You're bulletproof, until you're not.' But we are bulletproof. God will conceal David under the cover of His hand. He will lift him high up on a rock. He will secure him. He will protect him in the day of trouble, in the face of threats. Whether they be an impersonal threat like a virus, or an illness, or a very personal threat like the very real enemies that are chasing David.

Now, back to the present. Verse 6, now David responds differently to his fears. He's no longer controlled by his fears. He's now controlled by worship. He and his fears are no longer the center of the system. Now God has been placed back at the center of the system.

Now he feels confident enough (verse 7) to pray to God candidly, boldly. He cries aloud to God, confident that God will be gracious and answer him. He's asking God here to be gracious and answer him. He's asking God of the things that he's confident God will do.

Verse 8, he confident and he says to the Lord, Yes, I'm doing the things you've commanded me to do, I am seeking Your face. Thus, he can pray, Do not turn your face from me. Don't turn away your servant in anger—like You did King Saul before You, because You are my help. Cast me not, forsake me not, oh God, because You are the God of my salvation.

Now, here in verses 11 and 12 David realizes, or remembers, or returns to a profound truth, that we would do well to remember and not miss ourselves. And that is; adversity, threats, fears they do not, in themselves, confer any goodness or righteousness to us. One is not defined as good or shown to be better by the wickedness of one's enemies. Instead, what David knows is that enemies and adversity they are revelatory. They have a way of revealing what is inside of us. Like the old adage; 'You really don't know the quality of tea inside the tea bag until it's been poured in hot water. Then you know what was really inside the tea bag.

That's why David here in the psalm doesn't just pray for deliverance, but also (verse 11) for God to teach him His way. God to lead him on a level path. So, for God to change him the way he still needs to be changed, transformed. For God to lead him, to guide him, through the minefield that his enemies have laid for him. To change him further and lead him through the threats.

In this way, the truth is that sovereign God—what David is remembering here—is that the sovereign God, the Lord is—in a very real sense—in the threats, not authoring the threats. But God sovereignly uses—ordains—the threats and reigns over them, and uses them for He own good purposes. Which are certainly above our pay grade.

David here knows this. David humbly cooperates with God here, and wants to be transformed himself in this hot water that these threats have placed upon him.

Question: Do you strong with fear about what's happening in the world these days? Do you struggle with anxiety about the way the world is turning?

Question: Do you humbly place yourself under God sovereign hand, expecting and even asking God to transform you under the threats—within threats—while the threats are still there before God has delivered you or while God is bringing His own deliverance? Do you cooperate with God's inscrutable purposes, as David does here?

Verse 12, David's still prays, give me not up he the will of my adversaries—for they are bad. They're slanders. They're liars, and they breath out violence. That's not a euphemism here. They want to kill. They want to do violence. David knows God is big enough to do both—to deliver him and transform him—all in the same work.

So then, (verse 13 & 14) David knows that God will vindicate him. That's what the goodness, here, is referring to—is vindication. God will vindicate him on earth. David will see this vindication, this goodness. But this is a vindication that David and we often have to wait for. And often times, as D. A. Carson says here, we often have to wait for it a lot longer than we would wish. This is our hope. It's the promise of this vindication for which we wait. This is the Christian life. This is the battlefield. This is the fight of our lives to wait. And while we wait, to be strong. To let our hearts take courage. Not by ginning it up ourselves, but by looking to God. By looking to Him as David has done here. Then we have the courage and the strength to stand fast with a joyful smile on our face. With courage, standing our ground, as we wait for the Lord.

One final question here—one final thought. The promise of this vindication was communicated to David *only* in words through a prophet. If you think that's amazing, think about who God has promised to us His vindication. He did that in even more vivid terms as Hebrews 1:1 says, In times before, God spoke through prophet language, but to us He has spoken in the language of a Son—most vividly on the cross. He—Jesus Himself—is the *Word* of God. The *Word* of promise speaking to us. Speaking from the cross, “Look at My Son and believe Me when I say, ‘Behold I will never leave you nor forsake you. I would go so far as to even give up My Son to prove it to you.’”

So, God says to us today, “Your faith in Me says the language of the cross and then the empty tomb—the empty tomb that vindicated Christ—that language says, “Your faith in Me will be vindicated. Amen.