

Whom Shall I Fear

Psalms 27:1-14

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 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.*

⁷ *Hear my voice when I call, LORD; be merciful to me and answer me.*

⁸ *My heart says of you, “Seek his face!” Your face, LORD, I will seek.*

⁹ *Do not hide your face from me, do not turn your servant away in anger;
you have been my helper. Do not reject me or forsake me,
God my Savior.*

¹⁰ *Though my father and mother forsake me,
the LORD will receive me.*

¹¹ *Teach me your way, LORD;
lead me in a straight path
because of my oppressors.*

¹² *Do not turn me over to the desire of my foes,
for false witnesses rise up against me,
spouting malicious accusations.*

¹³ *I remain confident of this:
I will see the goodness of the LORD
in the land of the living.*

¹⁴ *Wait for the LORD;
be strong and take heart
and wait for the LORD.*

Fear

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?*

1. Fear is something that plagues us all. We live in a world where all sorts of threats abound. We have to deal with forces and people that wield far more power than us. Yes, there is a lot to fear, but the questions we need to ask ourselves are:
 - How do we understand God’s presence when fear grips us?
 - Should we fear God?
 - Does God remove our fears?

2. The psalmist declares that the Lord is his Light, Salvation, and Stronghold; therefore, he does not fear anything else. There are three words used by the Psalmist to describe the presence of God in his life:
 - (i) Light: Light dispels darkness.
 - (ii) Salvation: It implies the idea that deliverance is at hand. God will save His people.
 - (iii) Stronghold: A protected location. A strong shelter.

Reflect on these three words. Are you struggling with darkness or in need of deliverance? Are you seeking for a place of refuge from the challenges that surround you?

When Things Go Wrong

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.*

1. David writes as one not only hopeful of deliverance but as one who has experienced God's deliverance many times in his life. Read the passage below. Reflect on the confrontation between David and Goliath. Why was David confident of his victory?

1 Samuel 17:43-47

⁴³ He said to David, "Am I a dog, that you come at me with sticks?" And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. ⁴⁴ "Come here," he said, "and I'll give your flesh to the birds and the wild animals!"

⁴⁵ David said to the Philistine, "You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the LORD Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. ⁴⁶ This day the LORD will deliver you into my hands, and I'll strike you down and cut off your head. This very day I will give the carcasses of the Philistine army to the birds and the wild animals, and the whole world will know that there is a God in Israel. ⁴⁷ All those gathered here will know that it is not by sword or spear that the LORD saves; for the battle is the LORD'S, and he will give all of you into our hands."

2. The psalmist makes it clear to us that the life of faith is filled with challenges and adversity. There are those who seek to devour us, there are times we would be totally outnumbered and overwhelmed, and there are moments the enemy will attacks us. Only in the presence of God we learn to stand with strength and courage. There is the presence of fear, but that fear is pushed behind by the presence of God.
3. Read the verses below and reflect on the following questions:

1 Peter 5:8-9

⁸ Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. ⁹ Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that the family of believers throughout the world is undergoing the same kind of sufferings.

Ephesians 6:10-14

¹⁰ Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. ¹¹ Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. ¹² For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. ¹³ Therefore put on the full armour of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. ¹⁴ Stand firm then,

- (i) Do you fear suffering and adversity?
- (ii) What does it mean to stand firm in faith in the midst of adversity?

One Thing, One Desire: Enjoying the Constant Presence of God

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.*

1. The psalmist now describes the deepest and purest longing of his heart. He longs to dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of his life so that he may gaze upon the beauty of the Lord and seek Him. The more we gaze at the Lord, the more we are filled with the knowledge of God's goodness. This knowledge transforms us, making us more like Him. God is good and He makes all things beautiful in His time.
2. Reflect on the words below: what do they tell you about the presence of God?
 - a. Dwell (in the house)
 - b. Gaze (upon the beauty)
 - c. Seek (Him)
3. What does John tell us about the presence of God:

John 1:14

The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

1 John 1:1

That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched — this we proclaim concerning the Word of life.

4. The psalmist is safe in the presence of God. He is secured in a secure place. It is in the presence of God that one finds security. God is our hiding place. He is our peace in the midst of a troubled world.

John 16:32-33

³² “A time is coming and in fact has come when you will be scattered, each to your own. You will leave me all alone. Yet I am not alone, for my Father is with me.

³³ “I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”

The Appeal

⁷ *Hear my voice when I call, LORD; be merciful to me and answer me.*

⁸ *My heart says of you, “Seek his face!” Your face, LORD, I will seek.*

⁹ *Do not hide your face from me, do not turn your servant away in anger; you have been my helper. Do not reject me or forsake me, God my Savior.*

¹⁰ *Though my father and mother forsake me, the LORD will receive me.*

¹¹ *Teach me your way, LORD; lead me in a straight path because of my oppressors.*

¹² *Do not turn me over to the desire of my foes, for false witnesses rise up against me, spouting malicious accusations.*

¹³ *I remain confident of this: I will see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living.*

¹⁴ *Wait for the LORD; be strong and take heart and wait for the LORD.*

In the first six verses, the psalmist celebrates God’s past acts of deliverance. Now, He seeks the Lord for his present troubles. He turns to God and sets his gaze on Him. Here is a list of things we can learn from the psalmist:

- (i) He speaks out his prayers.
- (ii) He stands on God’s promises and invitation (“Seek his face!” Your face, LORD, I will seek.)
- (iii) He acknowledges that he is sinful and makes an appeal to God for grace and mercy.
- (iv) He acknowledges God’s presence in his life throughout all his days. God’s love will remain.
- (v) He is teachable. He is willing to learn from God.
- (vi) He seeks deliverance.
- (vii) He is confident that God will deliver him. He looks forward to the day of deliverance. He believes and He waits in the presence of God.

Waiting on God

God invites us to be in His presence and to seek Him (to wait on God).

Waiting on God is something Christians struggle with. We are busy and are compelled to try to achieve something or simply get things done. In all these activities, the uncertainty of life gets to us and fear slowly sets in within our hearts. Yet, again and again God reminds us that His presence is all we need and He wants us to understand that His presence is with us throughout each day. We are strong, full of hope, joy and understanding when we are with Him.

Acts 4:8, 13

⁸ Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them ... ¹³ When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus.

Prayer Items

1. We may know that God is our:
 - Light: He dispels darkness
 - Stronghold: He will protect us
 - Salvation: He has delivered us
2. We may learn to let God fill our deepest longing:
 - Dwell (in the house)
 - Gaze (upon the beauty)
 - Seek (Him)
3. Praise & thanksgiving: God's faithfulness throughout 9 years in His church
 - Healing, growth & transformation in lives
 - Protection & provision
4. Church:
 - Restarting of services & ministries: Life Explorer, Redeeming Roses, Destiny Kids & Teens
 - Unity in diversity
 - Community: around Sungai Way; the poor and needy
 - Opportunity & courage to Christ's witnesses
 - Those facing challenges in homes & workplaces
 - Shamira (Salomnella), Shoban (slip disc)
5. Covid-19
 - Deliverance & protection
 - Front-liners
 - Leadership of the government & company: wisdom, integrity & compassion
 - Those affected: sick, vulnerable, poor, lost their jobs
 - Reopening of school: wisdom, responsibility, protection
6. Malaysia
 - Government
 - Churches