

Psalm 27 Virtual Bible Study Transcript

Welcome to our online study, a devotional of the Psalms. This week, we are on Psalm 27. It starts out very strong. It's an incredible passage and then it ends on a very hopeful note as well. So, it's a perfect Psalm for our season of Advent, where we rejoice and look with hope and anticipation to the advent of our King. Let us see what Luther has to say.

Psalm 27.

The 27th psalm is a psalm of thanks. However, it also prays much and gives us comfort against the false teachers who give a false witness, blaspheming without any hesitation. For only entirely foolhardy saints would give a witness, bold and impudent, before God—from whom they have no command! Yet we see it daily: the more foolish and unlearned the people are, the more bold and audacious they are to preach and to teach the whole world. No one knows anything; they alone know all. They prepare themselves to make war and revolt against the true saints and God-fearers. This psalm belongs in the Second and First Commandments and in the First and Second Petitions of the Lord's Prayer.

This is Psalm 27.

¹The 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?

²When evildoers assail me
to eat up my flesh,
my adversaries and foes,
it is they who stumble and fall.

³Though an army encamp against me,
my heart shall not fear;
though war arise against me,
yet I will be confident.

⁴One thing have I asked of the LORD,
that will I seek after:
that I may dwell in the house of the LORD
all the days of my life,
to gaze upon the beauty of the LORD
and to inquire in his temple.

⁵For he will hide me in his shelter
in the day of trouble;
he will conceal me under the cover of his tent;
he will lift me high upon a rock.

⁶And now my head shall be 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.

⁷Hear, O LORD, when I cry aloud;
be gracious to me and answer me!

⁸You have said, "Seek[□] my face."
My heart says to you,
"Your face, LORD, do I seek."

⁹Hide not your face from me.

Turn not your servant away in anger,

O you who have been my help.

Cast me not off; forsake me not,

O God of my salvation!

¹⁰ For my father and my mother have forsaken me,

but the LORD will take me in.

¹¹ Teach me your way, O LORD,

and lead me on a level path

because of my enemies.

¹² Give me not up to the will of my adversaries;

for false witnesses have risen against me,

and they breathe out violence.

¹³ I believe that I shall look upon 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!

You can see that Advent theme coming through here quite often. "Wait for the Lord. Be strong and let your heart take courage. Wait for the Lord." That's the whole season of Advent, waiting and anticipating of the coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. You also have a resemblance or a connection with John the Baptist in verse 11. "Teach me your way, O Lord and lead me on a level path because of my enemies." You have that idea of the voice crying in the wilderness, "Make straight the way of the Lord. Make the uneven paths level." You have that connection there that you hear about preparing the way for the Lord.

Then, you have the confidence even of Job. "I believe that I shall look upon the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living!" Job himself says, "I know that I will see my own Redeemer with my own eyes. I know that my Redeemer lives." That's the theme of our bumper sticker and sort of the motto of our church, if you would say that. Here we have, again, "I will look upon the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living." This is the confidence and a declaration that I believe in the resurrection of the body and eternal life. That this is our hope and our confidence. This is why we do not fear or be afraid of anything, that we don't worry or cower, because we know that God is with us.

The beginning of the Psalm, "The Lord is my light and my salvation. Whom shall I fear?" It's supposed to be a rhetorical question. Then the answer is, well, there's nobody. I don't have to fear anybody. Yet, unfortunately, when we look at our own lives, how often do we stand in fear of someone or something happening in our lives? This is a great Psalm to go back to, to remind ourselves, God is our light and our salvation. What else is there? There's nothing else that we need to be afraid of. He's the stronghold of my life. What's there to be afraid of? God is my stronghold. He is that fortress that will never falter, whose ramparts will never be breached, whose gates will never be knocked down. We can stand secure in the stronghold of God. So. Why be afraid or fear anything? Even if evildoers assail me to eat up our flesh even, it is they who will stumble and fall because we know that in the end, God is with us and He will protect us, and all who call upon the name of the Lord will be saved. "Even if a whole army camps against me, my heart shall not fear," says the Psalmist. "Though war arise against me, yet, I will be confident." There's a lot of armies encamped around us right now. The church seems to be particularly at war with our society and with our culture and with the politics and with human nature, as it always has. But now we seem to see it more clearly. But, we don't need to be afraid. We don't need to act out of fear and cowardice, but we can still proclaim boldly the Gospel of our Lord because He is with us, and we can ever be confident.

I love this section. This is a section, often quoted. "One thing have I asked of the Lord, that will I seek after: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the Lord and to

inquire in his temple." I think when we shut down earlier this year, after a few weeks, all of us realized how important it was to be in the House of the Lord, to receive the message of hope and salvation, to hear His words of comfort, to receive the gifts of the sacraments and to hear the Word preached properly and rightly. We began to understand a little bit better what David meant when he says that the one thing he desires is to dwell in the House of the Lord forever. What a glory. But the thing of it is, it's not just this house, this physical building, when we dwell in the House of the Lord. To dwell in the House of the Lord means to be dwelling where His Word resides and that is everywhere. So, when our wills and our minds and our hearts are infused with the Word of God, then we find our dwelling in the presence of God, because He has promised through His baptism, He has given us the Holy Spirit and Christ dwells here with us, in us. So, we always have the opportunity and privilege of dwelling in the House of the Lord. In fact, we always do dwell. We just don't always recognize it, because we think very often that we are alone or that God doesn't have the answers or that we need to worry or fret about this, or this is too much for us to handle. Well, yeah, it's too much for us to handle, but it's not too much for God. He is our stronghold. What else is there to be afraid of?

Because of this, he knows that God will shelter us. He will conceal us. He will lift us high, for all of those protective terms, to keep us safe from those that are persecuting us, to hide us, to cover us in the tent from the storms and the tempest, to lift us high in the rocks so the waves don't crash against us and wipe out our foundation, all those signs of protection. "Then, my head will be lifted up above my enemies." In other words, I will still be able to stand firm, even though my enemies surround me. I can stand confident in the day of the Lord and in His promises. He cries to the Lord and God is gracious and answers to him. Do we believe that? Do we believe the God is gracious and answers us? He does. We ought to, but sometimes again, sometimes we forget.

So again, going back to this Psalm, in particular, really helps us and reminds us when we are worried or fretting or concerned, or we seem to have lost our focus, or we seem to think that the world and everything else that's going on is going to overpower us, to come to this Psalm and to be strengthened and nourished and be confident that God will cause us to stand. That God will lift up our hands and that God will protect us and guard us. "I believe that I shall look upon the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living." What a confident and wonderful statement of eternal life. We will see the face of the Lord in the land of the living. That is the hope, and that is the promise. That is the confidence that we have. Hold firm. Do not be afraid. The Lord is your light and your salvation? Whom shall you fear? No one and nothing. May His grace, mercy and peace be with you always. Amen.

Let us pray.

Lord, our God, You are merciful and kind, true and faithful. Preserve us in Your Word, and guard Your Church against all oppressors and faithless leaders. Grant peace to our country, and wisdom to our government to protect right and truth, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.