

20250223 Psalm 27 – Ps Bijoy

This Psalm isn't just beautiful poetry; it's an honest cry from David's heart. It's about confidence in the Lord, even when life throws its worst at us. So, let's dive in and see how this speaks to us today.

The Joy of Knowing (Verses 1–6)

“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?...⁶ And 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.”

A couple of years ago, I read a biography of a couple serving as missionaries in the northern part of Africa. They served in that region for more than 10 years. Many times, they were attacked and beaten, and people threatened to kill them. However, in the book, they mentioned that despite all the threats and difficulties, they had supernatural confidence in the Lord and weren't afraid.

I believe it's because they had the Joy of knowing,

“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?

The Lord is my stronghold of whom shall I be afraid? and the answer is none. I love this opening verse; we have the metaphor of light and salvation put together right there at the beginning. Why are those two things put together? because what light does is it expels the darkness and when the darkness is expelled that is when salvation comes. When you think about it, light enters and what does it do? It drives out the darkness. God doesn't sneak into the darkness to search for a few people, He comes in with a powerful burst of light that banishes the darkness. Then, He gathers those from the darkness into His arms and calls them to Himself, offering salvation.

In that first verse, the second part with the metaphor of a stronghold really resonates with me. I love the image of the stronghold. No one can defeat the power of the Lord. All the plans of any government or anyone trying to destroy the church and end Christianity are laughable to this God, your God, my God.

In verses two and three, he really builds on that, He says,

“When evildoers assail me to eat up my flesh, my adversaries and foes, it is they who stumble and fall. Though an army encamp against me, my heart shall not fear; though war arise against me, yet I will be confident.”

That phrase is not about someone simply being weak or unable to keep going; it's often used to describe the work of God. The reason these adversaries are stumbling and falling is because God is making them do it. In verse three, he says, "Though an army encamp against me", Even if an army camps against me, my heart will not fear. Even if war rises up against me, I will be confident. Therefore, "Knowing God leads to confidence" that confidence is the part of the joy of knowing Him. And in verses four through six,

"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..."

So, knowing God comes from spending time in His presence.

In verses one through three, we're talking about flesh-eating evildoers, adversaries, foes, armies, and war. But then, if you didn't know what came next and you read verse four, you might expect something like, "Destroy my enemies, take them out, let them not succeed", continuing in that line of thought. But instead, it says, "One thing have I asked of the Lord, that will I seek after." He switches gears completely, saying, "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." Eventually, in verses five and six, he returns to that military imagery, but that just makes verse four stand out more. Verses 1-3 and 5-6 are all along the same lines, but verse 4 is different. Why is it there? I think it's because, as wonderful as it is to have God as our Defender and Protector, it's not enough. Without God's presence in our life, it falls short. As wonderful as it is to have God as our Defender and Protector, it's not enough. It's not enough without His presence in our lives, without the intimate fellowship described in the beautiful phrase "to gaze upon the beauty of the Lord." Without that kind of connection, we must ask, "What are we saved for? What is divine protection without divine presence?" Honestly, what is personal salvation without a personal Savior? What is internal confidence without internal and eternal communion? True joy in knowing God's salvation comes when it's paired with knowing Him. It's amazing to say, "The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear?" It's incredible to say, "The Lord is the stronghold of my life, of whom shall I be afraid?" And while it's glorious to declare this, I can't stop there. I need to be able to say, "And I know Him.

And the reason we are able to say that "I know Him is because, as in verse One, He is our Light and Salvation. He already knew and called us even before the foundations of the World. Hence a clear path is already made for me to get to know Him more intimately. However, even when I know God, it's possible I won't understand everything perfectly, I might stumble, fail, or doubt. But when God knows me, He knows every part of my life, down to the hairs on my head, the sins I've committed,

the repentance I've made, and the redemption I have in Christ. He knows me fully, and He has reached down to hold me, never letting me go. It's a beautiful thing to have such internal confidence, but that only truly matters when you know you have eternal communion with the Living God. That is the joy of knowing Him, this is the real joy of knowing.

The pain of living

In verses 7 through 12, we see a shift, a contrast to the earlier confidence. As we read these verses, we notice a change. Now, David is saying, "Do not turn Your servant away, do not forsake me." It's a completely different tone. Where has the confidence gone? Where is the joy that was there in verses 1-6? The shift is striking, and when I look at this, I realize that David is just human like you and I. And I think we can all relate. We've had those days and weeks when we're fully living in Psalm 27:1 "The Lord is my light and my salvation", I have absolute confidence in Him. Bring on whatever troubles come; I can handle it. The Lord is my stronghold, I fear no one. But then, the next day, something unexpected happens. It could be big or small, but suddenly you find yourself thinking, "Lord, why? I don't understand. I thought we are good and everything was fine us. How could You let this happen to me?"

Living in the fallen world means experiencing both the knowledge of the goodness of God and the pain of life. In verses 7-12, David moves from what he knows about God to what he is personally experiencing - the pain of life. What's interesting is that in verses 1-6, God is mostly referred to in the third person (Holy Spirit), but in verses 7-12, we start to see a shift toward the second person (Eternal Son of God). In verse 8, David says, "Your face, Lord, do I seek," which makes it more personal. It's as if the knowledge David gained in Mairangi Bay Church is now crashing into his real life struggles. This leads him to cry out for grace in verse 7, to seek God's face in verse 8 (which is another way of saying he's seeking acceptance from God), to plead for mercy in verse 9, remembering how God has shown mercy before, and to seek God's presence in verse 10, even in the midst of feeling forsaken by his parents. There's some debate about whether his parents truly forsook him or if that's just figurative, but regardless of that, it shows that David is in a very dark place. Even if someone who was raised in a good home says, "My mom and dad have forsaken me," it's a sign of deep emotional pain.

No matter how you look at it, David is in a dark place. And that's why it's so important to understand verse four. Where do you find grace, acceptance, mercy, and divine presence? There are many answers to that, but verse four gives us one. The answer is when you gather with the people of God in worship. When you can sing your pain and praises to Him, even if you're the only one in the room thinking, "That's all I have, and nobody knows," you are still there, and you know

God has you. He will hold you fast. In that moment, as hard as it is, in the midst of the pain of living, you can say, "He has me. He is my stronghold. He will not let me go." That's where grace, acceptance, mercy, and presence are found, and we must remain there. Corporate worship invites us into a space where we receive from God and return thanks, praise, and honour to Him. When we live in that dynamic, even when trouble comes, the beauty of it is that our faith is not destroyed; it's deepened. It's strengthened, not shattered. Look at verses 11 and 12:

"Teach me your way, O Lord, and lead me on a level path because of my enemies.
Give me not up to the will of my adversaries; for false witnesses have risen against me,
and they breathe out violence."

He says even if my enemies are against me, Lord bring me closer to you.

Hope In waiting

Then we come to the hope of waiting. It's a bit surprising how this psalm ends. In verse 13, David says, "I believe that I shall look upon the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living," which is encouraging. But then the psalm ends with the command, "Wait for the Lord." After all the struggles and the pain of life, why wait for the Lord? But that final statement is actually very helpful. It answers the question raised by the psalm itself: What do I do when the knowledge I've gained whether from Church or life clashes with my experience? What should I do when knowledge and experience don't align? The answer is: wait on the Lord. So, what does it mean to wait on the Lord, or to wait for the Lord? Waiting on the Lord means allowing God to use your pain to bring together what you believe and what you experience. It's about letting God take your struggles and use them to align your faith in the Lord with the reality you're facing. Truly, for all the claims we make about what we believe myself included, you can never fully know what you believe until it's been tested in the Refiner's fire.

I know that in your lives, you've waited on the Lord through pain, challenge, and difficulty. And through it all, the Lord has taken what you know even the joy of what you know and worked it into your heart. After the fact, you find yourself praising Him even more boldly, worshipping Him even more fervently, because you realize that the story of your life is about the Lord using both what you know and the pain of living in this world to bring it all together. The wonder of it all is that your life, because of this, will become deeper and richer as you continue walking with your Lord. In the end, we all share this hope: as verse 13 says, "I believe that I shall look upon the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living! "