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“When in Times of Trouble”

Psalms 27

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In Psalm 27, David reveals how to stand firm when life gets hard. Whether you're facing external opposition or internal conflict, you can find confidence, intimacy, and strength in the Lord. Discover how to wait on God—not passively, but in a way that binds your heart to His.

1. **Psalm 27** – *“The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? When the wicked came against me to eat up my flesh, my enemies and foes, they stumbled and fell. Though an army may encamp against me, my heart shall not fear; though war may rise against me, in this I will be confident. One thing I have desired of the LORD, that will I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to inquire in His temple. For in the time of trouble He shall hide me in His pavilion; in the secret place of His tabernacle He shall hide me; He shall set me high upon a rock. And now my head shall be lifted up above my enemies all around me; therefore I will offer sacrifices of joy in His tabernacle; I will sing, yes, I will sing praises to the LORD. Hear, O LORD, when I cry with my voice! Have mercy also upon me, and answer me. When You said, ‘Seek My face,’ my heart said to You, ‘Your face, LORD, I will seek.’ Do not hide Your face from me; do not turn Your servant away in anger; You have been my help; do not leave me nor forsake me, O God of my salvation. When my father and my mother forsake me, then the LORD will take care of me. Teach me Your way, O LORD, and lead me in a smooth path, because of my enemies. Do not deliver me to the will of my adversaries; for false witnesses have risen against me, and such as breathe out violence. I would have lost heart, unless I had believed that I would see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living. Wait on the LORD; be of good courage, and He shall strengthen your heart; wait, I say, on the LORD!”*
2. **Psalm 27:5a** – *“In the time of trouble . . .”*
 - a. The psalmist, David, wrote **Psalm 27** when in a time of trouble.
 - b. Trouble from Saul
 - i. The time of trouble could refer to the years David hid from Saul.
 1. Samuel anointed David as the next king of Israel when David was roughly 15 years old.
 2. Considering David a rival to the throne, King Saul envied David and tried to kill him.
 3. David fled from Saul and hid in various places, including the Caves of En Gedi.
 4. David became king at age 30.
 - c. Trouble from friends and family

- i. The time of trouble could refer to the time David fled from his son Absalom, who staged a coup against him.
 - 1. During Absalom's revolt, David's best friend Ahithophel also joined in the rebellion.
 - d. Trouble without
 - i. David addressed his external conflict in verses 2, 3, and 6.
 - 1. David described the threat as *"enemies and foes"* in verse 2, as *"an army"* and *"war"* in verse 3, and as *"enemies all around me"* in verse 6.
 - e. Trouble within
 - i. David addressed his internal conflict in verse 10.
 - 1. **Psalm 27:10** – *"When my father and my mother forsake me, then the LORD will take care of me."*
 - 2. Other translations say, *"The LORD will receive me."*
 - 3. David experienced some form of neglect from his parents.
 - f. Regardless of the conflicts we face, God can breathe His grace and mercy into our lives.
 - i. **DISCUSS:** How has the Lord comforted you with His Word when you were in distress?
- 3. When in times of trouble, have confidence in the Lord.
 - a. **Psalm 27:1-3** – *"The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? When the wicked came against me to eat up my flesh, my enemies and foes, they stumbled and fell. Though an army may encamp against me, my heart shall not fear; though war may rise against me, in this I will be confident."*
 - i. We can be confident, knowing God's character.
 - 1. *"Confident"* in Hebrew is **batach**, meaning "to throw yourself on the ground."
 - 2. The Latin for *"confident,"* **confide**, means "by faith."
 - 3. God may allow you to face difficulty so that you grow in intimacy with Him and learn to put your confidence in the Lord.
 - b. God is our light (verse 1).
 - i. We must put our confidence in God to guide us.
 - 1. **1 Timothy 6:16** – God *"dwells in unapproachable light."* (ESV)
 - 2. **1 John 1:5b** – *"God is light."*
 - 3. **Exodus 33** – When Moses asked, "Lord, show me your glory," God agreed but shielded Moses from seeing His full countenance so that he would not die.
 - a. **DISCUSS:** Do you long to see God's glory?
 - ii. God's Word should be our guiding light amid dark times.
 - 1. We must ask for God to lead us, convict us, and expose our hearts to us.

- a. **DISCUSS:** Does the light of God's Word guide your days? How has the Lord brought Scripture to your mind recently?
2. **John 1:1** – *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."*
 - a. Jesus came as the express image and representation of God to man.
3. As gold is refined in the furnace, so God uses trials to refine us and rid us of impurities.
4. God forgives our bad decisions, but we can still suffer through the consequences of our harmful actions.
5. Trials are not always a result of sin, but we can use all trials as opportunities to grow.
 - a. **James 1:2–4** – *"Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything."* (NIV)
 - b. "Perseverance," or "patience," is translated from the Greek **hypomonē**: **hypó**, meaning "under" and **ménō**, meaning "to remain."
 - c. Patience comes from remaining under trials.
 - d. **DISCUSS:** How has God empowered you to "remain under" a trial? How did that develop patience in you?
- iii. Jesus, or **Yehoshua** in Hebrew, means "God is my salvation."
 1. Wait on the salvation of your God.
4. When in times of trouble, pursue intimacy with the Lord.
 - a. **Psalms 27:4–8** – *"One thing I have desired of the LORD, that will I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to inquire in His temple. For in the time of trouble He shall hide me in His pavilion; in the secret place of His tabernacle He shall hide me; He shall set me high upon a rock. And now my head shall be lifted up above my enemies all around me; therefore I will offer sacrifices of joy in His tabernacle; I will sing, yes, I will sing praises to the LORD. Hear, O LORD, when I cry with my voice! Have mercy also upon me, and answer me. When You said, 'Seek My face,' my heart said to You, 'Your face, LORD, I will seek.'"*
 - b. God beckons all to come.
 - i. **Matthew 11:28** – *"Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."*
 1. Jesus calls Believers to commune with Him.
 2. Jesus calls unbelievers to repent and walk with Him.

3. **DISCUSS:** How has God called you to Him this week? How did you respond?
- c. God can forgive even the worst sinner.
 - i. **1 Timothy 1:15b** – *“Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.”*
- d. Sin may be fun for a season, but it leaves you empty.
 - i. **DISCUSS:** Looking back, how has sin entertained you even as it emptied you, failing to fully satisfy you?
- e. Those who repent are washed and made new in Christ.
 - i. **2 Corinthians 5:17a** – *“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature.”* (KJV)
 - ii. **Romans 8:1a** – *“There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus.”*
- f. Sanctification is a process.
 - i. Corrie Ten Boom said that salvation happens in a moment, but surrender happens over a lifetime.
 1. You cannot expect to become perfect from one day of praying and reading God’s Word. We are made more like Jesus as we consistently abide in Him.
 2. **DISCUSS:** What are some areas where you have seen the Lord help you conform more to the image of His Son?
 - ii. Trials sanctify us by helping us pursue the Giver over the gifts.
 1. **DISCUSS:** How has the process of God taking things away allowed you to focus more on the sufficiency found in Christ?
5. When in times of trouble, seek help from the Lord.
 - a. **Psalms 27:9–13** – *“Do not hide Your face from me; do not turn Your servant away in anger; You have been my help; do not leave me nor forsake me, O God of my salvation. When my father and my mother forsake me, then the LORD will take care of me. Teach me Your way, O LORD, and lead me in a smooth path, because of my enemies. Do not deliver me to the will of my adversaries; for false witnesses have risen against me, and such as breathe out violence. I would have lost heart, unless I had believed that I would see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living.”*
 - i. God provides gentle rebuke and comfort through His Word.
 1. **DISCUSS:** When was a time God showed you what is in your heart using Scripture?
 - ii. Do not expect God’s blessing if you are living in sin.
 - b. God does not despise our simple prayers.
 - i. We can simply pray, “Lord, help me.”
6. When in times of trouble, do not forget to wait on the Lord.
 - a. **Psalms 27:14** – *“Wait on the LORD; be of good courage, and He shall strengthen your heart; wait, I say, on the LORD!”*

- i. Return to the well of God's goodness and be refreshed.
- ii. "Wait" is translated from the Hebrew word **qavah**, meaning "to twist and bind together like a rope."
 - 1. During trials, God is trying to bind our hearts to His.
- iii. **Qavah** first appears in **Genesis 1:9** where the word is translated as "gathered together."
 - 1. **Genesis 1:9** – *"Then God said, 'Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear'; and it was so."*
 - 2. One strand is weak, but hundreds of strands can hold your weight.
 - 3. To wait on God is to trust that He can hold your weight.
- b. God's delay is for His display.
 - i. When Mary and Martha's brother Lazarus got sick, they sent word to Jesus so He could come heal him.
 - ii. Jesus purposefully waited till Lazarus was dead before making the trip to see the sisters.
 - iii. The sisters wept and said that if Jesus had been there sooner, their brother would not have died.
 - iv. Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead.
 - 1. If Jesus had come earlier, He would have done the great miracle of healing Lazarus.
 - 2. Instead, Jesus waited for Lazarus' death, and He did the greater miracle of raising a dead man back to life.
 - 3. **DISCUSS**: When have you seen God display His glory by working a miracle in or through you?
 - v. Do not forget the heart of God toward you during a waiting season.
 - 1. **Zephaniah 3:17** – *"The LORD your God in your midst, The Mighty One, will save; He will rejoice over you with gladness, He will quiet you with His love, He will rejoice over you with singing."*
 - 2. God dances over His people.
 - 3. **DISCUSS**: How does understanding God's heart of love toward us help us wait patiently and trust in the Lord?

* Unless noted, all Scriptures quoted are from the New King James (NKJV)