

Bible Study on Psalm 27

Individual Lament – Help in Our Darkest Hour

Problems surround us everywhere. Christians are not exempt from life's troubles. Through Jesus' death on the cross God had redeemed us. Yet we still live in a sinful and hostile world. We face stress in our relationships at work and at home. We face problems we cannot control. We face failure caused by our shortcomings. God, our helper, wants us to come to Him in every time of need (Jeremiah 33:3). Yet, at times we pray and do not experience the comfort we desire (2 Corinthians 12:7-9). (LL)

The people of the OT had their problems too. The Psalms record some of what these people said to God about these problems. The prayers are called *laments*. The psalms of lament usually (but not always) follow this pattern: (LL)

1. An invocation or address to God
2. An expression of the lament or difficulty
3. A confession of confidence in God
4. A petition or request
5. Words of praise to the Lord

We see in the psalms that the people of God were not afraid to bring their deepest needs to the Lord. We likewise can bring any need, any concern to the Lord. He is eager and willing to listen and help in our every need. (LL)

A few psalms that fit into this category are Psalms 14, 27, 42, 43, 53, 71, and 77.

The book of Psalms contains 73 psalms written by King David. Psalm 27 fits well into the organizational pattern followed by many psalms of lament.

Questions will be posed and space will be allowed for a written response. Make every effort to answer the questions before looking below for the answer. The answers will be in bold print.

Give the verses to each of the pattern of this psalm.

1. Invocation (Whom is the psalmist addressing?)
2. Expression of lament (What is the psalmist's complaint?)
3. Confession of confidence in God (What does the psalmist trust God to do?)
4. Petition for help (What does the psalmist ask of God?)
5. Praise to God (What prayer of adoration does the psalmist offer?)

6. Verse 1 – In the Bible *light* is often a symbol of joy and happiness. In English too we sometimes speak of a “light” mood. Here the Lord, the source of our joy, is called light. How can the Lord be the light of our life?
7. Verse 1 – What are some benefits of our salvation?
8. Verse 1 – What does stronghold give us as we go through each day?
9. What are some prayers or steps of prayer that begin in same manner?
10. Verses 2 and 3 explain the lament. *Devour my flesh* (V. 2) can have the meaning to be figures of speech for slander of gossip and lies. It is thought that this psalm was written when Absalom was leading a rebellion against King David. How does the narrative (2 Samuel 15) of that event play out in verses 2 and 3?
11. David asks the Lord for several things in this psalm, chief among them, that he might *dwell in the house of the Lord forever* (V. 4). David’s duties as king did not allow him to literally live in the sanctuary. Our daily duties don’t allow that either. How does God fulfill that request for His children? See Ephesians 3:14-19.
12. If you were to ask for *one thing* (V. 4) from God, what would you pray for?
13. How do verses 5-7 speak of the value of being in worship regularly?
14. In verses 7-12, David asks God to deliver him from evil men, enemies, armies, and wars. What “evil men, armies, and wars” still assault God’s people and God’s church today? (See also Galatians 5:16-17; James 4:4; 1 Peter 5:8; 1 John 4:1.)
15. In verses 8-9 David speaks of *seek His face and do not hide your face*. a) What might that mean? b) Where do we encounter that language? c) What can that mean for us?
16. Read Jesus’ own prayer in John 17:15-16. a) How is what He asks similar to what David asks in Psalm 27? b) How can the words of Jesus provide us comfort and hope as we face trials and temptations?

David recognizes that when the Lord is on his side, he has nothing to fear. Human beings are prone to fearful responses. We worry about problems in this life, acting as if we face them alone. Yet God is our light and our salvation. Since He has redeemed us, we have nothing to fear. “If God is for us, who can be against us?” (Rm 8:31). • O Christ, my light and my salvation, comfort me and strengthen my faith. Amen. (TLSB)

Some Answers to the above Questions:

1. Verse 1

2. Verses 2-3

3. Verses 4-6

4. Verses 7-12

5. Verses 13-14

6. The Lord can be our light when we are where His Word and Sacraments are offered.

7. Two great blessings of salvation are joy and security. There can also be other acceptable answers

8. Answers will vary with each individual.

9. Lord's Prayer and ACTS

10. These two verses really match up well with the narrative of Absalom's rebellion.

11. The indwelling Holy Spirit has made us His temple. He lives in us and we live in His presence each moment of our lives.

12. Answers will vary with each individual.

13. In worship we have our sins forgiven, hear God's Word and receive His sacrament. All of them can give us strength for the days ahead.

14. Answers will vary. Current news events can spark ideas.

15. a. When his face shines on a person, blessing and deliverance come.

b. In the blessing at the close of the worship service.

c. Answers will vary.

16. a. Both prayers ask God's protection against those who would destroy God's people.

b. Answers will vary.