

Preservation In War (Psalm 27:1–14)

By Pastor Jeff Alexander (7/5/2020)

Introduction

1. We are witnessing an all-out war.

- a. This war is as old as Satan’s fall from holiness, and it rages strongly in these last days (Rev. 12:17). Satan seeks to distract and deceive the church with accusations and falsehoods (Eph. 6:10–12).
- b. This war is against God and His rule over the creation (Psalm 2).

On one side, it is posed as a *health* issue, but on the other side, it is spiritual in nature. While it is played out in the culture, it is aimed at destroying divine influence by shutting down the churches through severe “lock-down” measures.

How should believers respond to these measures when they affect the church? We must use the apostles’ response (Acts 4:18–20).

2. Beware that we are not “*outwitted by Satan*”; being “*ignorant of his designs*” (2 Cor. 2:11).

- a. The whole protest/riot effort is designed to provoke anger, hatred, and negative reaction in people. Beware, for believers are to love their enemies (1 Cor. 13:7).

b. Look at Jonah for instruction.

1) Jonah represented Israel in the conflict with the Assyrians. Israel was called into existence to witness the mercy and grace of God to the nations. Israel failed because she became superior, self-absorbed, racist, and nationalistic.

2) Jonah presumed on the grace of God (the gourd/shade) because he assumed that he deserved it; yet he rejected the idea that Nineveh should also find God’s mercy. It is impossible to forgive others when you feel superior to them (spiritual pride). Do you love sinners?

3) Jonah failed to see that God’s anger was directed at Israel’s blasphemous acts and attitudes in rebellion against Him. God used the Assyrians to carry out His judgment, against whom Jonah wrongly reacted. He failed to understand that God is, above all, kind, gracious, merciful, and full of compassion and concern for sinners. Do you love sinners?

4) Jesus identified with Jonah when He rebuked Israel for seeking a sign (Matt. 12:39–41).

Jesus desires to show mercy, and we must pray that He will enable us to be the agents of mercy to a hostile world. Where Israel failed, the church will not.

The proposition of the message: David, in the text before us, demonstrates how true warriors must engage the war. Although Psalm 27 is a war psalm, we err when we see David’s (and our) combat in light of modern warfare. Believers are to love their enemies: “*Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things*” (1 Cor. 13:7).

I. David’s Trust in God

1. David’s Confidence—God was his ...

a. *Light* in the darkness of this world. Light suggests illumination, purity, joy, and life.

b. *Salvation* or deliverance from the condemnation of that darkness. God is the only hope of deliverance for His people.

c. *Stronghold* or refuge to protect him from the evil that threatened all around: “*The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous man runs into it and is safe*” (Prov. 18:10). David’s response? “*Whom shall I fear?*”

2. David expected the trials of war (vv. 2, 3).

- a. *Evildoers* assailed him, intent on causing great harm. These adversaries and enemies threatened injury, but in the end, it is they who stumbled and fell.
 - b. *Armies* encamped against him to open war on him. The name of the Lord, however, calmed the fears of his heart and enabled great confidence in him.
3. David's singular desire was God Himself, for whom he both asked and sought (v. 4).
- a. He wanted to worship the Lord all the days of his life. Here he uses four terms to describe the place of worship: His house, His temple, His dwelling place, and His tabernacle—where God dwells with His people. That place in the New Covenant era is the church.
 - b. He would spend his days gazing upon the beauty of the Lord. This all-consuming thirst for the Lord would be gloriously elevated in the New covenant (John 4:23, 24).
4. David's faith was firmly grounded in this established relationship (vv. 5, 6).
- a. He would experience the safety of His shelter.
 - b. His head (position) would be lifted in victory.
 - c. Celebration would fill His tent with joyous shouts and enthusiastic songs.

II. David's Prayer to God

1. In this second part of the psalm, there is an abrupt change (vv. 7–12).
- a. David's affirmations of faith become petitions of prayer.
 - b. The pronouns change from third to second person.
 - c. The bold assertions become humble, earnest pleadings.
2. David's concern (vv. 9, 10)
- a. It may seem that David was suddenly overcome with doubts, but this is, rather, a humbling necessary to balance his strong confidence.
 - b. David was yearning with childlike faith for a Father to receive, listen, guide, and protect him as a loving parent (v. 10). Earthly parents will, at some point, be unavailable to their children; the Heavenly Father will ever be so. However, personal sin will break fellowship and hide His face. Thus David pled, "*Teach me your way*" (v. 11).
3. The psalm closes with a prescription for the soul in light of trust that prayer was heard (vv. 13, 14).
- a. David was assured that he would see good in his lifetime ("*the land of the living*").
 - b. However, David also recognized that he would have to *wait* on the Lord, which he vowed to do with strength of heart and patience of will.

God's Word to His Church

As stated in the introduction, Israel presumed on the grace of God, believing she deserved it, but rejected the idea that sinful nations about her should also be objects of God's mercy.

Beware, lest, like Israel, we are so filled with spiritual pride that our response to those who seek to destroy our nation is hatred and rage. We must not be ignorant of Satan's devices.

Like David, we must run to the Lord and find refuge in Him. We must also seek a spirit of brokenhearted compassion for those who oppose our Lord and us. Let us pray—

1. For the cities of our nation.
2. For those deceived and used by the enemies of God and our republic.
3. For the souls of sinners blinded to the gospel of Jesus.