

# LESSON 8

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## PSALMS 27—30

### PSALM 27: AN ANTIDOTE FOR FEAR

The two themes of this psalm are faith and fear. It swings from faith to fear and then back again to faith. The psalmist is afraid of the enemies who are converging upon him, and he asks God to deliver him from them. The antidote for his fear is God. He cannot keep terrifying thoughts out of his mind; but when they threaten to dominate his thinking, he confronts them with his energetic trust in God. The demons of fear are chased away by the angels of faith.

The first half of the psalm expresses faith in God (vv. 1–6). In the second half, fear over enemies emerges and becomes prevalent; but faith takes over. Thus the psalm ends on the high note of trust in God’s salvation (vv. 7–14). The contrast in emphasis between the two halves is so pronounced that it seems as though two different psalms, one stressing faith and the other highlighting fear, have been brought together to compose the psalm. Since no justifiable reason can be given as to why two different psalms might be united this way, it is more reasonable to believe that the Holy Spirit gave us this psalm to remind us of the wide mood changes experienced by the believer in God who is beset by perilous circumstances.

1. What does it mean for the Lord to be our light and salvation?
2. What one thing does this writer ask of the Lord?
3. How does the writer respond to God’s command “Seek My face”?
4. Will God always deliver us from the fiery furnace?

### PSALM 28: PRAYING IN A CRISIS

This psalm is properly called a lament psalm. The writer is praying to God out of great distress. In typical lament format, the psalm contains an invocation, a plea for help, a complaint, a petition that the wicked receive their due, a hymn of praise, and an expression of confidence in God’s response. It does not contain a confession of sin.

Of the seven typical traits usually found in the lament psalm, confession of sin is the only one that this psalm does not contain. We do not expect to find all seven elements in every lament psalm. These types of psalms vary in their structure. Their chief characteristic is that they are prayers rising up from souls in severe pain who are asking God to do something about their situation. They seek divine intervention in a crisis.

We do not know the exact nature of the trouble that caused this prayer. The text indicates that the writer is especially disturbed by the wickedness around him. He does not want to be connected with these evil men in any way. He certainly does not want to be a part of their judgment.

5. Has God been silent to the writer?
6. Does the writer wish to be counted among the wicked?
7. What does it mean for God to be our shepherd?
8. How do we pray in a crisis?

### **PSALM 29: GOD AND THE STORM**

A beautiful hymn of praise, this nature psalm has as its central theme the greatness and grandeur of God that is being displayed in a rainstorm. Adoration is given to God because His magnificent, hidden power is reflected in a tempest of nature.

The body of the psalm is a description of a storm that is described as having originated over the Mediterranean Sea in the north, coming inland to the Lebanon mountain range, and then sweeping southward across Palestine. It elicited the awe of the writer, not as a phenomenon of the physical world, but as a chorus of praise, a sermon in song, to the God who made it. The psalm has been appropriately called “The Song of a Thunderstorm” because of the seven-fold reference to the voice of God.

The major purpose of the psalm is to proclaim God’s supremacy in the heavens and the earth. All things, even the minute raindrop and the snowflake, are under His command.

9. How did the Israelites view the world of nature?
10. How do we worship in “holy array”?
11. Describe the storm in this psalm.

12. What is the writer's reaction to the storm?
13. What does the storm say about God's grace?

### **PSALM 30: WHEN A DISASTER HAS PASSED**

Judging from the superscription and the content, this thanksgiving song springs from a tragic page in the writer's life. He has just emerged from a near-fatal incident. As he rejoices over God's preservation of his life, and as he reflects on the lessons that he has learned from the bitter episode, he writes this psalm of thanksgiving.

A good possibility as to the later use of the psalm is that it was used at the various, special services that celebrated a new beginning of some kind. When an occasion gave the nation a new life, a new resolve, or a kind of revival, this psalm provided the language that would express the attitude of the nation toward that resurgence of life. It would be read or sung at those crucial times. The psalm speaks of what should happen after a person has been granted a reprieve from death, the ultimate calamity.

14. What kind of background does this psalm have?
15. Describe God's discipline.
16. How has the writer been filled with pride?
17. How has God turned the writer's mourning into dancing?
18. Describe the short-term and long-term characteristics of Christian living.