

## PSALM TWENTY-SIX AND TWENTY-SEVEN

times of either king. Ver. 8 recalls Hezekiah's love for the Temple, and ver. 9 expresses his revulsion at the thought of dying the death of a sinner, which was his interpretation of the mortal sickness with which God had smitten him" (Thirtle, O.T.P., 315-6.) The references appended to the text will transport the reader into a realm of reality, and the Analysis prefixed to it will probably make detailed exposition appear unnecessary.

### QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Integrity is a grand virtue—how can we plead it before an absolute holy God? Is this the circumstance of verses 1 through 7? Discuss.
2. Can we really love God without truly hating sin?
3. Before whom or to whom, is the psalmist trying to demonstrate his integrity? Is this normal? Discuss.
4. "The company we choose is always an index of our character"—Discuss.
5. When cut loose from social or civilized restraints—to where do we gravitate? This is a revelation of our real selves—is this true? Discuss.

## PSALM 27

### DESCRIPTIVE TITLE

Trust and Prayer in the Hour of Danger.

### ANALYSIS

Part I., Two pentameter hexastichs: Stanza I., vers. 1-3, That which Jehovah Is Now he Has Been in the Past, and Will Be in the Future; Stanza II., vers. 4-6, The One Thing sought in spite of Intermediate Danger, is Anticipated with Confidence. Part II., Four irregular tetrastichs, betraying Adaptation: Stanza I., vers. 7, 8, Prayer in Seeking Jehovah's Face. Stanza II., ver. 9, The Hiding of Jehovah's Face Deprecated. An addition, ver. 10: Jehovah will Not Fail, though Father and Mother may. Stanza III., vers. 11, 12, Prayer for Guidance in Presence of Enemies. Stanza IV., ver. 13, The Prospect of Prosperity Awaited with Confidence.

## STUDIES IN PSALMS

(Lm.)—By David.

### Part I

- 1 Jehovah is my light and my salvation—  
of whom shall I be afraid?  
Jehovah is the stronghold of my life—  
of whom shall I be in dread?
- 2 When there drew near against me evil-doers—  
to devour my flesh  
Mine adversaries and mine enemies mine  
they stumbled and fell.
- 3 Though there encamped against me a host<sup>1</sup>  
my heart shall not fear,  
Though there rise up against me a battle  
in spite of this I am trustful.
- 4 One thing have I asked of Jehovah—  
that will I seek to secure:—<sup>2</sup>  
To gaze upon the delightfulness of Jehovah  
in the morning<sup>3</sup> in his temple.
- 5 Surely he will conceal me in his covert  
in the day of calamity,  
He will hide me in the hiding-place of his tent—  
in straits<sup>4</sup> will uplift me.
- 6 Now therefore shall my head be uplifted  
above my foes round about me,  
And I will sacrifice in his tent  
sacrifices of sacred shouting<sup>5</sup> to Jehovah.

### Part II

- 7 Hear O Jehovah my voice,  
I call—be gracious unto me then and answer me.
- 8 To thee said my heart—<sup>6</sup>  
“Thy face Jehovah do I seek”

1. Ml.: “camp.”

2. M.T. adds: “That I may dwell in the house of Jehovah all the days of my life.” But as the claims of stanza uniformity, in a psalm like this first part, are considerable; and as the essence of the “one thing desired” seems to be preserved by the next line, the force of symmetry has been allowed to bring this line to the foot of the text.

3. So with Br.; and cp. 5:4, 59:17, 88:14.

4. Or, as otherwise pointed: “in a rock.”

5. M.T.: “I will sing and will harp”: too much for the measure, yet not improbably by the co-author (cp. Isa. 38:20).

6. M.T. adds: “Seek ye my face.” Prob. (w. Br.) “an early marginal exclamation” which “eventually came into the text.”

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- 9 Do not hide thy face from me,  
do not thrust away in thine anger thine own servant:  
My help hast thou been  
do not abandon or fail me my saving God!<sup>1</sup>
- 10 Though my father and my mother have failed<sup>2</sup> me  
yet Jehovah will care for me.<sup>3</sup>
- 11 Point out to me O Jehovah thy way,  
and guide me in an even path.<sup>4</sup>
- 12 Do not give me up to the greed<sup>5</sup> of mine adversary,<sup>6</sup>  
he that breatheth out violence against me.
- 13 I believe<sup>7</sup> that I shall gaze upon the good things of Jehovah  
in the land of the living<sup>8</sup>  
Wait thou for Jehovah: be strong,<sup>9</sup> and let thy heart be bold,  
wait thou then for Jehovah.

(Nm.)

## PARAPHRASE

### PSALM 27

The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?

2 When evil men come to destroy me, they will stumble and fall!

3 Yes, though a mighty army marches against me, my heart shall know no fear! I am confident that God will save me.

4 The one thing I want from God, the thing I seek most of all, is the privilege of meditating in His temple, living in His presence every day of my life, delighting in His incomparable perfections and glory.

5 There I'll be when troubles come! He will hide me. He will set me on a high rock

6 Out of reach of all my enemies. Then I will bring Him sacrifices and sing His praises with much joy.

1. Symmetry is improved by Br.—at risk of wiping out co-author's intensifications.

2. Or: "forsaken"; yet see 22:1.

3. Or (w. Thirtle): "recover me." For this meaning of *'asaph*, see 2 K. 5:3, 6, 11. Remarkable, as there applied to leprosy.

4. M.T. adds: "because of my watchful foes."

5. U.: "soul." See Intro., Chap. III., "Soul."

6. M.T. adds: "for there have arisen against me false witnesses."

7. M.T.: "Unless" ("unless I had believed")—but marked as spurious—Gn. "It is not justified by the most ancient versions"—Br.

8. Cp. Isa. 38:11.

9. Heb. *hzk*: in prob. allusion to HeZeKiah's name.

## STUDIES IN PSALMS

7 Listen to my pleading, Lord! Be merciful and send the help I need.

8 My heart has heard You say, "Come and talk with me, O My people." And my heart responds, "Lord, I am coming."

9 Oh, do not hide Yourself when I am trying to find You. Do not angrily reject Your servant! You have been my help in all my trials before; don't leave me now. Don't forsake me, O God of my salvation.

10 For if my father and mother should abandon me, You would welcome and comfort me.

11 Tell me what to do, O Lord, and make it plain because I am surrounded by waiting enemies.

12 Don't let them get me, Lord! Don't let me fall into their hands! For they accuse me of things I never did, and all the while are plotting cruelty.

13 I am expecting the Lord to rescue me again, so that once again I will see His goodness to me here in the land of the living!

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14 Don't be impatient! Wait for the Lord, and He will come and save you! Be brave, stout-hearted and courageous. Yes, wait and He will help you.

## EXPOSITION

There is great beauty in this psalm, and there are some irregularities: traces of careful preservation, and tokens of accidents and changes which may elude our most careful research. The psalm is manifestly composite, though not the less instructive for that reason. If we could know its exact literary history, we should probably see how some supreme event welded its composite parts into one; and its transcriptional history would probably account for its various readings. Part I. is exceedingly beautiful from the poetic point of view; and its spiritual elevation is most inspiring to the devout mind. Danger is near, but the spirit of the psalmist is calm; his thoughts flow with ease, and his numbers hold their way with clearness and regularity. This part is, indeed, a fine specimen of Hebrew poetry; nor is it less valuable as showing the calm height to which communion with Jehovah can lift a soul in the midst of peril. It needs but little detailed exposition: yet a perception

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of the situations implied, tend to make it all the more luminous. Part II. is altogether different, except as to the strength of faith and devotion expressed. It shows a marked change of measure; and has probably not been preserved so well as the more finished production that precedes it. An enquiry into authorship, and a glimpse of probable originating situations may best help readers to appreciate this psalm at its true value. Joint authorship is strongly indicated. There is no reason for doubting the truth of the inscription *To David*; though, what portions he contributed, it is impossible now to say. Dr. Briggs sees, even in the first part, glimpses of the days of Hezekiah. "The calm confidence," says he, "in connection with extreme perils from enemies, apparently besieging the city, reminds us of the situation of Jerusalem in the time of Hezekiah and Isaiah, *vide* 2 Kings 18, 19." On the other hand, Dr. Thirtle says: "The second part (vers. 7-14) seems to have been added by Hezekiah when consumed with a desire to go up to the house of the Lord (Isa. 38:22)." And, further on: "We are not to find in ver. 10 a biographical note, or an allusion to personal bereavement, but rather an expression of implicit confidence in God—as if to say, 'Though my sickness is such that even father and mother may forsake me, yet for all that the Lord will receive me,' or *recover* me, as the verb *asaph* implies in a context relating to the treatment of leprosy (cp. 2 Kings 5:3, 6, 11). In other words, 'Though nearest and dearest prove false, the Lord will be faithful to me'"—Thirtle, O.T.P., 316. Charming and helpful as this is, it may not be out of place to suggest, that even the second part of this psalm may have had a Davidic *foundation*; and, in particular, that if only we had David's history before us, that alone might have made it perfectly gratuitous to resort, with Dr. Briggs, to Maccabean times to find a situation in which ver. 10 could have been written. David's "father and mother" did not indeed "forsake" him; but they naturally "failed" to afford him the counsel and help which he might have fondly hoped to derive from their presence in the cave of Adullam (1 Sam. 22:1-4). On the other hand, adaptations to Hezekiah's circumstances quite cluster about the close of the psalm. Ver. 12 may be held to point plainly to the Assyrian invader; ver. 13 to refer to Hezekiah's trust (2 K. 18:5), to reproduce Hezekiah's very style (Isa. 38:11), and to enshrine an allusion to his name. (See note on "Be strong," above; and Thirtle, O.T.P., 123, 124.)

STUDIES IN PSALMS  
QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Notice the two distinct parts to this psalm (vs. 1-6) and (vs. 7-14). With what one word would you characterize each part? Does this mean two authors were involved in the composition of this psalm? Discuss.
2. Talk about specific ways God can be a "light" and "fortress" to us.
3. How often does God protect us unknown to us? Are there not "Spiritual hosts (armies) of wickedness"? Discuss.
4. What is the "house of the Lord"—how shall we dwell in it?
5. In the experience of David when did his father and mother fail him?

PSALM 28

DESCRIPTIVE TITLE

Prayer Turned into Praise.

ANALYSIS

Stanza I., vers. 1, 2, Prayer Boldly Pleads the Feared Result of Refusal to Answer. Stanza II., vers. 3, 4 (with addition, ver. 5), Depicts the Character of the Lawless, and Imprecates their Punishment. Stanza III., vers. 6-8, Praise for Deliverance. *Refrain*, ver. 9, Invokes Jehovah's Blessing on his People.

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(Lm.) By David.

- 1 Unto thee I call my Rock—<sup>1</sup>  
do not turn silently from me;  
Lest if thou turn silently from me—  
I be likened with them who are going down to the pit.
- 2 Hear the voice of my supplication—  
as I cry for help unto thee,  
As I lift up my hands (O my God)<sup>2</sup>  
unto thy holy shrine.<sup>3</sup>

1. M.T. adds: "Jehovah."

2. Not in M.T.

3. "Chancel"—Dr.