

Gleanings From Psalm 27

by Art Katz

Art Katz explores Psalm 27 to illustrate the ultimate confidence and provision found in God amidst adversity and fear.

Duration: 46:46

Scripture: Psalm 27, Matthew 6:33

Topics: "Confidence In God"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of understanding God as God and having a sense of His presence in our lives. The apostles and prophets are seen as the foundations of the church because they communicate God's nature and character through their words and actions. The speaker also discusses the concept of finding refuge in God and not being afraid, even in the face of adversity. The sermon concludes with a mention of the upcoming prophetic school, which will focus on God as the ultimate creator of the nations.

Transcript

So, Lord, may that be our soon experience. May it be so soon that we enjoy it even this morning. So we bless you, Lord, of all of the way in which singing and choruses and overhead projectors and affecting an atmosphere in a congregation have become known as, quote, worship, unquote, and have not impressed one with the powers of darkness.

They yawn at that. We ask, Lord, that you might bring us either today or progressively at some soon time into the ultimate reality that is the statement of faith that registers in heaven and knocks the powers of darkness to bygones. And so bless us, Lord, in the word.

May the word bring us to the place of worship that is authentic both in your hearing and theirs. And we thank you and give you praise in Jesus' name, amen. A scanning of these verses, I can't begin to approach what a statement this is.

I have in italics under the designation Psalm 27, triumphant song of confidence. So a song is something that cannot be affected. You cannot make it up.

It either is going to be a spontaneous overflow or it's not. So it itself is an ultimate statement of faith when you can sing out of your heart to the Lord, but not only in circumstances that are favorable, but all the

more powerful and impressive under adverse circumstances. When you're beset upon, when you're surrounded by opposition, when things go wrong or seem to go wrong, you still have such an ultimate confidence in God that you can still sing because your confidence is persuaded that God is unquestionably sovereign even in the adverse moment.

See what I mean? This Psalm 27, like so many of the Psalms, is an ultimate statement of faith. And you take note how many times I'm going to use the word ultimate. Now it's one of my favorite words.

How do you define ultimate? Song is an ultimate expression of faith. Confidence is an ultimate statement of trust. What is ultimate? We don't hear that word used in common parlance because what is there in the world that either requires it, acknowledges or honors ultimacy? But what is ultimate? Because what is ultimate is perfectly congruous with the kingdom of God and with God himself.

God himself is ultimate. He's the ultimate reality. He wants to bring us to an ultimate place.

But if we don't know what ultimate is, you know, then how do we have direction? You think on that. And maybe the very context of the content of the Psalm will give you a clue. So verse 1, the Lord is my light and my salvation.

The Lord is the strength of the stronghold of my life of whom then shall I be afraid. So what is the Psalmist saying? Not that the Lord gives light. The Lord is light.

There's a little difference. I love the Lord giving light, but when the Lord has become light, the Lord himself is. That's the ultimate statement of God as provision for a believer's life.

You understand? There's a common grace that benefits mankind and there's an illumination that comes from God where all mankind would be stumbling in unbelievable darkness. But when God has become light, when he is your light and your salvation, the evidence is of whom then shall you be afraid. It's an ultimate confidence that even in the darkness of things that appear as despair or would encourage despair, God is my light.

How personal that is. This is not poetry. It is poetry, but it's poetry of the deepest statement of the kind of reality that God intends to become for his saints.

That's why I love the book of Psalms, so my light and my salvation, I mean, we can spend a week on this. How is light to be juxtaposed with salvation? And there are many things that would suggest itself that when we're saved, our eyes are opened. There's a new way of seeing and perceiving.

Things that before were distasteful are the very things now that are a delight. And those things that before seemed to be such a fixation that we had to have also become as nothing. We see with a new seeing, the light is our salvation.

It's a salvation from the world, from crummy values, from mispending our life and our energy. So there's a conjunction between light and salvation. If salvation has not brought light, which is seeing, you might well question how saved.

But the Lord is. It's not that the Lord provides. The Lord himself is.

He himself is the ultimate provision. He is our salvation. And the answer is no fear.

Of whom shall I be afraid? Of what shall I be afraid? When you know God like this, what is there? What thing conceivably can cause terror or terrify you or bring insecurity or anxiety or apprehension or any of the kinds of things that tyrannize an entire mankind? You know, the whole of mankind is gripped in fear. But that's why they need underarm deodorants. It's not because they're working that they're sweating.

It's that they're fearing that they're sweating. Anxiety exudes a very particular odor. Do you know that? And I was just marveling on my trip how little I needed it.

Maybe from exertion, but certainly not from anxiety. So we need to know the world is anxious, fearful, intimidated, threatened, insecure. How do I look? How do I feel? How am I accepted? But when the Lord is your light and your salvation, of whom then shall I be afraid? For very God has become your salvation.

He himself is the ultimate provision. And then we come to the poet, the psalmist, gives us the most adverse circumstances that can be described. Like when evil doers assail me to devour my flesh, my adversaries and foes, they shall stumble and fall.

Like you couldn't find language that's more pointed. It's not that the man is afraid he might get a critical letter in his mailbox. He's afraid that there are enemies that are out for his life.

And you can understand why. Because a man who knows God like this is an enemy to darkness. And so his fear is a legitimate fear that actually could mean his destruction.

But of what shall he be afraid? And so in this Holy Ghost inspired psalm, God himself inspires the poet psalmist to conjure, what could be the most fearful thing that could come against you? Because if you can have confidence in God then and not be afraid then, you have come to the place of faith of God's invention. You know the difference between past, tense, present and future? They are altogether irrelevant to God. Because he's always in the eternal now.

When he says something or even conceives something, it's done and it's done for all time and eternity. So we mustn't, as fearful little pieces of humanity, wondering as God's speaking about past problems or future problems, it's all the same. Once you know God like this, your past is covered, your present is covered, your future is covered.

Whether foes have come or foes will come, it doesn't matter, it's all the same. Though an army can't encamp against me. What? A whole army against one little soul? You see how, what's the word for this, when you use large language, this is hyperbolic.

This is exaggerated, like the Lord is saying, what is the most fearful thing that you could consider that you would find threatening? Not just a foe or an opponent, an entire army. If an entire army should come against me, my heart shall not fear. Huh? What? David, that was a reality.

Yeah, it wasn't just poetry. Which, it may be a reality for us in the near future as well. It may well be.

Yeah. So the Lord is saying, whether it's one or many, to him it's no difference. He's as great a defense against one who seeks to devour you as an army that seeks to come against you.

Yeah. That's true. Because he's the ultimate provision.

They shall stumble and fall. They have fallen. They are ultimate opposition, but we have a God who is ultimately our defense.

That's why this is a song of ultimate confidence. In the invisible God, we see the visible things that are threatening. But to have a faith that knows God, though unseen, as being greater than, and he is your rock and your provision, your sanctuary and your dwelling, then you can sing a song.

And you can sing it when the enemy is at the door. And when the enemy hears that song, they themselves are defeated. Remember when they went out against the armies of the uncircumcised? And who are the sweet singers of Israel? King Jehoshaphat wanted to know.

And the people identified them. So he set them in advance of the army, and they went forth singing and praising God in song. And when the enemy heard it, they were confused and turned against one another.

And Israel was, or Judah, three days in taking the spoil without themselves having to lift an arm to obtain their own victory. The enemy slew itself, merely hearing the song of the sweet singers of Israel. Now, who are the sweet singers of Israel? Was it a professional chorus like the Mormon Tappernackle Choir? I think that they were just ordinary Jews.

They were God's men and women who knew God like the psalmist and were not intimidated by three uncircumcised armies at the border of Israel. They were in a place of ultimate confidence because God is their salvation. Though he slay me, yet will I praise him.

Because the issue of being slain or being preserved is not the issue of the army, it's the issue of God. Right? You could do nothing against me, except that we're giving you from above. So yet I will be confident.

So this I will be, there's something required from us. It's an ultimate determination. We're called to an ultimate determination on the basis of an ultimate provision, which is God himself as our salvation.

Every verse of this psalm has to do with what is ultimate. I will be confident. Ultimate opposition, but ultimate confidence, ultimate determination to be confident.

I will be. I have a choice in the matter. I'm either going to allow my senses to be invaded by the overwhelming foe and be terrified, or I'm going to remember that God is my salvation and I'm going to make a choice.

I will be confident. And then how does this come in? One thing I've asked of the Lord that I will seek answer. It's almost like a break in the psalm and this becomes lyrical.

It goes from threatening armies to a soliloquy about being in the ethereal realm with God, but it's not incompatible. In fact, if a person is not in that ethereal place at all times, this is a place of dwelling, then he will be intimidated by armies and things visible. So here again is a choice.

One thing I have desired. It's an ultimate desire. What does Paul say in Philippians? This one thing I do, not looking back, is like narrowing the focus, either or, put up or shut up, black or white, yes or no, one thing or nothing.

You notice how different that is from the world? The world is compromising in its language. Maybe if, I guess, it depends, it's relativistic, but there's an absoluteness in God, one thing. And this psalmist has chosen it.

One thing I have desired, I have asked of the Lord, and that one thing I will seek after. In this psalm, you'll see he will, that God provides, and then you'll see I will. It's God and his ultimate provision, and man acting in his own ultimate choice toward God.

I will choose. And that is the very ground of being. To make choices of this ultimate kind is to define yourself as a human being, is to come into your personality, or a better word, your personhood.

People are dying and are in mental institutions and going to psychiatrists, or their marriages are shot, or they themselves are sleepless and all that, because they're not one with themselves. They've not come into the full satisfaction and delight in their own being, in their own uniqueness as personalities that God has made in his image. They don't know who they are.

But when a person will assert himself, I will, not somebody else for me, or someone else influencing, but what I am in my deeps, my quintessential self that is so rarely called for, so rarely required to be identified, so rarely expressed, when I, out of the deeps of my being, will, something comes forth which is the true person in God. It's joy unspeakable. It's reality.

And it only comes with this kind of assertion. And that's why people are in a beggarly, miserable condition in the world. Nothing requires from them an ultimacy of their own being.

That's why they can't identify themselves. That's why they have to spike their hair and tint it. That's why they have to have tattoos and earrings and blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah.

They don't know who they are. They don't have an identification. Because nothing has been summoned, nothing has been required of them in an ultimate way that would give them their own definition and recognition of themselves as persons, because only God can do that.

He's deep calling unto deep. He's the ultimate God calling into what is ultimately the reality of our own selves. And the same thing is true corporately.

A whole people, a corporate body, can find themselves in their definition and their uniqueness and their reality in the same way, in their own corporate decision for God. See what I mean? And that's the church. That's when God is glorified.

That's why he has created all things. In order that through the church, something can be demonstrated to the powers of the air, a corporate reality of the kind that this psalmist speaks about personally. So what is the one thing to live in the house of the Lord? It's my ultimate priority all the days of my life, the good days, the bad days, the frightening days, the threatening days, all the days.

No exception. It's a consistency. I will, I choose to behold the beauty of the Lord and to inquire in his temple.

Because the beauty of the Lord is God in his ultimate person. It's God in his majesty. It's God in his sovereignty.

It's God in his mercy. It's God in his love. It's God in his power.

It's God. And you'll see him only in his house in that way. When this is a first priority, when it's your ultimate desire, this is the ultimate reward to see God as God in his majesty.

And once you've seen that, of what shall you be afraid? I can't tell you the ball that I'm having reading Calabar on creation and what underlies creation and what was the determination of God as creator from before even the things were created. What was in this concept in his heart to perform through his son and by his spirit. I'm hanging on the ropes.

I'm gasping at the depth of the revelation of God in his unbelievable majesty. It is triune genius. And by the way, we think that that is going to be the subject for this summer's school.

God as ultimate creator of the nations, the primeval, the ultimate things that underlie very reality itself. We've only been skimming at the surface to talk about Israel in the last days. There's only a giant come lately phenomenon as important as it is, but even it needs to be seen in the context of God as God.

Because he knew that from the beginning and set in motion the circumstances that would require that. We need to have a sense of God. This is the greatest need of the church.

And this is what the apostle and the prophet brings. That's why they are the foundations of the church, not because they have a commanding knowledge of God's purposes. Of course, they have that.

But the thing that is their distinctive, that is the foundation is they communicate God as God, not only just verbally, but in their very confidence in their trials and tribulations, that people can see them with their scars, banged about, knocked and defamed and all of these things. And yet the man is singing. He's rejoicing and counting it all privilege.

What's with this guy? What has he seen that I've not seen that allows him to praise God in song in the midst of his adversity? He must have a knowledge of God beyond anything that I've glimpsed. And that's true. And when his knowledge becomes your knowledge, that's the foundation from which the church shall never be moved.

So, for he will hide me in verse five in his shelter. Here are the he wills of God, the ultimate provision of God. Naomi, having come to this place of dwelling with God in his ultimate reality, then leads you to the consideration of the next verse, for he will.

Knowing what he is, is the clue and key to knowing what he does. Because he's this, I can count on him to do this. See what I mean? Now, I know that he will hide me in his shelter.

A lady sent me an email letter from Holland who was completely rattled and undone by the whole view of Israel's last days, apocalyptic dealings, because she was involved at the highest level of organizations presently bringing Jews to Israel now and complete. She went out of her way to see me on my last day in Holland, and we spent an entire evening talking over the subject. And she's telling me, yes, now that I'm considering, now that I'm weighing up, now that I'm reading and reviewing, I see that you're right and I'm undone.

But she said, how is it that you're so free in talking about your own community as being a place of refuge for 25 years? That was the call of God. And she says, you know, you're making it known. The enemy then will know where you're located.

And how then will it be a refuge? I said, well, I think it's important, first of all, to tell the Church that we're not speaking a speculation, that we're not giving a mere concept of something, but that we're speaking it with a confidence not only out of our knowledge of the word of God, but out of the actuality of our own

experience for a quarter of a century, and that we're speaking of it as taking place in North America. Because if Jews will be in flight in North America from persecution, where then in the world will they be safe? So there are reasons why it's imperative that we must speak of ourselves, but then does not leave us open and exposed. How then will it be a refuge if it's openly identified? And maybe the answer is here.

He will hide me. He will. There's no other way.

Unless he hides us, we'll be up for grabs. But he will hide me in his shelter in the day of trouble. It's not that there may be a day of trouble, and if it should come.

No, in the day of trouble, it will come. It's not a speculation. It's an assurance.

But in that assurance, there's also a covering and a protection. That's the important thing. So isn't that just like God? He doesn't butter us up to say, well, this shall not come upon you.

These hard times may not come, da-da-da-da-da. No, it will come. But in its coming, you have this confidence.

I'll be your shelter. I'll be your covering. He will conceal me in the cover of his tent.

This is that lousy translation. We have a choice either to regard that as nice poetry or nuts and bolts provision in the time of trouble. Can God himself be a place of safety and a hiding and a covering in such a time? That's the question.

Is this poetry that we can enjoy because it has a lovely sound for our ear? And although it is that, is it also an assurance, a confidence that when the time of trouble comes, he will be a covering and a shield? So he will set me high on a rock, the last line of verse 5. You notice that that's a kind of contradiction in terms? On high on a rock? How can a rock be on high? Yeah, brood over these statements that are paradoxical, contradictory, on high, on a rock. A rock is never suspended. A rock is below.

Then you stand on it. But here's a rock that's high. And it has all of the virtue of a rock in terms of stability and endurance and safety.

But it's not at ground level. It's a high. But if you want to use the word ultimate here, it's an ultimate contradiction in terms.

High rock. But you know what I have found? It's when you stumble on an ultimate contradiction that you're at the threshold of ultimate revelation. Just when you, well, how do I reconcile this with this? These are two totally disparate things.

Exactly. This isn't accidental. This is divinely intended that in the paradox is concealed something of the mystery of God that only a paradox can contain.

Don't be stupefied by it. Prepare and burrow into it. When it opens to you, it will open dimensions of God as rock.

What that implies, high and rock that you would not have had before. How do these apostles come with this confidence in God? Where did they get it? They could get it from the same source, co-joined with their experiences. They have a hermeneutical key of interpretation for the reality of their experiences through the word.

And the same privilege is available to us if we burrow in, if we're not offended by the paradoxes or lightly dismiss them as being a mere play on words, but recognize that there's a divine strategy in that combination of words to what God is inviting us to consider. We are altogether too shallow, too superficial, and too quick in our summary dismissal of scripture. We're not reading it rightly.

Listen to the way we read it. Read the psalm is the way we read it ourselves. But there's reading and reading.

So, again, I'm not only, I'm only making some suggestion, but also to be an example of how we need to meditate, study, brood upon the word of God. If we had nothing more than Psalm 27 as the only thing that has come down to us through the ages, and all the rest of the scriptures was somehow lost, we would have enough to sustain us about God and with God for all the balance of our days, because everything that can be said about him is in here. That's how compressed and choice this remarkable psalm is, as are so many of the psalms and the scriptures themselves.

So, as Naomi said, where did the for come from? How do you connect that word for with that verse that preceded it? Now we can say in verse six, where does the now come from? Now my head is lifted up. Well, because of what preceded it. Now, having seen this, having understood this, having known that God is not just giving me a play on words, but this is ultimate reality, though it seems a paradoxical contradiction of terms.

Now my head is lifted up. What does it mean your head lifted up? I'm not depressed. My head is not hanging on my chest.

I'm not saying, woe is me, oy vey, how come? Why me? I'm not suffering some mindless fate or terrible turn of circumstances or I'm a victim. There's no place for being a victim. Now my head is lifted up.

I don't care what my circumstances are. This God, who's so sovereign, majestic, and glorious, and it's going to be this in a time of trouble. My head is lifted up, whatever the circumstance.

See what I mean? And to lift your head up is to come erect and to come into your dignity as a human being in God. Now my head is lifted up, both before the calamity, during calamity, after calamity, and in a time of trouble, in a time of peace. It's lifted up above my enemies all around me.

And you can be assured, if you know God like this and love God like this and seek God like this, you will have enemies. And the enemies will not just be the world. Strangely, they will be those from within Christendom itself who are offended by your intensity of devotion and attachment to God and this kind of knowledge of God.

I don't know why it is. It rubs men raw. This is why the Anabaptists were persecuted and driven out from their places.

Why couldn't the state churches, the Lutheran Catholic, allow them to exist? They would be still in Landa, the quiet ones in the earth. Can't you give them a little piece of earth, a little corner of Switzerland? So what? No. They had to be hounded out ruthlessly with bounties on their heads, hunted.

They were not permitted to live. The same statement with Paul. This man cannot be permitted to live.

His very existence constitutes such an offense, such a threat. He represents. We cannot bear.

If he were only religious, we could get by. But the way he purports, carries himself, and speaks of God and acts for God, we can't tolerate that. You will have enemies in exact proportion as you come into the depth of this kind of relationship.

But don't be afraid of it. Don't be intimidated. God is greater.

My head is lifted up. And I will offer in his head sacrifices. So, Lord, may that be our soon experience.

So, Lord, may that be our soon experience. May it be so soon that we we enjoy it even this morning. So we bless you, Lord.

Of all of the way in which singing and choruses and overhead projectors and affecting an atmosphere in a congregation have become known as, quote, worship, unquote, and have not impressed one with the powers of darkness. They yawn at that. We ask, Lord, that you might bring us either today or progressively at some soon time into the ultimate reality that is the statement of faith that registers in heaven and knocks the powers of darkness to bygones.

And so bless us, Lord, in the word. May the word bring us to the place of worship that is authentic, both in your hearing and theirs. And we thank you and give you praise in Jesus' name.

Amen. A scanning of these verses, I can't begin to approach what a statement this is. I have in italics under the designation Psalm 27, triumphant song of confidence.

So a song is something that cannot be affected. You cannot make it up. It either is going to be a spontaneous overflow or it's not.

So it itself is an ultimate statement of faith when you can sing out of your heart to the Lord, but not in only in circumstances that are favorable, but all the more powerful and impressive under adverse circumstances. When you're beset upon, when you're surrounded by opposition, when things go wrong or seem to go wrong, you still have such an ultimate confidence in God that you can still sing because your confidence is persuaded that God is unquestionably sovereign, even in the adverse moment. See what I mean? This is this Psalm 27, like so many of the Psalms is an ultimate statement of faith.

And you take note how many times I'm going to use the word ultimate. Now, it's one of my favorite words. How would you define ultimate song is an ultimate expression of faith.

Confidence is an ultimate statement of trust. What is ultimate? We don't hear that word used in common parlance because what is there in the world that either requires it acknowledges or honors ultimacy. But what is ultimate? Because what is ultimate is perfectly congruous with the kingdom of God and with God himself.

God himself is ultimate. He's the ultimate reality. He wants to bring us to an ultimate place.

But if we don't know what ultimate is, you know, then how do we have direction? You think on that. And maybe the very context of the content of the song will give you a clue. So verse one, the Lord is my light and my salvation.

The Lord is the strength of the stronghold of my life of whom then shall I be afraid. So what is the Psalmist saying? Not that the Lord gives light. The Lord is light.

There's a little difference. I love the Lord giving light, but when the Lord has become light, the Lord himself is. That's the ultimate statement of God as provision for a believer's life.

You understand? There's a there's a common grace that benefits mankind and there's an illumination that comes from God or all mankind would be stumbling in unbelievable darkness. But when God has become light, when he is your light and your salvation, the evidence is of whom then shall you be afraid. It's an ultimate confidence that even in the darkness of things that appear as despair or would encourage despair, God is my light.

How personal that is. This is not poetry and it is poetry. But it's poetry of the deepest statement of the kind of reality that God intends to become for his saints.

That's why I love the book of Psalms. So my light and my salvation. I mean, we can spend a week on this.

Why? How is light to be juxtaposed with salvation? And there are many things that would suggest itself that when we're saved, our eyes are opened. There's a new way of seeing and perceiving things that before were distasteful are the very things now that are a delight. And those things that before seem to be such a fixation that we had to have also become as nothing.

We see with a new seeing the light is our salvation. It's a salvation from the world, from crummy values, from mispending our life and our energy. So there's a conjunction between light and salvation.

If salvation has not brought light, which is seeing you might well question how safe, but the Lord is. It's not that the Lord provides the Lord himself is he himself is the ultimate provision. He is our salvation.

And the answer is no fear of whom shall I be afraid of? What shall I be afraid? When, when you know God like this, what is there? What thing conceivably can cause terror or terrify you or bring insecurity or anxiety or apprehension or any of the kinds of things that tyrannize an entire mankind? You know, the whole of mankind is gripped in fear, but that's why they need underarm deodorants. It's not because they're working that they're sweating. It's that they're fearing that they're sweating.

Anxiety exudes a very particular odor. Do you know that? And I was just modeling on my trip, how little I needed it maybe from exertion, but certainly not from anxiety. So we need to know the world is anxious, fearful, intimidated, threatened, insecure.

How do I look? How do I feel? How am I accepted? What if I hear it? But when the Lord is your light and your salvation, of whom then shall I be afraid? For very God has become your salvation. He himself is the ultimate provision. And then we come to the poet, psalmist gives us the most adverse circumstances that can be described.

Like when evil doers assail me to devour my flesh, my adversaries and foes, they shall stumble and fall. Like you couldn't find language that's more pointed. It's not that the man is afraid he might get a critical letter in his mailbox.

He's afraid that there are enemies that are out for his life. And you can understand why, because a man who knows God like this is an enemy to darkness. And so his fear is a legitimate fear that actually could mean his destruction.

But of what shall he be afraid? And so in this Holy Ghost inspired psalm, God himself inspires the poet, psalmist to conjure what could be the most fearful thing that could come against you. Because if you can have confidence in God then and not be afraid, then you have come to the place of faith of God's intention. You know the difference between past tense, present and future? They are altogether irrelevant to God.

Because he's always in the eternal now. When he says something or even conceives something, it's done and it's done for all time and eternity. So we mustn't, as fearful little pieces of humanity, wondering as God's speaking about past problems or future problems.

It's all the same. Once you know God like this, your past is covered, your present is covered, your future is covered. Whether foes have come or foes will come, it doesn't matter.

It's all the same. Though an army didn't camp against me. What, a whole army against one little soul? You see how, what's the word for this when you use large language? Exaggerated? Huh? Hyperbolic? This is hyperbolic.

This is exaggerated, like the Lord is saying, what is the most fearful thing that you could consider that you would find threatening? Not just a foe or an opponent, an entire army. If an entire army should come against me, my heart shall not fear. What? For David, that was a reality.

Yeah, it wasn't just poetry. Which it may be a reality for us. It may well be, yeah.

So the Lord is saying, whether it's one or many, to him it's no difference. He's, he's as great a defense against one who seeks to devour you as an army that seeks to come against you. Because he's the ultimate provision.

They shall stumble and fall. They have fallen. They are ultimate opposition, but we have a God who is ultimately our defense.

That's why this is a song of ultimate confidence in the invisible God. We see the visible things that are threatening, but to have a faith that knows God, though unseen as being greater than, and he is your rock and your provision, your sanctuary, your dwelling, then you can sing a song. And you can sing it when the enemy is at the door.

And when the enemy hears that song, they themselves are defeated. You remember when they, when they went out against the armies of the uncircumcised and who are the sweet singers of Israel? King Jehoshaphat wanted to know, and the people identified them. So he set them in advance of the army and they went forth singing and praising God in song.

And when the enemy heard it, they were confused and turned against one another. And Israel was or Judah three days in taking the spoil without themselves having to lift an arm to obtain their own victory. The enemy slew itself merely hearing the song of the sweet singers of Israel.

Now, who are the sweet singers of Israel? Was it a professional chorus like the Mormon tabernacle choir? I think that they were just ordinary Joes. They were God's men and women who knew God like the Psalmist and were not intimidated by three uncircumcised armies at the border of Israel. They were in a place of ultimate confidence because God is their salvation.

Though he slay me, you know, yet will I praise him because the issue of being slain or being preserved is not the issue of the army. It's the issue of God, right? You could do nothing against me, except that we're giving you from above. So yet I will be confident.

So this, I will be no, there's something about it. There's something required from us. It's an ultimate determination.

We're called to an ultimate determination on the basis of an ultimate provision, which is God himself as our salvation. Every verse of this song has to do with what is ultimate. I will be confident, ultimate opposition, but ultimate confidence, ultimate determination to be confident.

I will be, I have a choice in the matter. I'm either going to allow my senses to be invaded by the overwhelming foe and be terrified, or I'm going to remember that God is my salvation and I'm going to make a choice. I will be confident.

And then how does this come in? One thing I've asked of the Lord that I will seek answer. It's almost like breaking the Psalm and this becomes lyrical. It goes from threatening armies to a soliloquy about being in the ethereal realm with God, but it's not incompatible.

In fact, if a person is not in that ethereal place at all times, this is a place of dwelling, then he will be intimidated by armies and things visible. So here again is a choice. One thing I have desired.

It's an ultimate desire. What does Paul say in Philippians? This one thing I do, not looking back, is like narrowing the focus. Either or.

Put up or shut up. Black or white. Yes or no.

One thing or nothing. You notice how different that is from the world? The world is compromising in its language. Maybe if I guess it depends, it's relativistic, but there's an absoluteness in God.

One thing and this, this Psalmist has chosen it. One thing I have desired. I've asked the Lord and that one thing I will seek after.

And there's a, there's a, uh, in this Psalm, you'll see he will that what that God provides. And then you'll see, I will. It's God in his ultimate provision and man acting in his own ultimate choice toward God.

I will choose. And that is the very ground of being. To be, to make choices of this ultimate kind is to define yourself.

As a human being is to come into your personality or a better word, your person hood. People are dying and are in mental institutions and going to psychiatrists or their marriages are shot where they themselves are sleepless and all that because they're not one with themselves. They've not come into the full satisfaction and delight in their own being in their own uniqueness as personalities that God has made in his image.

They don't know who they are, but when a person will assert himself, I will not somebody else or someone else influencing, but what I am in my deeps, my quintessential self that is so rarely called for. So really required to be identified. So rarely expressed when I, out of the deeps of my being will something comes forth, which is the true person in God.

It's joy, unspeakable. It's reality. And it only comes with this kind of assertion.

And that's why people are a beggarly miserable condition in the world. Nothing requires from them an ultimacy of their own being. That's why they can't identify themselves.

That's why they have to spike their hair and tinted. That's why they have to have tattoos and earrings. They don't know who they are.

They don't have an identification because nothing has been summoned. Nothing has been required of them in an ultimate way that would give them their own definition and recognition of themselves as persons. Because only God can do that.

He's deep calling unto deep. He's the ultimate God calling into what is ultimately the reality of our own selves. And the same thing is true corporately.

A whole people, a corporate body can find themselves in their definition and their uniqueness and their reality in the same way, in their own corporate decision for God. See what I mean? And that's the church. That's when God is glorified.

That's why he has created all things in order that through the church, something can be demonstrated to the powers of the air, a corporate reality of the kind that this psalmist speaks about personally. So what is the one thing to live in the house of the Lord? It's my ultimate priority all the days of my life. The good days, the bad days, the frightening days, the threatening days, all the days.

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