

# In the Midst of Waiting 2: The Humility of Waiting

Text: Psalm 27:7-14

**1** The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The LORD is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?

**2** When evildoers assail me to eat up my flesh, my adversaries and foes, it is they who stumble and fall.

**3** Though an army encamp against me, my heart shall not fear; though war arise against me, yet I will be confident.

**4** One thing have I asked of the LORD, that will I seek after: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the LORD and to inquire in his temple.

**5** For he will hide me in his shelter in the day of trouble; he will conceal me under the cover of his tent; he will lift me high upon a rock.

**6** And now my head shall be lifted up above my enemies all around me, and I will offer in his tent sacrifices with shouts of joy; I will sing and make melody to the LORD.

**7** Hear, O LORD, when I cry aloud; be gracious to me and answer me!

**8** You have said, "Seek my face." My heart says to you, "Your face, LORD, do I seek."

**9** Hide not your face from me. Turn not your servant away in anger, O you who have been my help. Cast me not off; forsake me not, O God of my salvation!

10 For my father and my mother have forsaken me, but the LORD will take me in.

11 Teach me your way, O LORD, and lead me on a level path because of my enemies.

12 Give me not up to the will of my adversaries; for false witnesses have risen against me, and they breathe out violence.

13 I believe that I shall look upon the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living!

14 Wait for the LORD; be strong, and let your heart take courage; wait for the LORD!

## Recap

- A. The last time we looked at Psalm 27, we touched on the doctrine of the “**Already but not yet.**” In essence, we are **already** in the Kingdom but we **do not yet** see the full fulfillment.
- a. We touched on this to point to the tension we feel in our current situations such as
    - i. We are in Christ, yet we struggle with sin.
    - ii. All is not well in the **now** even though our **eternity** is secure in Christ, in the future (the not yet).
- B. One of the clearest marks of this tension is the **waiting we have to endure wherever there is a gap between our present situation and what we hope for** (all within the parameters of God’s will).
- C. Last week, Nick spoke about the wilderness experience of the Israelites - how the wilderness is **is the place of trial, of hardship, of deficiency, of little water and little food and little**

**comfort. It's the desert. It's the place that exists between Egypt and Canaan, between the house of slavery and the Land of Promise.**

a. **We, God's New Covenant people in Christ, have been freed from slavery to Satan, sin, and death, and we are headed toward the Promised Land of the new heavens and new earth, and the new Jerusalem. And the time in between is our wilderness sojourn.**

b. I hope you are seeing that **waiting is largely synonymous with the wilderness** experience. You can almost say the wilderness is a learning space.

D. During our last foray into Psalm 27, we drew certain conclusions on how and why we wait

a. We wait by gazing upon the beauty of God and relying on the Sovereignty of God (vs 4-6)

b. And God often leads us into the wilderness/waiting to do the following

i. **Open our eyes to see our depravity** and how much we need Him (test)

ii. Bring about a **necessary dying to self** so that we can be truly dependent on Him (teach)

## Looking forward

A. Consider the following learning spaces as we journey together

a. The **repeated arguments and intolerance between you and your spouse**

b. The **diagnosis of a certain type of sickness** that is sure to influence your quality of life

c. The longing to be **known and loved**

- d. The chaos of work, that sucks out all margin and you are left with little or no energy for your family
- e. The thirst to be **free of depression, and be rid of suicidal thoughts**
- f. The prison of not being enough - not good enough, not smart enough, not valuable enough, not good looking enough
- g. The helplessness of not being able to offer assistance to loved ones in need
  - i. The **passing of loved ones**
- h. The creaking of your bones that remind you that the end is not far off
- i. Living with a sense of direction

B. Where is the **wilderness or the waiting showing up** for you?

- a. Said in another way, **where are your learning spaces?**
- b. What **ails your heart** as you sit here today and what gets underneath your skin whether it be a serious or mundane affair?
- c. What comes to mind that makes you uneasy?

C. On one hand, **hold whatever God has brought to mind** and **be expectant of what God will say to you as we proceed further.**

## Context of Psalm 27:7-14

- A. While the first half of Psalm 27, **verses 1-6, lays the foundation for waiting**, verses 7-14 draws back the curtain for us to see **how the psalmist, practically, waits on God**.
  - a. It's almost like verses **1-6 is the intellectual theology** and **verses 7-12 shows the outworking of the theology**
- B. The contrast between **absolute confidence (vs 1-6) and desperate pleading (vs 7-12) shows the humanity of the Psalmist**.
  - a. He is also just like us, where there are moments we feel invisible and are flying high with God and there are other moments where we seem to be getting hit from every angle.
  - b. **Yet, what we will see** is that in the midst of it all is **God, our refuge and always present help**.
- C. To avoid **treating this psalm as just a piece of beautiful poetry, I want you to see the intensity and depth of the psalmist's anxiety** through the following words
  - a. **7** Hear, O LORD, when I cry aloud; be gracious to me and answer me!
  - b. **9** Hide not your face from me. Turn not your servant away in anger... been my help.
  - c. **9b** Cast me not off; forsake me not...



- i. This is the foundation of every other thing we do. Our hope is always found in him.
  - ii. **There is no other form of hope, save Yahweh**
- B. The **Psalmist is not confused as to who is the captain of the ship**, and so rather than bend inwards, his first point of call is to cry out to God.
- C. We see this very **example in Christ in Hebrews 5:7**
  - a. In the days of his flesh, Jesus **offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears**, to him who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverence.
- D. Jesus is not confused as to **who leads the dance**. Rather than rely on himself, he turns back to God.
  - a. If **Jesus does sets God as priority, how much more, you and I?**
- E. And so **this is the first step we must take, a turning to God**
  - a. This is not the **simple minded utterance of words to God** that you do not believe.
  - b. Rather this is you **truly seeing him as your only hope**, gasping for the grace he provides, for **He is not simple the problem solver, he is the solution**

## God Speaks

- A. In response to the psalmist cry in verse 8, the **directive from God is “Seek My Face”**

- a. When you are waiting for marriage, the first step isn't how to become more attractive
- b. When faced with an overwhelming schedule, and weariness, the first step isn't looking for ways to become more time efficient

- i. **The answer, from God, is always "Seek My Face."** This is God inviting you into a loving relationship with himself

B. This is God's way of **retraining us to step away from living like functional atheist**, where we **relegate God to the fringes of our lives.**

C. Note that the response from God isn't

- a. I will strike down your enemies or I will make a way for you

- b. The answer from God is God Himself**

D. Why is this so?

- a. Beneath all of our problems is **the potential of separation of God, and Satan works to deceive us that God is not truly after our good.**

- i. The **enemy's aim is not blocking your healing or promotion or marriage.**

- 1. **Truthfully he cannot do anything without God allowing it.**

- ii. The enemy's **aim is always and every always will be separating you from God.**

This is the goal beneath all of his attacks and machinations.

- 1. **Everything else is a pawn to get to this end - your rejection of God's love and mercies**



b. And when we look **at the motivations beneath our very legitimate desires**, what we will likely find is mixture of **right and wrong motivations**.

i. And this is why **God reverts us back to himself because he is after dealing with the issue beneath the issue**.

ii. God is primarily after your reconciliation with Himself

E. We see this same approach when **God sends Jesus as the Messiah**.

a. Normally one would think Jesus as Messiah meant he would overthrow the government/kingdom of Rome.

b. However, Jesus's mission is overthrowing the kingdom beneath the kingdom of Rome, the **Kingdom of Sin/Self/Devil**.

F. **The gift God always gives is himself, for in giving himself to you, he gives you a foothold to fight off the advances of the enemy's lies:**

a. This is why God would **send Jesus to die for us, for in offering Christ as a sacrifice**, he is **showing us once and for all, the extent of his love**, which is beautifully expressed in Romans 8:31-32

i. **31 What then shall we say to these things [waiting/wilderness]? If God is for us, who can be against us? 32 He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?**

b. In seeking His face we are better positioned to reject the advances of the enemy

- G. An interesting point to note is that **this is the only definitive word from God in this psalm**. In the midst of very real issues, **God gives us the gift of himself**.
- a. This is **quite telling of God's character**. He is **not pointing you to fleeting solutions, but to Himself, the eternal stronghold**.

## The Psalmist's Response

- A. The Psalmist **doesn't shake his finger at God** when he hears this directive, **rather he responds with this**:
- a. [My heart says to you, "Your face, LORD, do I seek."](#)
  - b. The Psalmist **isn't simply after deliverance from his enemies, he true aim is God**.
  - c. His **priority is God** - not deliverance
- B. **Do you respond this way in the midst of your trials or wilderness?**
- a. **While waiting, is God or resolving your current situation your primary goal?**
  - b. If you are like me, the answer is a woeful no. **I do not respond this way, save the grace of God**
- C. Like the Psalmist, **lay the foundation of seeking first after God, and every other thing will be added**.

- a. Let intimacy with God be of more importance to you than financial security or marriage or healing

**D. How then do we prioritize God as first in our lives?**

- a. By praying for the desire to seek him and know him.
  - i. God will **give you the desire to seek him and the humility to depend on him** always, whether you are facing challenges or not.

**E. So after turning to God as our hope and seeking his face, what else can we learn from the psalmist?**

## Abandonment into Yahweh's Hands (vs 9-12)

**9** Hide not your face from me. Turn not your servant away in anger, O you who have been my help. Cast me not off; forsake me not, O God of my salvation!

**10** For my father and my mother have forsaken me, but the LORD will take me in.

**11** Teach me your way, O LORD, and lead me on a level path because of my enemies.

**12** Give me not up to the will of my adversaries; for false witnesses have risen against me, and they breathe out violence.

# The Cry of the Heart

- A. We established from verse 8 that the Psalmist true aim isn't simply deliverance from the current situation. **His true aim is God**
  
- B. Here's how the NIV Application (NIVAC) commentary expounds on this idea
  - a. The implication of 27:8 [You have said, "Seek my face." My heart says to you, "Your face, LORD, do I seek."] is that the psalmist is not making an inquiry of Yahweh but is earnestly pleading for the "face" of Yahweh itself—his very presence.
  
  - b. What he desires more than anything, requests, and pleads is for Yahweh to be present with him. Thus, the next verse continues:
    - i. Hide not your face from me. Turn not your servant away in anger, O you who have been my help. Cast me not off; forsake me not, O God of my salvation
  
- C. As the Psalmist thirsts after God, there are three things I want to highlight
  - a. The Psalmist's Contrition of Heart
  
  - b. The Psalmist's recollection of God's character
  
  - c. The way of the Pilgrim

## Contrition of the Heart

- A. Rooted in the elements of verse 9 is a **deep contrition of the heart**. He has no grounds to make any demands of God
- B. Rather it's almost as if he seeks the face of God despite his own sins hence the statement "[Hide not your face from me. Turn not your servant away in anger](#)"
- C. Let this be for us an example. **Despite the psalmist presumed sins he presses into God**
  - a. We have **no grounds to approach God save the sacrifice of. Christ on that old rugged cross**
    - i. Where the Psalmist **has no mediator before God**, we have Christ!
    - ii. Where the psalmist **has a human high priest**, we have the eternal high priest
    - iii. Where the psalmist **offers the blood of animals that could never take away sins**, the blood of Christ has been offered for us
    - iv. Where the psalmist **sees shadows pointing towards Christ**, we have Christ.
    - v. Where the psalmist got the benefit of doubt for [God in his divine forbearance was passing over former sins](#), we have the benefit of that Old Rugged Cross
  - b. I say all this to get to this point - **Do not let your sins or misgivings keep you away from God in the midst of your waiting.**

- i. Do not listen to the **lie of the enemy that God is done with you or so annoyed with you that he will not look upon you. This is NOT true! It will NEVER be true!**
- ii. When the **enemy reminds you of your depravity, which is true, counter with the fact that despite your sins that you can't even full understand, you are also fully and overwhelmingly loved by God.**
- iii. Tim Keller puts it this way
  1. The gospel is this: **We are more sinful and flawed in ourselves than we ever dared believe, yet at the very same time we are more loved and accepted in Jesus Christ than we ever dared hope**

## Recall the Character of God

- A. Despite our sins and mishaps, **what empowers us to always run back to God is understanding and recalling his Character.**
- B. In verses 9-12, as the psalmist prays and responds to God's call to seek his face, he is rehearsing the nature and character of God
  - a. **God as Helper: 9 Hide not your face from me. Turn not your servant away in anger, O you who have been my help.**
  - b. **God as Savior: Cast me not off; forsake me not, O God of my salvation!**

- c. **God as Faithful Companion: 10** For my father and my mother have forsaken me, but the LORD will take me in.
- d. **God as Teacher: 11** Teach me your way, O LORD, and lead me on a level path because of my enemies.
- e. **God as Deliverer: 12** Give me not up to the will of my adversaries; for false witnesses have risen against me, and they breathe out violence.

C. Going back to verse 10, I want to **highlight something we struggle with here**

- a. Part of the enemy's deception is to whisper that our **waiting is punitive punishment for our sins.**
- b. **The parent-child relationship depicted here eradicates that notion** for we've seen the anguish cry of the psalmist's heart, so he is in a precarious state, yet he speaks of God as being more faithful than our most intimate relationship
- c. The verb "receive/take me in" **conveys the sense of a father lifting up his child with the intent of providing for his needs (cf Ex 19:4, Dt 32:13-14)**
- d. Isaiah 49 is a **wonderful text to meditate on to see how far God is willing to go for the same Israelites that have rejected him over, and over, and over again.**
  - i. **God's past faithfulness guarantees his present and future faithfulness to you.**
  - ii. Isa 49:15 is a great cross reference point for verse 10

1. "Can a woman forget her nursing child, that she should have no compassion on the son of her womb? Even these may forget, yet I will not forget you.

e. **God is far more in love with you than you can understand. If he is chastising you, it is so that he can draw you closer to Himself**

D. Recalling the nature of God strengthens our faith in Him. It has a way of reminding us of whose we are.

a. Rehearsing the character of God breathes life into our feeble knees, and **does a simultaneous work in us:**

- i. **It humbles us, which the right posture because in this state, we are more likely to yield to God**
- ii. **It exalts the Triune God in our hearts, so we can rightly see Him as being infinitely superior to our problems.**

## The Path of the Pilgrim

A. Verse 11 & 12 for me **represents a shift in tone**. Listen to it

- a. **11** Teach me your way, O LORD, and lead me on a level path because of my enemies.
- b. **12** Give me not up to the will of my adversaries; for false witnesses have risen against me, and they breathe out violence.



**B. Up to this point, the psalmist has:**

- a. Turned first to God - making God a priority
- b. He responds to God's directive of "Seek my face" by abandoning himself into God's hands seen through his heart's contrition and rehearsing the character of God
- c. And now, he takes it a step further

C. We established that the psalmist is not simply after deliverance from the current situation but that he is fully after God. In verse 11 and 12, the **psalmist is a pilgrim committed to the way of the Yahweh**

- a. **No matter how the opposition of this path, the psalmist is committed to the path of the pilgrim.**
  - i. Despite the mockings of friends, who belittles her commitment to the purity, she is committed to the way of Christ.
  - ii. Regardless of the career demotion the pilgrim faces, he is committed to living a life of integrity.
  - iii. In the face of heartaches over the passing of loved ones, the pilgrim takes the next best step looking unto Jesus the author of eternal life.
  - iv. No matter the jeering of peers, the pilgrim wrestles with her fears and shame before the Almighty knowing that God loves her dearly!
  - v. Sidestepping the illusion of financial security, the pilgrim swims against the current of society by finding his value in the fact that he is a beloved child of God

- vi. Pushing through the scorn of society, the pilgrim avoids the relativism that relegates as an old fabled tale, and teaches her children to worship God
- b. Knowing his own shortcomings, **the psalmist prays for guidance on a level path - a place where obstacles have been removed so that he can walk the path of a pilgrim**

#### **D. How do we walk this path?**

- a. We cannot turn to God and see him as our first port of call without knowing His Character and nature
  - i. We start by praying for the desire to know Him
  - ii. As He nurtures this desire in us, he guides us into carving out time with Him.
  - iii. There are a multitude of **practices** you can engage in from
    - 1. Meditate on the Word
    - 2. Take walks with God
    - 3. Solitude and silence
    - 4. Scripture memorization for the purpose of meditation
    - 5. Reading scriptures
      - a. Contemplation
      - b. Lectio Divina
    - 6. Fasting

7. Craft out a day with Jesus
8. Serve in Church or as God leads
9. Listening to scripture and music
10. Actively studying of scriptures
  - a. Basically anything that opens you up to God, to do business with God
  - b. Come up with a plan of doing one thing - it's better if you can do it with a friend or spouse.

b. In the process of engaging with God, the following might happen

- i. Perhaps as you open your bible to read, God will show you an aspect of his nature that will enable you to put your hope in Him
- ii. Maybe as you take a walk with God, your eyes are opened to see the illusions of status and financial security you live in
- iii. Perhaps in the story of Moses, you see a man who is not defined by what he has accomplished but by his relationship with God
- iv. Maybe as you recite some aspect of the sermon on the mount, the fears that grip your heart are loosened, because you are seeing how much God loves you and accounts for the strands of hair upon your head.

- v. As you sit in silence and solitude, God might direct your thoughts to a friend you've been longing to share the gospel with
  - vi. Maybe as you fast, God shows you the hypocrisy of your unforgiveness towards your spouse
- E. There are **no shortcuts to knowing God**. And the idea that **knowing God is hard or best left to some intellectual juggernaut is a lie of the enemy**. There is nothing hard to the exercises we spoke of. Do the following and do it consistently:
- a. Simply carve out time and show up
  - b. God will lead the dance, just follow. You don't need to prepare an outline or come with preconceived topics to discuss
  - c. Simply show up, and show up consistently. He has a plan and a map to take you through

## Confidence in God (vs 13-14)

**13** I believe that I shall look upon the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living!

**14** Wait for the LORD; be strong, and let your heart take courage; wait for the LORD!

- A. When we **truly make first things first**, and we **abandon ourselves** into the ever capable hands of Yahweh, the **end result is this settledness in the Sufficiency of God**
- a. The sufficiency of God goes beyond deliverance from the particular situation. **It is a pervasive sense of well being no matter what is happening around us**

b. It is seeing God as our anchor and having our hope fully in Him.

B. Despite the **presence of adversaries and false witnesses** that are threatening violence, the psalmist ends as he begins. **He ends the psalm, as he starts it, at a place of deep seated confidence in God.**

a. The psalmist is **strongly convinced that God** will rescue him, hence the words “**I believe that I shall look upon the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living!**”

b. **There is an expectation of deliverance in this life, hence the term the “land of the living”**

c. Note that the **deliverance the psalmist is after is primarily Yahweh** - hence the phrase “**the goodness of the LORD**”. You do not hear him say, I believe my enemies shall be defeated.

i. This **isn't to say we do not hope for what we long for**, it is to show us that true deliverance is found in Yahweh

ii. This isn't also to say the particular situation we find ourselves in, will be resolved as we envision; rather, it is pointing us to the truth that **our salvation can only be found in the person of Christ**

C. The phrase " Wait for the Lord" is **probably first an encouragement to psalmist himself but it is also an encouragement to everyone who hears these words**

D. The words “**be strong, and let your heart take courage**” are echoes of encouragement we see in scripture:

- a. This is how Moses and God exhorted Joshua before leading Israel into battle (Deut. 31:7, 23; Josh. 1:6, 7, 9, 18).
  - b. In the same manner Joshua encouraged Israel before they faced the enemy (Josh. 10:25).
  - c. David used these words when strengthening Solomon to assume the leadership of the kingdom (1 Chron. 22:13; 28:20)
  - d. King Hezekiah exhorted his military officers when Sennacherib besieged Jerusalem (2 Chron. 32:7)
- E. In all the aforementioned examples, there is a sense of engaging in battle, **which signifies impending action** yet the call here is to **wait for the Lord**, which signifies inactivity of sorts or dependent activity, where we act only as God leads.
- F. I love the NIV Application (NIVAC) commentary on this verse, which says:
- a. Too often we find action preferable to waiting! Like Saul, we would rather take matters into our own hands and **face the enemy boldly in our own strength rather than wait for God** (1 Sam. 13:1–15).
  - b. **Waiting on God is hard work.**
  - c. **Yet, it is one way—perhaps the only way—of demonstrating God’s strength manifest in our weakness.**
    - i. Whenever we rush frantically about trying to “do it” on our own, we in effect become “functional atheists,” denying, by our actions, that God is active in our lives

1. In essence we say, through our actions, that there is no God

G. **Waiting is not resignation or despair, it is actually a step of trust and commitment.** Waiting actually shows your trust in God.

- a. It is the path of the **pilgrim that acknowledges his/her need to rely on God alone.**
- b. For me, **one of the most difficult aspect of this walk of faith is waiting on God.** It goes against my senses, especially when I have ideas of how to resolve the situation before me.
- c. Too often, **I am impatient and I want God to act on my schedule** - this is what leads to the grumbling that Nick touched on last sermon - where we say **“if I were in your shoes God, I can do better”**
- d. However God in his mercies doesn't bow to my cries. In his love, he forgives my grumblings and acts for my good

H. So let's recap here on how we wait on God

- a. We set first things as first - God as priority
- b. We abandon ourselves into the hands of Yahweh
  - i. by being contrite of heart and
  - ii. recalling his character
- c. We commit to the path of the pilgrim by knowing God via spiritual disciplines, and all of the above leads to

- d. Confidence in God
- I. **And so we wait, ever so confident of our end - eternity with God, which Christ secured through his blood**
  - a. **And so we wait becoming more dependent on Christ, and becoming like Christ as we, with unveiled faces, gaze upon the beauty of the Most High!**
- J. What makes waiting worth it, **is the confidence we have in the sacrifice of Christ!!!** Hallelujah
  - a. One of the things we learn as we wait on God, is to **abandon outcomes into His ever capable hands**. We come to accept, **reluctantly at first**, that we do not have the **wherewithal to make “our situation” come out right**.
  - b. **Eventually, we are joyful, that outcomes are not dependent on us**

## Conclusion

- A. If you notice I titled this message the humility of waiting, but I have not spoken directly about humility at all. The reason is all we have touched on such as:
  - a. Turning first to God
  - b. Abandoning ourselves into the hands of Yahweh, which leads to
  - c. Confidence in God
- B. All these come together to form the posture of humility that that God is always working out in us.



a. By humility I mean a real and intent filled preference for the will and way of God