

Fear Not—Psalm 27

#0741

Study Given by W. D. Frazee—1950

It is a most wonderful thing that the greatest danger and the greatest problem and the greatest opposition that will ever be faced by human beings in this world will be met by those with the least fear. That is the great final conflict just ahead of us—the climax of the conflict of the ages.

It is to prepare a people for that conflict that the third angel's message has been revealed and given all over this world. God would have His people prepared for this crisis. Prepared or unprepared, we must all meet it. Happy will those be who have learned to abide in the secret place of the Most High, under the shadow of the Almighty. So, let us look at this beautiful Psalm this morning—the 17th Psalm. I'm going to ask you to read with me responsively. I'll read the first verse, and you read the second, and we'll go right on through to the end:

“The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? When the wicked, even mine enemies and my foes, came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell. Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear: though war should rise against me, in this will I be confident. One thing have I desired 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 behold the beauty of the LORD, and to enquire in His temple. For in the time of trouble He shall hide me in His pavilion: in the secret of His tabernacle shall He hide me; He shall set me up upon a rock. And now shall mine head be lifted up above mine enemies round about me: therefore will I offer in His tabernacle sacrifices of joy; I will sing, yea, I will sing praises unto the LORD. Hear, O LORD, when I cry with my voice: have mercy also upon me, and answer me. When Thou saidst, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto Thee, Thy face, LORD, will I seek. Hide not Thy face far from me; put not Thy servant away in anger: Thou hast been my help; leave me not, neither forsake me, O God of my salvation. When my father and my mother forsake me, then the LORD will take me up. Teach me Thy way, O LORD, and lead me in a plain path, because of mine enemies. Deliver me not over unto the will of mine enemies: for false witnesses are risen up against me, and such as breathe out cruelty. I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living. Wait on the LORD: be

of good courage, and He shall strengthen thine heart:
wait, I say, on the LORD” Psalm 27.

Did the man who wrote this psalm know anything about trouble? Did he know anything about opposition? Oh, yes. It was out of the depth of such experiences that he spoke, inspired by God.

Through much of David’s life, he met opposition. You remember at an early age he had been selected by God Himself to take the place of the ruling monarch. Saul had rebelled against God by refusing to carry out the counsels of the spirit of prophecy fully. He was substituting his wisdom for the divine revelation of God. He wanted to do God’s work, but he wanted to do it in Saul’s way.

Finally, God said to Samuel the prophet, “We can’t use Saul. We will have to find another. I have a young man in mind.” He sent Samuel down there to anoint David.

However, no revelation of that made to others at the time. David continued quietly with his work of minding sheep. Out there with his flock, he sought to prepare himself for the great responsibilities that lay ahead of him.

You remember that soon after in the providence of God, he was called upon to meet the challenge of Goliath. You remember the wonderful victory that God gave him. You remember some of his experiences in court life as he was called into intimate contact with the king. Finally, as God blessed David, it dawned upon that brooding mind of Saul that perhaps this was the man that he had heard of who had been selected to take his place. The spirit of malice, hatred and murder grew in that king’s mind and heart. And finally, he sought to kill David; first with a javelin, and then later, he summoned whole armies to pursue this young man.

David, of course, was forced to flee from place to place—sometimes living in caves, sometimes in the deserts, sometimes in the mountains, sometimes even outside the land of Israel in exile. Not for days or weeks but for years, my friends, he was hunted like a wild beast. Sometimes, as we would say, just one jump ahead of his enemy.

Through those experiences, David was developing and did develop a trust in God which is breathed through the psalms we love to read and sing. God has seen fit to preserve that history and these psalms so you and I may learn the same experience and sing the same songs.

We are going into battles far beyond those David went through. We are going into opposition. Even from those—mark it!—even from those from whom we ought to expect protection, we shall find betrayal and persecution.

What will happen to us as those experiences come to us? Will we lose our hope? Will we lose our faith? Or, will we have the experience David had? Let’s see what the source of his confidence was. Let us right at the beginning of our study note that it lies not in any circumstances or any people. It doesn’t lie in this world or in humanity. It lies in Heaven, in God Himself.

“The Lord is my light and my salvation. Whom shall I fear?” And what, of course, is the answer to “whom shall I fear”? Nobody. That’s the thing. It’s what we call a rhetorical question, isn’t it? The thought is that it’s a wonderful way of saying, “I won’t fear anybody.” As He puts it in the 23rd Psalm, “Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil.” And here, “I won’t fear any human being.” Why? “The Lord is my light, and my salvation. The Lord is the strength of my life, of whom shall I be afraid?”

The worse thing any human being can do to us is not to torture our bodies but to put fear into our souls. What can be done at the rack or the stake is small compared to what can be done without lifting a finger against the body. Some of the keenest minds of this world at the present time are harnessed to the terrible task of how to subdue the human mind; how to take captive the thoughts of people; how to harness the energies of thought, and at the same time kill the initiative and the conscience. Yes. That is being done under the red banner of communism and the black banner of the Jesuits.

It matters not which side of the iron curtain we look, that which is being done, the study, experiment and practice along those lines, is yet to be focused on this remnant people. And while we must face the torture of the body, believe me, friends, the greatest peril we face is that to which our minds will be exposed. Fear is going to spring up and blossom under those conditions if there is any seed of fear within the soil of our hearts. As the spring rains bring ten thousand weeds, so that which lies ahead of this people will bring out within us any lurking fear.

Is there any fear in your mind or heart? “Ah,” says one, “of course, there is. Everybody is afraid.”

We are naturally, friend, and there is no power in us to drive fear from us. We can no more run away from fear than we can run away from our shadow on a moonlit night. But oh, there is deliverance from fear. God wants each one of us to be lifted far above all fear.

“The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear?
The Lord is the strength of my life, of whom shall I be afraid?
When the wicked, even mine enemies and my foes, came
upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell...”

And so, he says:

“...Though an host should encamp against me, my heart
shall not fear” Psalms 27:1–3.

Notice that he doesn’t say, “If the host comes, I just tremble and shake and quiver until it is gone. Then, of course, I’m happy. Except I’m so worn out that I can hardly do anything but sigh.” No, he doesn’t say that. What was the thing that kept him from fear when he saw the host coming? Ah, my dear friends, it was the sense of the presence of God, the sense of the presence of God. Not so much that God

was on his side, but that he was on God's side. There's a bit difference between those two things, may I say to you, friends.

I suppose your mind goes as mine does when I read this third verse, to the experience of the prophet, Elisha as recorded in 2 Kings 6. You remember that the whole army of Syria had been sent after one man—the prophet of God. So important did the Devil consider the spirit of prophecy in Israel, so important did he consider it to make away with the man who was bringing those revelations from Heaven that the king of Syria dispatched his army to the city of Dothan to get that man. They came by night and surrounded that place with horses and chariots and a great host the Bible says.

You remember how in the early morning, Elisha's servant was looking around and saw that great army out there, and he recognized that it was the Syrians. He said, "Alas, my master! how shall we do?" Well, just turn over there to 2 Kings 6. I want you to notice exactly what happened and where the confidence of Elisha lay:

"And when the servant of the man of God was risen early, and gone forth, behold, an host compassed the city both with horses and chariots. And his servant said unto him, Alas, my master! how shall we do? And he answered..."

Read it with me, please:

"...Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them" 2 Kings 6:15–16.

Ah, what an answer from an heart of faith! Elisha didn't say, "Oh, we'll just have to shake and tremble and be in fear until something happens to that army." No. Right away, the answer of faith rose up in his heart because faith was resident there. He said that there was, "More with us than those who are with them." Do you feel that way, friend, when you meet trouble, opposition, lies, slander? "They that be with us are more than they that be with them."

"And Elisha prayed, and said, LORD, I pray Thee, open his eyes, that he may see..."

Whose eyes? The eyes of the servant—the young man.

"...And the LORD opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha" 2 Kings 6:17.

What were they? The angels of God assuming that form—chariots of fire round about Elisha. So, before that army of men could get to Elisha and his servant, what must they pass? The angels of God. That leads you, of course, to think of the 34th Psalm and the seventh verse:

"The angel of the LORD..."

Does what?

“...encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them” Psalm 34:7.

Are they encamping round about you that way, friend? If not, if I were you, I would move into the circle.

They tell me that out in the tropics, where those great jungle beasts roam in some sections of Africa, the travelers who pass through those stretches are careful when they make camp at night to have a campfire. In some places, they have a circle of campfires around the camp if it's of any size. What for? Oh, to keep those jungle beasts from coming in. They won't come through those fires. They are afraid of that

And let me tell you, friends, the Devil is afraid of the angels of God. He had better be. One angel took care of 185,000 of those Assyrians who were lifting up their hands against the God of Heaven. Just one angel took every firstborn in every Egyptian home the night of the deliverance of Israel from bondage.

I say, Satan and all his hosts had better be afraid of the angels of God. And if you and I want to be delivered from fear, all we need to do is move into the circle of the angels, and stay there and sense the presence.

“Ah,” but somebody says, “I can't see them.”

That all depends on what you use. Thank God that He has given us faith. With the eye of faith, we can see and discern these angels. Am I right? They are all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation. I love this beautiful comment in the book, *Education*, in this chapter on faith and prayer:

“Only the sense of God's presence can banish the fear that, for the timid child, would make life a burden”
Education, page 255.

Oh, catch the implication of this sentence! What will fear do for some? It will make life a, what? Burden. But oh, there is something that can do, what with fear? What will it do? Banish it. Thank God! Like Napoleon, banished to that lonely island in the South Atlantic—St. Helena where he died at last. Fear can be sent into exile; banished from your life. How? By the sense of, what? The presence of God.

“The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?
the LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be
afraid? When the wicked, even mine enemies and my foes,
came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell.
Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall
not fear: though war should rise against me, in this will I be
confident” Psalms 27:1–3.

There is one more thing in this sentence that I want us to be sure to get. Let me read it again:

“Only the sense of God’s presence can banish the fear that, for the timid child, would make life a burden”
Education, page 255.

Can even a timid child can be delivered from fear? A timid one—one naturally fearful and shy, can they be delivered from fear? Oh, yes! What will do it? The sense of the presence of God. And then the sentence suggests that should:

“Let him fix in his memory the promise, ‘the angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivered them.’ Psalm 34:7” *Ibid*.

Is there anyone here who is afraid of anything, anybody? Commit this text to memory. Go over and over it. Let’s say it together:

“The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivered them.’ Psalm 34:7”

Ah, you see, it’s the fear of God that banishes the fear of man. The more we fear God, the less we are afraid of man.

The fear of God is, of course, not a slavish fear. Not a fear that brings ulcers, high blood pressure, and heart trouble. Oh, no. The fear of God is a respect for God, a sense of His majesty, His authority, His overall rule that makes us so conscious of Him that we lose all fear of anybody else. “The fear of man bringeth a snare, but the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom,” the beginning of knowledge, it’s the beginning of life, my friends. Oh, that all of us this morning may enter into this with all our hearts!

I love to think of the testimony of Luther in the dark days when the reformation seemed about to perish because all the military might of what was called the Holy Roman Empire seemed to be turned against him. The great ecclesiastical power and authority of the Pope of Rome, and all his bishops and archbishops and cardinals, were focused on blotting out that monk that had chosen to stand up and declare the Word of God with holy boldness.

You remember that Luther had an associate by the name of Melanchthon. Luther, you know, was inclined to be, shall I say, a bit like Peter. He spoke right out. He was bold. He had to be. Melanchthon was more quiet, more retiring. He was a scholar, reticent and sometimes a bit fearful. Listen to what Luther wrote. You can read it in *Great Controversy*, page 210:

“To Melanchthon, who was crushed under the burden of anxiety and fear, he [Luther] wrote: ‘Grace and peace in Christ—in Christ, I say, and not in the world. Amen. I

hate with exceeding hatred those extreme cares which consume you. If the cause is unjust, abandon it; if the cause is just, why should we belie the promises of Him who commands us to sleep without fear? ...Christ will not be wanting to the work of justice and truth. He lives, He reigns; what fear, then, can we have?"
Great Controversy, page 210.

Isn't that wonderful, friends? But you know, Luther himself at times met discouragement. I have read of an experience of Martin Luther when he came home one day and found his wife in mourning. He thought what in the world was the matter. So, he asked her. He said, "What in the world are you wearing mourning clothes for?"

She said, "Oh, God is dead."

"Why woman, what do you mean that God is dead."

She said, "You act like it. You're acting as if God were dead. That's why I'm wearing mourning clothes."

He got the point. He got his eyes off the troubles and opposition that were all around him. He got his eyes on God, and the mourning dress came off his wife.

Is God with us, friends? Well, if He isn't, we had better get where He is with us, hadn't we? Yes.

During the days of the civil war, someone asked President Lincoln if God was on our side—the side of the North at that time. "Do you think that God is on our side?" Lincoln's answer, I think is wonderful. He said, "I am not so much concerned whether God is on our side, but whether we are on His side."

Oh friend, believe me, you can never beg or buy the support of God for your cause. The very reason why many are fearful is that they have espoused a cause of doubtful value. There is only one place where you can afford to be without fear. It is to be buried completely in the plan and purpose of God. And that brings us back to our song:

"Though war should rise against me, in this will I be confident.
One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after..."
Psalms 27:3–4.

Ah, David had one consuming desire. Just one. What is it?

"That I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to enquire in His temple" Psalms 27:4.

I'm not trying to pull God down to my program. Oh, I am seeking with all my soul that I may enter into *His* plan, His purpose, His house; I want to dwell there with

Him always. Not merely in the future life, but in this life to enter into the house of God, the family of God, the kingdom of God, the purpose of God. That was David's all-consuming desire. Only thus can we be delivered from fear.

Freedom from fear must never mean to us that we know that we're going to get what we want. Freedom from fear must never mean to us that we know that we're going to get what we want. May I tell you, there is a great counterfeit for what we are studying this morning? There are preachers preaching in popular churches a doctrine, a philosophy of peace that comes directly from Satan.

The prophet Ezekiel says, "They heal slightly the hurt of the daughter of my people saying Peace, peace, when there is no peace." Thousands are being lulled to sleep with a false doctrine of how to get what you want through religion. How to be able to sleep at night through prayer. Why? Because I want to sleep. And the kind of religion doesn't make any particular difference. Whatever religion will put you to sleep the best, use that. Sure, because your desire is to get to sleep. You don't want to toss all night, so you had better learn to pray.

Do you see what I am getting at? It doesn't come from Heaven, my friends. No. Let me tell you that the best thing that can happen to some people is not to be able to go to sleep. They don't need to sleep. They need to have their conscience awake and shall I say, scourging them. Yes.

If I have a splinter in my finger, what I need is not some drug to make me feel comfortable. I need something to pull that splinter out. Right? Yes. If I've swallowed a pin and it is pricking the inside of my anatomy, what I need is not something to swallow so I will feel comfortable and go to sleep. I need somebody to get hold of that pin and get it out before it punctures a vital blood vessel. Am I right?

Oh, let us never think, friends, that freedom from fear is to be obtained by some tranquilizing drug, or some hypnotic spell, or some soothing words from some human being. No. The way to have peace is to let Jesus take sin away and then rest in the arms of His love. It is to be fully satisfied with God and His way and know that He is going to bring about in our lives that which He sees is best and to His glory.

That's why those three Hebrews were not afraid when they were commanded to bow down and worship the graven image. What did they do when ten thousand people knelt before that golden image? What did they do? They stood up. Do you suppose their knees were shaking like that? Do you suppose they tried to find some tree that they could hide behind? Do you suppose they sort of crouched over to see if they could keep out of sight? What do you think?

Why, no. They weren't afraid. They stood there in holy confidence. When they were called to answer about it, and Nebuchadnezzar found out their religious scruples, he said, "Listen, there is no god going to deliver you out of my hands. There is that furnace. It is already hot, and it is going to get seven times hotter, and in you go unless you kneel down this time. Think it over, fellas."

They said, “Now king, we don’t need any more time to think it over. We have a God who is perfectly able to deliver us. But whether He delivers us or not, we will not worship that image. We love Him much more than we fear you. We would rather die loving Him than live fearing you.

So into the furnace they went. We say, “Yes, of course, the Lord delivered them, but I don’t know whether He would do that for me or not.” My point is, their peace was before they ever went into the fire. God wants you and me to have that, for we are going into the fire, my friend. We’re going in the fire. And we, like them, are not going to worship an image.

Is there going to be an image set up? Have you been reading in the *Review and Herald* lately about the Sunday law movements: the labor unions, the Catholics and Protestants all uniting to try to force down the throats of the American people the Sunday law idea? Oh, it is coming, friends. It is far more than a little cloud the size of a man’s hand on the horizon. The tempest will soon be here.

Are you afraid? Oh, ask God to deliver you from fear. And how will God teach you those lessons? By letting you have from day to day some little things that ordinarily might make you afraid—people, circumstances, opposition, lies about you, threaten you, this or that. It is amazing what little things can make people afraid. I’ve heard of people being afraid of a little thing no longer than this with a tail and four legs. Haven’t you?

Jesus can deliver us from fear. I spoke a few minutes ago about the tranquilizing drugs people take to get rid of fear. The doctor who is in charge of the United States Public Service, Dr. Henry Vanzile Hynes, in a recent statement said this:

“People who do not appear to be happy, either asleep or awake, are taking tranquilizing drugs to keep them in between.”

What a statement!

“People who do not appear to be happy, either asleep or awake, are taking tranquilizing drugs to keep them in between.”

Do you know how these tranquilizing drugs work? Just this week, I got hold of a picture that teaches me quite a bit about how they work. If this picture were larger so you could see it, you would see two mice here. These two white mice are in a laboratory. A doctor Hadeski has been working on an experiment with these rats. These mice are put in there and underneath them is a grid charged with electricity. When the experimenter wants to, he can give the mice a little charge of electricity on their feet. Of course, they jump. Ordinarily, each rat thinks it is the other rat that did it to him, you understand [Laughter from the audience], so they fall to and start to fight with each other. That’s the normal reaction of the mice to that. It has been established.

But now they give them some tranquilizing drugs. What do you suppose happens? Listen, the mice jump at the electric shocks, but they no longer take it out on each other. You see? They still jump. That is the physiological reaction. But there's nothing in the to fight the other fellow anymore.

Say, maybe you know somebody to whom you might want to give some of those drugs to [Laughter from the audience], so they would not jump unto you. Or, may you think that It might be a good thing if you could get a dose of that some time so you wouldn't feel like doing something to somebody who has done something to you, or, like the mice, that you think they have done something to you.

Is that the answer, friends? Can you imagine one of those mice writing a song saying, "I used to be so belligerent. But since I have been taking such and such, I can be happy even when the shocks come. I never feel like fighting anybody"?

Is that the brand of victory and peace that you want, my friends? Listen. You can get it in any one of a dozen or a score of tranquilizing drugs today, and you can get it in any one of a hundred different religious tranquilizers—false doctrines to lull and soothe the conscience.

But oh, what poor substitutes! What wicked counterfeits. And all the while, Jesus stands by offering us the sweet peace and companionship of His presence and protection.

"The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?
the LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be
afraid?" Psalms 27:1.

You know, one of the ways David learned these lessons was being a shepherd. For years, he spent his time looking after those sheep. He had to take them to pasture. He had to find the place where the water was. There were seasons of the year when water was hard to find. He had to find places to shelter them at night where not thief or wolf could get them. In all these ways, he learned what a shepherd's work is and how the sheep were to be protected. So he sang, "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. Though I walk through the shadow of the valley of death, I will fear no evil."

Someone has pictured questions arising and being bright to those sheep about just what it is going to do under this or that circumstance. Hear the sheep answering:

Where will this hungry lambkin feed?
Where find the grass that meets my need?
What questions for a sheep indeed?
My Shepherd knows.

And when I thirst for waters cool
And long to find the quiet pool,
No wisdom lies within this wool;

My Shepherd knows.

The night draws on, where shall I rest?
Safe, sheltered from each thief and beast?
I know not, need not know the least;
My Shepherd knows.

Oh friends, let us have done with that quest for security which lies in surrounding ourselves with battlements so high that no enemy can penetrate, which lies in the idea of amassing gold so much that we can never spend it all. With surrounding ourselves with enough other things or people so that we need not fear. One day of the time of trouble will blast all that into a thousand pieces.

But in the midst of that time of trouble, songs of praise will rise from the remnant people of God: "Our hope is in Jesus."

"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea" Psalm 46:1-2.

Thank God, friends, Jesus is in the business of speaking peace to those who will listen and will come close enough to Him to catch His whispered words.

Has He whispered peace to your heart? Are you willing to give up your ways, not merely your sins, but your ambitions, your desires, your careers, your likes and dislikes? Are you willing to lay them all at Jesus' feet and say, "Lord, anything You want is what I want"?

Then and only then can you be delivered from fear. Let Him whisper that word of peace this morning.

[Closing song, "There Is a Name So Dear," closing appeal by Elder Frazee and, and testimonies]

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