

Psalm 27:4-6

<https://thebiblesays.com/commentary/ps/ps-27/psalm-274-6/>

David directs us to perceive and seek our access to God in spirit through prayer.

In the next three verses of Psalm 27, David turns from bold, assured proclamation to musings that are more introspective in nature. Having declared confidence in the Lord's sovereignty over history—indeed, over his own personal destiny—David opens the windows to his heart and mind that allows readers a clearer glimpse of the rationale supporting his “blessed assurance” in His LORD.

The psalm writer acknowledges that, as a matter of first priority, he has approached the Lord with a special petition: *One thing I have asked from the Lord, that I shall seek* (vs 4).

We might easily imagine such a prayer would be directed first toward health, safety, and security in a world that offers challenges on every front.

David, however, knows that such safe-holds are mere echoes of a grander reality: the life-giving blessing of living every moment in the awareness of God's redemptive presence. And so, the remainder of his prayer in verse 4 is revealed:

*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 meditate in His temple* (vs 4).

David's first desire is to *dwell* (Hebrew, “yashab”) directly and permanently in God's presence. ([See the Commentary on Psalm 91:1](#) for further discussion on the word *dwell*.) The term evokes David's hope for both the experience of immediacy to and of relational continuity with the *Lord* Yahweh.

Such an estate would disclose the unfathomable depths of God's *beauty* (Hebrew, “noam”)—here a referent to the entire being and character of Yahweh—to the fortunate participant. God's nature is of such purity that those who catch merely a glimpse of it are overwhelmed by His perfected glory and chastened by their own imperfections (1 Chronicles 17:16; Romans 7:24).

To meditate (Hebrew, “baqar”) *in His temple*—an active attitude of purposeful submission while receiving the gifts of insight, awareness and assurance—is the apt response to being in the presence of the Holy One, the Sole Creator of Life. The word *temple* (Hebrew, “hekal”) is used of the wilderness tabernacle once it was settled permanently in Shiloh, after Israel entered the Promised Land.

The word “hekal” is also used by David to refer to God's dwelling place (2 Samuel 22:7) which fits well with this context. It could also suggest David's aspirations to establish a place and build

a structure worthy of representing and inviting God's presence in Israel. David did not build the First Temple. That was left for his son, Solomon, to achieve (2 Samuel 7:12-13).

Living in the Lord's presence is its own reward; and, David testifies, it is a reward that overflows as well with other benefits. When trouble raises its head to disturb life, David knows the Lord *will conceal me in His tabernacle* (vs 5). The poet-king lives—and by inference so do all who share his dedication to God—within and under Yahweh's protection.

The poetic imagery here calls to mind a sacred residence, inviolable by profane offenders. David refers to God's spiritual presence. In early Israel the tabernacle referred to the meeting tent, where God's presence resided among His people (Exodus 33:14-15). The tabernacle was carried by the Israelites in their journeys and campaigns establishing the borders of the nation (Exodus 25:8).

David would have been familiar with the meeting tent's structure, the larger portion referred to as the Holy Place and an interior chamber known as the Holy of Holies. However, here David's access to His God was gained through prayer. David directs us to perceive and seek our access to God in spirit.

Access to the tabernacle meeting tent's interior was restricted to the priestly class; gaining entrance to the innermost chambers was even more restrictive. *In the secret place of His tent He will hide me* shows that David's access is not limited by a physical structure. Despite these known restrictions, David is assured that the Lord will provide His faithful ones shelter equivalent to being secreted away within the most inaccessible realms of divine protection.

This prophetically foreshadows a later revelation, that the earthly tabernacle was a model of the true tabernacle in heaven (Hebrews 8:5, 9:11). Through the death of Jesus, the Son of David, believers now have access into the true Holy of Holies in heaven, to receive cleansing of our consciences (Hebrews 9:13).

To drive the point firmly home of his confidence in God's care, the psalmist declares the Lord *will lift me up on a rock* (vs 5). The use of *rock* is an oft-embraced Old and New Testament metaphor. The craftsmen of Israel, familiar with regions of great sandy expanses, would have known that rock was the most stable foundation upon which to build. Moses proclaimed that God was Israel's perfect and righteous rock (Deuteronomy 32:3-4).

Later voices in the Old Testament repeatedly echoed the sentiment that God was a firm foundation, a *rock* (for example, 2 Samuel 23:3; Isaiah 30:29; Habakkuk 1:12). Jesus told a parable about the wisdom of building one's house upon a foundation of rock in relation to accepting his teachings (Matthew 7:24-25). He went on to equate the faith Peter proclaimed as the rock upon which the New Testament church was to be built (Matthew 16:18). No matter the difficulties life might mete out, David knew that he stood on the unassailable rock of the Lord Yahweh's providential care.

Verse 6 looks forward to the moments—in this life and, surely, the life to follow—when David anticipates experiencing the full vindication of his faith in the Lord: *My head will be lifted up* (vs

6). Rather than the defeated and bowed stance of the vanquished, David is confident that his line of sight will rise well above the low and sordid intentions of those who seek his downfall. Such happy circumstances, attributed to God's intervention on his behalf, evoke from David the appropriate acts of worship: *I will offer in His tent sacrifices* (vs 6). The offering of *sacrifices* in this context would appear to be *sacrifices* of thanksgiving (Leviticus 7:13, 15; 2 Chronicles 29:31).

This worship of offering *sacrifices* is not given under duress, in fear of consequences from angering a needy and petulant god. *Shouts of joy* are the characteristics of freely engaged and gratefully offered thanks from any who recognize Yahweh's mercies and grace at work in their circumstances.

David declares, *I will sing praises to the Lord* (vs 6). To break out in song is a natural human response to news that uplifts and give life to the spirit. This would not be the first time King David openly expressed exultation in the Lord God Yahweh (2 Samuel 6:12-15).

David is intentional both in choosing a true perspective, that God is His firm foundation, and that His plans are for our best. He is also intentional in taking actions in keeping with his chosen perspective, both to *offer sacrifices* as well as to *sing praises*.

Biblical Text:

**⁴ One thing I have asked from the Lord, that I shall seek:
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 meditate in His temple.**

**⁵ For in the day of trouble He will conceal me in His tabernacle;
In the secret place of His tent He will hide me;
He will lift me up on a rock.**

**⁶ And now my head will be lifted up above my enemies around me,
And I will offer in His tent sacrifices with shouts of joy;
I will sing, yes, I will sing praises to the Lord.**