

MONSTERS IN OUR MIDST "FACING THE MONSTER OF INADEQUACY" PSALM 28:1-9

This Week's Core Competency

Peace – I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, others, and me. Philippians 4:6-7 *Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. 7 And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*

I cannot make things right between God and me—no one can do that, so I cannot make peace with God—no one can do that either. Peace with God is his to give, not ours to take; we cannot save ourselves. Seventeen times in the Psalms alone *salvation* is so closely associated with the LORD as to imply that it comes from him. For example, in Psalm 27:1 the psalmist says, "the LORD is my . . . salvation." Moreover, according to Psalm 35:9, salvation is "his," and according to Psalm 37:39, it "comes from" him. We who have experienced his salvation cannot pat ourselves on the back; we can only "sing for joy to the LORD and shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation" (Ps 95:1). Salvation, whether temporal or eternal, is from the Lord.

In Psalm 28 we see the psalmist's mood change as he turns to the LORD for salvation. In

The LORD is my strength and my defense; he has become my salvation.

– Psalm 118:14

verse 1 he appears anxious; in verse 6 he is at peace. Not wanting to die like the wicked, he prays that the LORD will make a difference between him and those who harbor malice in their hearts. "Do not drag me away with the wicked, with those who do evil," he prays, seeking the LORD's deliverance. Those who have no regard for the Lord must pay for their evil deeds; they must get what they deserve. But he is not like them. He sees that the LORD is his strong shield, and his heart trusts in him. Consequently, his "heart leaps for joy" as he looks forward to singing a psalm of thanksgiving to his God and savior.

Not only is the LORD his strength, he is the strength of all of his people and a fortress of their salvation. He is the one who saves them, blesses them, and carries them like a shepherd carries his sheep. In the psalmist's day, Israel faced threats from without and within that threatened its very survival. Military attack, political intrigue, crop failure, disease, spiritual decline—the nation faced it all. In our day, God's people face the same sorts of threats to our well-being that Israel faced plus some new ones unique to our culture and times—a whole host of things that we can't handle by ourselves. And then, of course, there is death. The LORD is still the one who delivers us from them all, and according to the New Testament, Jesus is the LORD. He is our Lord and Savior (Php 3:20; 2Pe 1:11; 2:20; 3:2; 3:18; Jude 1:25).

day 1

ENCOUNTER – read God’s word to put yourself in touch with him.

Psalm 28:1-9

Of David.

1 To you I call, O LORD my Rock;
do not turn a deaf ear to me.

For if you remain silent,
I will be like those who have gone down to the pit.

2 Hear my cry for mercy
as I call to you for help,
as I lift up my hands
toward your Most Holy Place.

3 Do not drag me away with the wicked,
with those who do evil,
who speak cordially with their neighbors
but harbor malice in their hearts.

4 Repay them for their deeds
and for their evil work;
repay them for what their hands have done
and bring back upon them what they deserve.

5 Since they show no regard for the works of the
LORD
and what his hands have done,
he will tear them down
and never build them up again.

6 Praise be to the LORD,
for he has heard my cry for mercy.

7 The LORD is my strength and my shield;
my heart trusts in him, and I am helped.
My heart leaps for joy
and I will give thanks to him in song.

8 The LORD is the strength of his people,
a fortress of salvation for his anointed one.

9 Save your people and bless your inheritance;
be their shepherd and carry them forever.

Cf., another translation

By David

1 To you, O LORD, I cry out!

My protector, do not ignore me!

If you do not respond to me,
I will join those who are descending into the grave.

2 Hear my plea for mercy when I cry out to you for
help,

when I lift my hands toward your holy temple!

3 Do not drag me away with evil men,
with those who behave wickedly,
who talk so friendly to their neighbors,
while they plan to harm them!

4 Pay them back for their evil deeds!
Pay them back for what they do!

Punish them!
5 For they do not understand the LORD's actions,
or the way he carries out justice.

The LORD will permanently demolish them.

6 The LORD deserves praise,
for he has heard my plea for mercy!

7 The LORD strengthens and protects me;
I trust in him with all my heart.
I am rescued and my heart is full of joy;
I will sing to him in gratitude.

8 The LORD strengthens his people;
he protects and delivers his chosen king.

9 Deliver your people!
Empower the nation that belongs to you!
Care for them like a shepherd and carry them in your
arms at all times! (NET)

EXAMINE – what the passage says before you decide what it means.

* Circle "Rock" in v. 1.

* Box "for" indicating *reason* in v. 1.

* Box "like" indicating *comparison* in v. 1.

* Bracket "gone down to the pit" in v. 1.

* Underline "lift up my hands" in v. 2.

* Circle "Most Holy Place" in v. 2.

* Bracket "drag me away with the wicked" in v. 3.

* Box "but" indicating *contrast* in v. 3.

* Box "since" indicating *reason* in v. 5.

* Underline "works of the LORD" in v. 5.

* Box "for" indicating *reason* in v. 6.

* Circle "strength" and "shield" in v. 7.

* Circle "fortress" in v. 8.

* Underline "anointed one" in v. 8.

* Circle "inheritance" in v. 9.

day **2**

EXPLORE – the answer to these questions to better understand what the passage means.

Consult the explanation of the message and the notes to follow if you need help.

1. What does the psalmist want the LORD to do and why does he want him to do it? (vv. 1-2)
2. Verse 2 *ends* like verse 1 *begins*. How so?
3. David's petition in verses 3-4 takes the form: "don't do this; do this." Explain.
4. What evil do the wicked do? (v. 3)
5. Note the implicit *contrast* between "what their hands have done" (v. 4) and "what his hands have done" (v. 5). To what do you suppose the psalmist is referring?
6. How is it the wicked "show no regard for the works of the LORD" (v. 5)?
7. Comment on the change in *mood* that comes in verse 6.
8. The psalmist declares the LORD has heard his cry for mercy (v. 6). How can he be so sure?
9. Does your heart *resonate with* or *push back* from the psalmist's words in verse 7? Explain.
10. **Discussion:** Does verse 9 make you think of Jesus? Talk about why.

day 3

EXAMINE – an explanation of the message to better understand the meaning of the passage.

Psalms 26-28 are likely connected to a small number of nearby psalms "of David" linked by common themes. *The NIV Study Bible* suggests it belongs to a collection that includes Ps 23-28 (see its introduction to Ps 28). One commentator connects it to Ps 26-27. He writes: "In each of Psalms 26-28 the Lord's house comes into view. In Psalm 26 the worshipper, as he approaches, is searched by God's demand for sincerity (cf. Pss 15 and 24) and, in the last verse, rejoices to have found access. In Psalm 27 he sees this house as sanctuary from his enemies, and as the place of vision, face to face with God. In Psalm 28 he brings forward his petition, spreading his hands as a suppliant towards the holy of holies, and receives his answer (Derek Kidner, *Psalms 1-72*, TOTC, vol. 15, 135).

Another notes the similarities between it and Psalm 27. He observes: "The combination of confidence in the Lord and prayer that occurred in Psalm 27 occurs also in Psalm 28 but in reverse order. The psalmist begins with an urgent prayer in the form of an individual lament (11. 1-5) and concludes with an expression of confidence in the Lord, who is his strength (vv. 6-9)" (Willem A. VanGemeren, *Psalms*, EBC, rev. ed., 5: 287). What's more, the two psalms are connected by the word "stronghold" (27:1; 28:8), references to the temple (27:4; 28:2), and the language of prayer (27:7-11; 28:1-5).

The twofold division of the psalm, *prayer* followed by *praise*, is marked by a change in perspective and mood at verse 6. In verse 2 the psalmist implores the Lord to hear his prayer, but in verse 6 he declares the Lord has heard it. In verses 1-5, the psalmist is anxious, but in verses 6-9, he is jubilant.

In verses 1-2 the psalmist tells the LORD *what* he wants him to do and *why* he wants him to do it. He wants the LORD to respond to his cry for mercy, because he doesn't want to experience the same fate as the wicked. The NET renders verse 1 this way: "To you, O LORD, I cry out! My protector, do not ignore me! If you do not respond to me, I will join those who are descending into the grave." This same fear rears its

head again in verse 3, which the NET renders: "Do not drag me away with evil men, with those who behave wickedly." In a nutshell, the psalmist wants God to make a difference between him and the wicked because he wants to escape the end they rightly deserve. The same request is expressed in Psalm 26:9-11. There the psalmist says, "Do not take away my soul along with sinners, my life with bloodthirsty men, in whose hands are wicked schemes, whose right hands are full of bribes. But I lead a blameless life; redeem me and be merciful to me."

In verses 3-5, the psalmist asks God to repay evil men for their evil deeds knowing that he, himself, deserves none of it (v. 4). Unlike him, they show no regard for God in that they single-mindedly pursue their own unrighteous deeds. God does good, but they do evil. God shows love, but they harbor malice. One commentator puts it this way: "The actions of the evildoers toward their fellows are not motivated by mere personal incompatibility but by their self-centered existence. Instead of having regard for the works of God or for what God has done for them, their one and only stimulus is their own desires, the objects of which do not include God. Therefore, God will break them down (cf. Jer. 24:6, 42:10, 45:4) and they will perish, for they have chosen to defy the law of 'spiritual gravity'" (A. A. Anderson, *Psalms 1-72*, NCBC, 230-31).

In verse 6 the psalmist declares his confidence in God. "Praise be to the LORD," he exclaims, "for he has heard my cry for mercy." Such certainty is an expression of faith as verse 7 suggests. Confident that that the LORD is his strong shield, his heart trusts, he boldly affirms "I am helped," and vows to give gratitude to him in song. But the LORD is not his strength and his salvation alone. He saves and blesses his inheritance, Israel, and his anointed one as well, and so the psalmist concludes by asking God to do just that. "Be their shepherd and carry them forever," he prays.

The Message of the Passage

The Lord is your salvation, the only one who can deliver you from every threat and the fate of the wicked, so trust him completely.

day **4** **EMBRACE** – how God spoke to you in his word.

Our desire is to not be merely hearers of the word, but doers of the word as James teaches in James 1:22. Try some of the challenges below to apply what you have learned this week.

- **Journal your thoughts on the passage:**

–Write about how God revealed himself to you . . .

–Write about how God wants you to change you . . .

–Write about how God wants to use you to change your world . . .

“Facing the Monster of Inadequacy”
(Use the space below for Sunday’s message notes)

notes STUDY – the commentaries to answer the questions.

Of David

The Heb. phrase may, but doesn't necessarily, indicate authorship. "David" can mean either the historical individual or the Davidic king (Jer. 30:9; Ezek. 34:23-24; 37:24-25; Hos. 3:5 do not promise the resurrection of David himself but a restoration of the Davidic dynasty). The preposition 'of' (Hb. *le*) is even more ambiguous in Hebrew than it is in English. It could mean: (1) 'of' or '(belonging to)' David in the sense of possession, because he authored the psalm; (2) '(belonging to)' the Davidic collection of psalms (similar phrases are so used in other ancient Near Eastern poetry)-in other words, a royal collection of psalms (as distinct from Levitical collections, such as those of Asaph and Korah), reflecting the royal patronage of the temple; (3) '(dedicated to)' David or to the Davidic king (like a book dedication); (4) 'for (the use of)' David or the Davidic king, that is, for the king to use either personally or as the leading liturgist in public worship; (5) 'concerning/about' David" (Craig C. Broyles, *Psalms*, NIBC, 27-28).

v. 1 **Rock** Cf., "my protector" (NET). "A metaphor of power and strength, reliability and unchangeableness" (Anderson, 228). The LORD alone "gives strength and sustenance to his people and provides refuge for his own (18:2, 31; 19:14; 27:5; 73:26; 92:15; 144:1)" (VanGemen, 288).

v. 1 **remain silent** I.e., do not act on my behalf; cf., "If you do not respond to me" (NET).

v. 1 **pit** Cf., "grave" (NET); "the world of the dead" (GNT). "I.e., those who are about to perish or those who are already dead. This is a common phrase in the OT, and it is synonymous with 'going down to Sheol' and 'going down to the dust" (228). "If God would not respond, he would die (pit, *bor*, is a synonym for grave; cf. 30:3)" (Allen P. Ross, "Psalms," in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: Old Testament*, 815).

v. 2 **lift up** "This represents the usual attitude of the worshipper in prayer; he may be either standing (1 Kg. 8:22) or kneeling (1 Kg. 8:54; Ezr. 9:5) . . . The hands are lifted up either toward heaven (1 Kg. 8:22; Lam. 2:19, 3:14) or toward the Temple (1 Kg. 8:35, 38, 42; Ps. 5:7 (M.T. 8), 134:2) as the 'earthly dwelling place' of God or as the representation of his heavenly abode" (Anderson, 229).

v. 2 **Most Holy Place** "The *debir* was the inmost shrine of the Temple, while the other two main parts of the sanctuary were the porch or vestibule, and the Holy Place or the main room. The Holy Place measured some 30 by 60 feet, and the porch was about 15 by 30 feet; the Holy of Holies was formed in the shape of a cube, some 30 feet in each dimension. The latter had no windows, and it contained the Ark and the cherubim with their outstretched wings. As if guarding the Ark (1 Kg. 8:6)" (229).

v. 3 **drag me away** I.e., "like a condemned man to his punishment" (A. Cohen, *The Psalms*, SBB, 81). "In verses 3-4 the worshiper seeks to distinguish himself from the wicked and their impending judgment (as in 26:9-11)" (Broyles, 148). "Even worse than consignment to the will of the wicked, which was the fear of 27:12, is consignment with them to the disgrace they have earned. This was the miscarriage of justice feared in 26:9f., and while the figure there depicts a clearing away of rubbish, here it suggests the dragging of prisoners away to punishment" (Kidner, 140).

v. 5 **works of the LORD** "Both the Lord and the wicked evidence their nature in their work, but there is a qualitative difference between the two kinds of works (cf. Isa. 5:12). In essence, the wicked work destructively against the works of God. Their due punishment is destruction. The acts of the Lord in creation and redemption and Yahweh's rule through David reveal the wonder of God's purpose. The history of redemption condemns the wicked. Justice demands that evil be moved so that its power will be completely broken. But the righteous find comfort in God's acts (vv. 6-9; see Reflections, p. 603. The Might Acts of Yahweh)" (VanGemen, 290).

v. 6 **has heard** "In anticipation of God's righteous judgment and the experience of vindication, the psalmist burst out in a hymn of praise to God. He blesses the Lord for what he will do in response to his prayer; (vv. 1-2), in which he asks the Lord to respond to his condition in mercy. He claims that the Lord has heard his prayer 'for mercy' (cf. v. 2) and looks forward to an even greater deliverance" (290).

v. 7 **my strength and** Cf., "the Lord strengthens and protects me" (NET); "the Lord protects and defends me" (GNT). "My strength" and "my shield" taken together perhaps form a *hendiadys*, two nouns expressing one idea: "my strong shield" (Anderson, 230).

v. 8 **anointed one** I.e., "probably the king" (Broyles, 149; cf., Anderson 232). "David now builds on the fact that he is more than a private citizen. As the Lord's anointed (a term which grew into the word Messiah) he stood for his people, and God's grace must be meant for them as well" (Kidner, 141).

v. 9 **your inheritance** I.e., the nation of Israel (Pss 33:12; 78:62, 71; 79:1; 94:14; Dt 4:20; 9:26, 29; Joel 2:17; 3:2; Mic 7:14, 18). "This imagery is reminiscent of Isaiah's language (40:11; 46:3-4; 63:9; cf. Ex 19:4) and, of course, of the words of Jesus (Jn 10:1-18)" (VanGemen, 291).

Family Talk

Encouragement from one parent's heart to another

In our achievement driven society it is no wonder many kids have developed a fear of failure and feelings of inadequacy. As parents, one of our jobs is to help our kids navigate these feelings and discover the truth, which is what God thinks about them! God says we are loved with an everlasting love (Jer. 31:3). And nothing can separate us from that great love! (Rom. 8:39) Reminding our kids often that they are uniquely created and gifted by God will help them overcome times of failure. What can you do when your child is facing a fear of failure or feelings of inadequacy? First, pray for your child and with your child. Second, remind him of the truth in God's Word. Third, encourage him to keep trying and not give up. Many of us have scars from those first failed attempts at riding a bike. What fun we would have missed in life if we had given up! Fourth, use times of failure to teach valuable life lessons. What did your child learn from the experience? Lastly, reaffirm your love and acceptance of him. It's important for our kids to know that our feelings for them are not based on their achievements or success. May God bless you as you lead and disciple your precious kids!

What Does The Bible Say

Weekly Verse: Psalm 28:1-9

1. What name does David call God in verse 1?
2. According to verse 2, what is David asking God?
3. Fill in the blanks. The Lord is my _____ and my _____; my heart _____ in Him and I am helped. (v. 7)

What Do You Think

1. How do you think David felt when he wrote the first five verses?
2. How do you think he felt in the last four verses of the Psalm?
3. Do you think David trusted God to help him overcome the fear he was facing?

What R U Going To Do

Sometimes we are afraid to try new things because we are afraid of failing or not being good enough. What is something you would like to do but have been afraid to try? Playing a new sport? Making new friends? Playing an instrument? Talk to your parents about it and then pray together about going ahead and trying it!

MEMORY TIME

Core Comp

Peace: I live without worry because things are good between God, others, and me.

Memory Verse

Psalm 28:7a *The Lord is my strength and my shield; my heart trusts in Him and I am helped.*

KIDPIX COUPON

I memorized CC ____ and Verse _____. Family completed **Say** _____ **Think** _____ **Do** _____

Child's name _____ Grade ____ Parent's signature _____

Earn tokens by completing the Bible study portion of this page.
Questions: Kids@pantego.org

30 CORE COMPETENCIES

10 CORE BELIEFS

Trinity *2 Corinthians 13:14*

I believe the God of the Bible is the only true God - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Salvation By Grace *Ephesians 2:8-9*

I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.

Authority of the Bible *2 Timothy 3:16-17*

I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.

Personal God *Psalms 121:1-2*

I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.

Identity in Christ *John 1:12*

I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.

Church *Ephesians 4:15-16*

I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.

Humanity *John 3:16*

I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Compassion *Psalms 82:3-4*

I believe God calls all Christians to show compassion to those in need.

Eternity *John 14:1-4*

I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.

Stewardship *1 Timothy 6:17-19*

I believe that everything I am or own belongs to God.

10 CORE PRACTICES

Worship *Psalms 95:1-7*

I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.

Prayer *Psalms 66:16-20*

I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.

Bible Study *Hebrews 4:12*

I read the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.

Single-mindedness *Matthew 6:33*

I focus on God and His priorities for my life.

Spiritual Gifts *Romans 12:4-6*

I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.

Biblical Community *Acts 2:44-47*

I fellowship with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, others' lives, and in the world.

Giving Away My Time *Colossians 3:17*

I give away my time to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Money

2 Corinthians 8:7

I give away my money to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Faith *Ephesians*

6:19-20

I give away my faith to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Life *Romans 12:1*

I give away my life to fulfill God's purposes.

10 CORE VIRTUES

Joy *John 15:11*

I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.

Peace *Philippians 4:6-7*

I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, myself, and others.

Faithfulness *Proverbs 3:3-4*

I have established a good name with God and with others based on my long-term loyalty to those relationships.

Self-Control *Titus 2:11-13*

I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.

Humility *Philippians 2:3, 4*

I choose to esteem others above myself.

Love *1 John 4:10-12*

I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.

Patience *Proverbs 14:29*

I take a long time to overheat and endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.

Kindness/Goodness *1 Thess. 5:15*

I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others.

Gentleness *Philippians 4:5*

I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.

Hope *Hebrews 6:19-20*

I can cope with the hardships of life and with death because of the hope I have in Jesus Christ.

About the Authors

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The mission of THE SCROLLS is to help you develop the beliefs, practices, and virtues of a follower of Jesus Christ called The 30 Core Competencies through your own active reading of the Bible. Send any questions or comments you may have about this lesson to Tom Bulick. His e-mail address is tbulick@pantego.org.