

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!

EX: David believed in the protection and promises of God. He sought to understand and to know the way of the Lord more perfectly. As he lay in the caves at night, he likely remembered back to the visit of Samuel and his anointing with the horn of oil as a youth (**ISM 16.13**). God had anointed him. God had promised him the victory. With that kind of promise, **how could he fear for the future?**

RM 8.31-39 ~ *What, then, shall we say in response to these things? 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, along with him, graciously give us all things? ³³ Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. ³⁴ Who then is the one who condemns? No one. Christ Jesus who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us. ³⁵ Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? ³⁶ As it is written: “For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered.” ³⁷ No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. ³⁸ For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, ³⁹ neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

AP: Brethren, we cannot know how the current uncertainty will end. We cannot know how things will go. But we can know that the victory is ours. We are already conquerors! So, while the armies of the enemy may rise and fears and anxieties may knock at the door, we can know the future—and in that knowledge, we need not have any **fear of the future**. For as we seek the way of the Lord like David did, we may not know will come tomorrow, but we know what comes beyond then!

IJN 5.1-5 ~ *Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God, and everyone who loves the Father loves whoever has been born of him. ² By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey his commandments. ³ For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome. ⁴ For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. ⁵ Who is it that overcomes the world except the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?*

CONCLUSION

The time of David was no less a time of native fear and anxiety, and his life was certainly no bed of roses! Yet, he managed to overcome fear and phobias and found faith and trust in His God. He overcame a **fear of circumstances by seeking the presence of the Lord**. He overcame a **fear of failure** by, instead, **focusing on the Father**. And he resisted a **fear of the future** by **remembering his past and the promises of God**. And Brethren, we can find the same comfort that he did!

HB 12.1-3 ~ *Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ² looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. ³ Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted.*

INVITATION

#632 [Exp-OTW]
04/28/2025

How to be Freed from Phobias
PC ___ Pchd _____

PS 27

QUESTION: How should the Christian react to fear?

TRN TO PS 27

INTRODUCTION

ILL—Increase of Anxieties (hear about it on videos, kids use the language of “anxiety” and “phobias”) This is understandable, of course, as the world is uncertain and filled with danger. After all, none of us get out of this life alive!

But there is also a rise in phobias, in general. Phobias are **“irrational fears”**. It’s one thing to be afraid of drowning when you’re in the middle of the ocean. It’s another if the fear rises while you’re stuck in the desert. As a result, there are constant efforts and professions organized to help **free people from their phobias** and anxieties. But looking around, I can clearly see that these efforts are less than helpful: more often than not just giving people the language to express the fears and phobias they have, and not the skills to ultimately free them from it. I sometimes wonder, sadly, if that’s not intentional.

But as a result, we see fear, anxiety, and phobias all around us—people struggling to make it through the life around them, and falling into panic with the native uncertainties occurring all around them. And so, we naturally ask: **how can we be freed from phobias?** For an answer, we look to the **PS!**

BACKGROUND (vs. 1)

The English translation of **PS 27** has a simple two words in its header: **“Of David”**. However, in the Septuagint, we have a bit of additional commentary embedded in the header: **“Of David before he was anointed”**. These brief commentary notes are remnants for scribal commentaries from days gone by—there to provide context based upon recorded tradition. And in the case of this Psalm, recorded tradition is that this was written during that time when David had been exiled and was being actively hunted by King Saul and his armies.

Many of us have felt fears of various types—both justified and unjustified. But to my knowledge, none of us here have ever had a reason for fear so justified as David. The most powerful man in the region was hunting him and desperately wanted him dead. And yet, David shows confidence and courage. **How?** We desperately want to know, for all of us today feel anxieties and fear—and are seeking an answer to it. Brethren, the answer for us is found in the same place that David found it all those years ago in the Judean caves.

PS 27.1 ~ *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?*

We see in his opening to this Psalm remarkable confidence. But as we’ll see as we continue, this wasn’t the confidence that comes for comfort—but it’s the confidence that comes from the conquering of fear: **fear of circumstances, failure, and future**. And as we see how David confronted and overcame his fear, we can see how we can do the same!

BD1: Fear of Circumstances (vs. 2-6)
ECONOMICS/2025/GDP 2025 Q1

Whatever your political beliefs, it is hard to deny the uncertainty we see in the economy around us—no one knows how things are going to shake out with the current tariff policy. And if there is one thing that economists do not like, it's uncertainty. As a result, there is palpable **fear** in the voices of the financial community when we listen to broadcasts and read news articles. They're **fearful of the circumstances** around them—ones that they have no control over. This was a feeling that David knew quite well!

PS 27.2-3 ~ *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.*

BKGRND: David wasn't a Pollyanna—whistling through the graveyard of his life. He was well aware of what was going on around him: he was sought day by day. He was encamped against by the armies of Saul. And yet, in spite of this, he was able to overcome his own **fear of circumstances**. **How?**

PS 27.4-6 ~ *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.*

EX: This passage is beautiful—but it's even more beautiful when we understand the cultural language David was using here. He references the **“house of the Lord”** and **“his tent”**. Some might assume this was a reference to the temple (though, it hadn't been built yet) or the tabernacle (though he was far from its ground as he was wandering the wilderness, and as a man from the House of Judah, he'd have had no right to stand within its literal walls). Rather, he's using poetic language. He's referencing a tradition of Jewish hospitality: when a guest was dwelling in the tent of a host, they were under the protection of that host. It was the duty and responsibility of the host to protect the guest so long as they dwelt within the walls of their tent. David is saying here that he's able to resist his fear and overcome it because of his continual dwelling in His tent: in His presence!

PS 18.3 ~ *The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, my God, my rock, in whom I take refuge, my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold. ³ I call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised, and I am saved from my enemies.*

AP: How are we to overcome our own fear of the circumstances going on around us? We can do so by following the same pattern of David: by continually dwelling in the presence of God. This is done through our gathering with our brothers and sisters every time the doors are open. This is done through our private time of devotion, prayer, and study. This is done by constantly seeking the presence of the Lord—always seeking to *dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of [our lives]*.

JN 15.4-9 ~ *Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. ⁵ I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶ If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. ⁷ If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ⁸ By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples. ⁹ As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love.*

BD2: Fear of Failure (vs. 7-10)

ECONOMICS/2025/Trade War

As we see the two largest economies on the planet preparing for a trade war, it's hard not to find a small knot forming in our gut. **How will it end? Will we succeed? Or will we fail?** In this, our **fear of failure** begins to grow and fester.

But somehow, David did not struggle with this fear. While the mighty armies of Saul were rallied against him, he felt no such **fear of failure**. Again, we ask: **how?**

PS 27.7-10 ~ *Hear, O Lord, when I cry aloud; be gracious to me and answer me!*

BKGRND: We don't see in David a fearful general, running from weapons cache to weapons cache, checking to make sure he had everything he needed for the battle ahead. He didn't do the ancient equivalent of doomscrolling. He didn't fear failure and, instead, he changed his focus!

PS 27.8-10 ~ *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.*

EX: He recognized that the victory wasn't going to be determined by which army had the best fighters or who had the high ground. But rather, the victory was going to be found by whomever had the ultimate favor of the Lord. It was in seeking the favor of the Lord that David was able to conquer the expected fear of failure of the general on the verge of war. And in the same way, it's in seeking the favor of the Lord that we can do the same!

PS 69.16-18 ~ *Answer me, O Lord, for your steadfast love is good; according to your abundant mercy, turn to me. ¹⁷ Hide not your face from your servant, for I am in distress; make haste to answer me. ¹⁸ Draw near to my soul, redeem me; ransom me because of my enemies!*

AP: Our feeds, streams, and radios are filled with fear. And what makes it worse is the realization that we cannot do anything about it. But we need not have **fear of failure**—for God has promised us the victory. No, he hasn't promised a successful economy or multi-million dollar 401k. But He's promised redemption, protection, and deliverance. So rather than focusing our attention on our fears, we need to instead focus on the Father and seek His favor!

HB 13.5-6 ~ *Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for he has said, “I will never leave you nor forsake you.” ⁶ So we can confidently say, “The Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what can man do to me?”*

BD3: Fear of the Future (vs. 11-14)

ILL—Windows 11 Replacements (this uncertainty has started to affect my job; we need to replace Win10 computers; but who knows how expensive PCs will get?) This has thrown our financial forecasting into chaos. It's hard to predict just what's going to happen—how expensive key and needed components will become, and how that will impact our clients. Our account managers and financial team have a palpable **fear of the future**—uncertain just what's coming.

You'd expect David to have a healthy dose of **fear for his future**. He couldn't be certain what would happen to him with the armies of Saul on the hunt. Yet, we see he overcame his **fear**: *I believe that I shall look upon the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living!* (**vs. 13**) Not to repeat myself, but again, I must ask: **“How?”**

PS 27.11-14 ~ *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*