

AN EXUBERANT DECLARATION OF FAITH

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TEXT:

"1 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? 2 When the wicked came against me to eat up my flesh, My enemies and foes, They stumbled and fell. 3 Though an army may encamp against me, my heart shall not fear; Though war may rise against me, in this I *will be* confident. 4 One *thing* I have desired of the LORD, that will I 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 inquire in His temple. 5 For in the time of trouble He shall hide me in His pavilion; In the secret place of His tabernacle He shall hide me; He shall set me high upon a rock. 6 And now my head shall be lifted up above my enemies all around me; Therefore, I will offer sacrifices of joy in His tabernacle; I will sing, yes, I will sing praises to the LORD. 7 Hear, O Lord, *when* I cry with my voice! Have mercy also upon me and answer me. 8 *When You said*, "Seek My face," My heart said to You, "Your face, Lord, I will seek." 9 Do not hide Your face from me; Do not turn Your servant away in anger; You have been my help; Do not leave me nor forsake me, O God of my salvation. 10 When my father and my mother forsake me, Then the LORD will take care of me. 11 Teach me Your way, O Lord, and lead me in a smooth path, because of my enemies. 12 Do not deliver me to the will of my adversaries; For false witnesses have risen against me, and such as breathe out violence. 13 *I would have lost heart*, unless I had believed That I would see the goodness of the LORD In the land of the living. 14 Wait on the LORD; Be of good courage, And He shall strengthen your heart; Wait, I say, on the LORD!" Psalm 27: 1-14

FOCUS VERSE: "*I would have lost heart*, unless I had believed That I would see the goodness of the LORD In the land of the living." Psalm 27: 13

THE HOOK:

I've heard this verse (Psalm 27: 13) from a famous Psalm of David quoted many times over my lifetime. Friends, pastors and even college teachers have quoted this verse in my hearing many times.

David was a man of many trials and troubles, and David quotes it, especially in the latter part of his life! He was somehow in the crucible of affliction, and he said, "I would have lost heart" (verse 13), some versions say "I would have fainted" under these trials and troubles "unless I had believed That I would see the goodness of the LORD".

Faintness of heart is a common infirmity, even he who slew Goliath was subject to its attacks! Hope is heaven's balm for present sorrow!

Despite his troubles in that land, which is also the "special sphere of trouble", David believed that he would see the goodness of the LORD, not only in Heaven beyond, but also here in this land below. My friends, David believed he would see the goodness of the LORD, not merely when he emerged from the crucible of affliction, but also while he was still in it! As a pilgrim he believed to see the goodness of The LORD during the days of his pilgrimage here on earth.

David did not always see it, but he believed to see it! He believed in it! He anticipated it! He expected it, and by believing in it, he did actually come to see it and rejoice in it!!

We should never forget that the world around us is cursed. "'Cursed *is* the ground for your sake; In toil you shall eat *of* it All the days of your life." Genesis 3: 17b.. There are many thorns to disturb us and, so, being in a world under the curse, "Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, and you shall eat the herb of the field. In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; For dust you *are*, And to dust you shall return." Genesis 3: 18 & 19.

Were this world really to be our home, it would be a terrible fate for us indeed! If we were to always live in this Folsom Prison with its blues, it would be very sad indeed! It is here where the shadow of the curse always lingers!

"But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved)," Ephesians 2: 4-5 "But GOD!" Don't you love those "But God" statements!? Hallelujah! What an awesome GOD we have! Faith rushes into the fiercest fight that ever raged, fully believing to see the banner of The LORD's

mercy and truth waving high despite it all! "He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love." Song of Solomon 2:4

And HIS banner is over you too! Song of Solomon 2: 4 "He brought me to the banqueting house, And his banner over me was love."

The Apostle Paul was certain about this! He said, "For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Romans 8: 38 & 39. And I am starting to wonder if he was inspired by these words here in Psalm 27: 13

So what is our declaration? I trust it is as exuberant as David's!

THE BOOK:

This is David's exuberant declaration because he is firstly assured of GOD's goodness, and secondly because he expects to see it!!

David knows about and believes in the steadfast assurance of GOD's goodness. This Holy fact comes gushing out of the Torah where it says, "And the LORD passed before him and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abounding in goodness and truth," Exodus 34: 6 and 1 Chronicles 16: 34 says, "Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for *He is* good! For His mercy *endures* forever." And, coming home from exile, "And they sang responsively, praising and giving thanks to the LORD: "For *He is* good, For His mercy *endures* forever toward Israel." Then all the people shouted with a great shout, when they praised the LORD, because the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid." Ezra 3: 11. Even when David was being hunted like prey by his own son, Absalom, he said, "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me All the days of my life; And I will dwell in the house of the LORD Forever." Psalm 23: 6.

Now that's a strong assurance!! These are all precious promises recorded in GOD's Word, all true, all reliable, all unfailing, and all unimpeachable! These are all wonderful consoling words given in GOD's great Word, selected on purpose because they will be done on earth as it is in heaven! (Matthew 6: 10). See **Post Notes** for other verses suitable and sweetly assuring to the aching hearts of this world!

So, the Psalmist cries, and rejoices as in a victory song, "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?" Psalm 27: 1. And he goes on, "Though an army may encamp against me, my heart shall not fear; Though war may rise against me, In this I *will be* confident (verse 3). And he goes on further to say, "For in the time of trouble He shall hide me in His pavilion; In the secret place of His tabernacle He shall hide me; He shall set me high upon a rock." (verse 5).

David knew of Israel's history. Here is some sound theology. "Jesus Christ *is* the same yesterday, today, and forever." Hebrews 13: 8. "For I *am* the LORD, I do not change; therefore, you are not consumed, O sons of Jacob." Malachi 3: 6. What a cheering influence this truth, this holy, wonderful truth has been to so many over centuries and centuries!! Despite troubles and trials, all is over-ruled by the same loving LORD of all! (See Post Notes a, b c).

GOD's Holy Will is still working, even now, in ways we cannot fathom. (See Post Notes d, e, f, g, h, I)

"**8**"For My thoughts *are* not your thoughts, nor *are* your ways My ways," says the LORD. **9** "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts. Isaiah 55: 8-9

GOD is still in control. "Behold, the LORD's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; Nor His ear heavy, that it cannot hear." Isaiah 59: 1, "And the LORD said to Moses, "Has the LORD's arm been shortened? Now you shall see whether what I say will happen to you or not." Numbers 11:23.

It is important to have a firm confidence, a steadfast assurance in the goodness in the goodness of The LORD in the land of the living.

Why? I have learned from the Holy Scriptures that GOD is GOD throughout all eternity. All eternity with GOD is good because GOD is good, infinitely good and merciful!!

My friends, stir up the Holy Fire! Know that GOD is good. Proclaim it! GOD is good now. GOD is good all the time! HE is good to the highest and most perfect degree of goodness to all HIS children in all their worst calamities and all their darkest seasons of sorrow!! GOD is good in the good seasons and in the bad seasons of life. GOD is good when life is easy. GOD is good when life is an effort. GOD is good in sickness and in health. GOD is good in our times of bereavement.

We must not complain about what GOD has done, but we must be willing to say to HIM, "Whatever YOU do is right and best for me." Sometimes we want to make a slight alteration in some of the arrangements of Divine Providence, but instead let us say, "LORD not our will but YOURS be done." ("saying, "Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless, not My will, but Yours, be done." Luke 22:42)

We are still a planting of The LORD so that HE might be glorified. "To console those who mourn in Zion, To give them beauty for ashes, The oil of joy for mourning, The garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; That they may be called trees of righteousness, The planting of the LORD, that He may be glorified." Isaiah 61: 3

Keep trusting GOD like David did! "Wait on the LORD; Be of good courage, And He shall strengthen your heart; Wait, I say, on the LORD!" Psalm 27: 14

My friends, even amidst trials we must believe to see the goodness of the LORD! We must continue to believe that the great head of the church has not forgotten us! HE is, and will always be, the head of HIS redeemed!

Isaiah 58: 10 – 12 tells us, "**10** If you extend your soul to the hungry and satisfy the afflicted soul, Then, your light shall dawn in the darkness, and your darkness shall *be* as the noonday. **11** The LORD will guide you continually, and satisfy your soul in drought, and strengthen your bones; You shall be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters do not fail. **12** Those from among you Shall build the old waste places; You shall raise up the foundations of many generations; And you shall be called the Repairer of the Breach, The Restorer of Streets to Dwell In. Isaiah 58: 12. If we do this, then the banner of GOD's great love will fly again over the church!

David expects to see the goodness of The LORD here on earth. There are many a believer who has lived to see the goodness of The LORD to him/her.

For example, Bernard Gilpin was an Oxford Theologian and a very influential clergyman in the emerging Church of England in the mid-late 1500s. He lived spanning the reigns of King Henry VIII, King Edward VI, Queen Jane Grey, Queen Mary, and Queen Elizabeth the First! He was known as "The Apostle of the North". His religious views offended Queen Mary, and he was being taken to London to be burned at the stake as a heretic. As the story goes, while on the way to London, he fell and broke his leg and had to take some rest. In his own words, he said, "It was all for the best." And so it was, for as they reached London they could hear the bells of the bell tower ringing very loudly because Queen Mary had died, and Queen Elizabeth had come to the throne, and so it was that he was not burned at the stake! The breaking of his leg had saved his life!!

We may have to wait, and some may never see it, but you who believe will distinctly see the goodness of the LORD!! We must continue to believe in the faithfulness of GOD!

The Hebrew word for "faithfulness" is "Emunah" The root of Emunah is based on the very common word, "Amen". The meaning of "Amen" is "Festive affirmation, that something is so"

GOD is always faithful. "Righteousness shall be the belt of His loins, And faithfulness the belt of His waist." Isaiah 11: 5. "and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood," Revelation 1: 5.

We must live trusting the faithfulness of GOD who knows all things, past, present and future. "For we walk by faith, not by sight." 2 Corinthians 5: 7

Mighty Samson saw more with his eyes put out than when they were in, for it was then that he saw by faith the great and mighty things which he did not know. GOD calls to us, "Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know." Jeremiah 33: 3

David knew this too, and so he expected the goodness of the LORD! "My soul, wait silently for God alone, for my expectation is from Him." Psalm 62: 5

Here also, is a great truth for us. We cannot judge fairly the working of providence by gazing at only a part of it.

There is an old story about a student who took one brick to the market in order to show the people what kind of house he had to sell, but who could judge rightly a house by looking at only a single brick?

So too, it is foolish to try and judge the goodness of The LORD by the transactions of grace in one hour.

When the roll is called up yonder, you believers shall be there and see the panorama of grace, not in part, but the whole, matchless beauty, unimaginable skill of our Divine Artisan, GOD Almighty! Glory to HIS Name!!

David sang about it! "The LORD *is* their strength, And He *is* the saving refuge of His anointed." Psalm 28:8

"For You *are* my rock and my fortress; Therefore, for Your name's sake, lead me and guide me." Psalm 31:3

HE who orders all things according to the counsel of HIS own good will cannot ever fail to do that which is best for HIS loved ones. "In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will," Ephesians 1: 11. "9 Remember the former things of old, For I *am* God, and *there is* no other; I *am* God, and *there is* none like Me, 10 Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times *things* that are not *yet* done, Saying, 'My counsel shall stand, And I will do all My pleasure,' 11 Calling a bird of prey from the east, The man who executes My counsel, from a far country. Indeed, I have spoken *it*; I will also bring it to pass. I have purposed *it*; I will also do it. 12 "Listen to Me, you stubborn-hearted, who *are* far from righteousness: 13 I bring My righteousness near, it shall not be far off; My salvation shall not linger. And I will place salvation in Zion, For Israel My glory." Isaiah 46: 9-13

THE TOOK:

David believed it! You can believe it! Yes, believe it now! This is a sure cure for pessimism!! Hold on to what you know of GOD's goodness! Trust GOD where we cannot know!!

A popular mantra of today is "Seeing is believing.", but the scriptures reverse this saying because "Believing is seeing" when it comes to the goodness of GOD!

Because there is an earthquake, shall I cease to believe in gravity, or the solidity of the earth?

"For the word of God *is* living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit and of joints and marrow and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." Hebrews 4: 12. You can believe GOD's Word.

Believe that your Creator cannot lie because no falseness resides in HIM! "in hope of eternal life which God, who cannot lie, promised before time began," Titus 1: 2, "'God *is* not a man that He should lie, nor a son of man, that He should repent. Has He said, and will He not do? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?" Numbers 23: 19

Trust in GOD's one and only son, Jesus Christ, who is heir of all things. "has in these last days spoken to us by *His* Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds;" Hebrews 1: 2. HE is the author and finisher of our faith. GOD "has in these last days spoken to us by *His* Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds;" Hebrews 12: 2

Trust this Saviour today! Cast yourself upon HIM and you will find this declaration true as well. "He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him." John 3: 36. That is better than any of the declarations in the world! Better than the Declaration of Sports issued by King James of England in 1617. Better than the Declaration of Independence in 1776. Friends, that is the GOD's declaration! That is the goodness of The LORD in the land of the living (verse 13).

It takes strong souls to go through periods of trials and troubles. It takes believing souls which have a settled faith in the laws of GOD and understand that all GOD's ways are good!!

"And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these *is* love." 1 Corinthians 13:13. If a man or woman has this triple cord of faith, hope and love, nothing, NOTHING can break it! Always remember, GOD is good all the time! All the time GOD is good! AMEN!!

David Believed it. Do you believe it? Is this your declaration?

Wait on the LORD!! Wait at HIS door in prayer. Wait at HIS feet humbly! Wait at HIS table with service! Wait at HIS window with expectancy! HE will not fail!!!!!!

POST NOTES:

Jeremiah 29: 11 "For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope."

1 Timothy 2: 3 & 4 "For this *is* good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, **4** who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth."

1 Thessalonians 5: 18 "in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you."

1 Thessalonians 4: 3 "For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality;"

Luke 9: 23 "Then He said to *them* all, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me."

James 1: 5 "If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him."

Proverbs 3: 5 & 6 "5 Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; 6 In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths."

2 Peter 3: 9 "The LORD is not slack concerning *His* promise, as some count slackness, but is long-suffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance."

1 John 1: 9 "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

Micah 6: 8 "He has shown you, O man, what *is* good; And what does the LORD require of you but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?"

a) **Ephesians 4: 6** "one God and Father of all, who *is* above all, and through all, and in you all."

b) **Romans 10: 12** "For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon Him."

c) **Acts 10: 36** "The word which *God* sent to the [a]children of Israel, preaching peace through Jesus Christ—He is Lord of all"

d) **Job 5:9** "Who does great things, and unsearchable, Marvelous things without number."

e) **Job 9: 10** "He does great things past finding out, Yes, wonders without number."

f) **Job 11: 7** "Can you search out the deep things of God? Can you find out the limits of the Almighty?"

g) **Job 36: 26** ""Behold, God *is* great, and we do not know *Him*; Nor can the number of His years *be* discovered."

h) **Deuteronomy 29: 29** "The secret *things belong* to the LORD our God, but those *things which are* revealed *belong* to us and to our children forever, that *we* may do all the words of this law."

i) **Isaiah 40: 28** "Have you not known? Have you not heard? The everlasting God, the LORD, The Creator of the ends of the earth, neither faints nor is weary. His understanding is unsearchable."