



SHELTER ME

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INSPIRED BY PSALM 27

SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT

My natural instinct when reading the Psalms is to personalize them, to welcome the ancient poet's words as my own. When I first read through Psalm 27, I found myself transposing the psalmist's literal threats—armies surrounding, enemies encroaching, safety retreating—into metaphorical ones that might resonate with my own experience. Suffocating stress, seasons of instability and uncertainty, relational conflict, disintegrating health—all of these threaten my own personal sense of security and well-being. However, I lead a life cushioned by support and physical safety. I have never had to pray to God to spare my life in the midst of war.

Sometimes, to remember that scripture is not for me but for all, I imagine the words spoken by someone with a vastly different life experience than my own. In my second reading of Psalm 27, I placed the words in the lips of a Guatemalan girl fleeing violence in her home to seek asylum in the States. I encourage you to read the psalm once again, imagining how the words come to life from this vantage point.

The most stunning moment in this prayer exists in verse 4. The poet turns from survival mode to seek God's beauty and presence. Perhaps living at the edge of life teaches you that beauty, like light, is necessary for survival.