

# An Analysis of Psalm 27

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## ABSTRACT

This paper examines logical relationships in Psalm 27. After an initial discussion of genre types, and where this psalm falls, relationship comparisons inside verses are examined as well as those that occur when comparing verses and larger constructions within the psalm. The framework for the analysis is from Ernst Wendland's book, *Analyzing the Psalms* (2002). The author also provides his own translation of the psalm and shows the value of such an analysis by pointing out how his analysis of semantic relationships caused him to make certain translation decisions that resulted in his translation differing from other translations.

## Introduction

The analysis of Psalm 27 in the following discussion highlights determinations about the logical relations of various parts while determining the larger structures and how these relate to each other. A few key areas are also expounded wherein my translation differs from other versions of the psalm (see Appendix A). It is my hope that those who read this analysis will be able to glean some of the same treasures I have personally enjoyed through its undertaking. May the reader later add to the discussion and apply the principles utilized in this paper to analyses of other psalms and poetic parts of Scripture and therein be blessed by Yahweh.

Initially consideration must be given to psalms prior to and following Psalm 27. It is interesting to see how these psalms relate to one another. According to Dennis Bratcher's classification of the Psalms by genre (2009), Psalm 27 falls into at least 2 classifications: 1) lament of an individual; and 2) specialized thanksgiving psalm (a song of trust). Psalms 26 and 28 are both viewed as laments of an individual (David). Wendland (2002) takes a different stance and sees Psalms 26 and 27 as professions of trust, while Psalm 28 is considered to be a petition. I see reasons for both arguments in the Psalms themselves.

I am in agreement with Kidner (1973) who sees a good deal in common between Psalms 26, 27, and 28. Psalm 26 begins with petition, "Vindicate me, O Lord." What follows through verse 3 is filled with reasons why God should take such an action. A short praise with two mentions of the Lord's place of worship follows, and then an amplification of the petition is made. The first half of Psalm 27 is all about praise of God for his faithfulness. Evil participants, perhaps the same ones referred to in Psalm 26, are mentioned and there are four references to the place of worship (house, temple, tent). The section of praise takes a turn toward petition which basically lasts for 6 verses. Hence, these two psalms have much in common.

Psalm 28 continues with petitions to the Lord. There is mention of both the place of worship and the work of evil doers as well as the psalmist's need of the Lord's protection. In all three psalms, Yahweh is acknowledged for his faithfulness and the psalmist declares his tremendous need and trust in him.

Psalm 25 has some similarities to Psalms 26 through 28 but does seem to deal more with the many reasons for praising the LORD. Additionally it is one of the nine acrostic psalms wherein each line begins with a different letter of the Hebrew alphabet. These aspects make Psalm 25 markedly different from the psalms that immediately follow. Psalm 29 is different in that it is without a doubt a hymn of praise to God and holds to a deep chiasmic structure.

In his translation and commentary on the Psalms, Hirsch (1979) sees Psalms 24 through 28 as a series of songs because all bear the superscription of David. Contained within these songs are David's thoughts and expressed emotions during eventful times of his life. While no one knows the exact time any of these psalms were written or the circumstances, it is clear these were written during tumultuous personal times for David. Some scholars have conjectured Psalm 27 was written during the rebellion of Absalom. Others have argued verses 7-14 could not possibly have been written by David or at least not in conjunction with the circumstances under which verses 1-6 were written.

The division between a psalm of confidence and an individual lament has caused much academic deliberation. Many have concluded Psalm 27 consists of two separate psalms. This was the position of

Gunkel in his pioneering work on the Psalms. Craigie (1983) disagrees with Gunkel (1930; 1933) and finds reason to accept the psalm as a unified whole. The first section is to be understood as an address which expresses trust and confidence. The second section is the prayer itself being offered only after due offerings are presented.

Upon consideration of the psalm's liturgical use, Craigie (1983) goes on to state the first section may be viewed as expressing the intention to sacrifice and praise by the worshiper in a public declaration of faith before the congregation. The second section changes to 2nd person and is directed toward God. It is a prayer of need and the expressions contained therein designate it as a lament. Finally, the psalm ends with a statement of faith and some hortatory statements. These comments appropriately work to bring the listener back to the statements of faith and confidence made in the first section.

This analysis focuses on discourse features and how they relate to each other within Psalm 27 (see Appendix B). Thus, my own translation of the text will be referred to and may be viewed in its entirety in Appendix A. The translation is intentionally literal in key places so the reader may readily perceive my understanding of the Hebrew text.

### **Analysis of Logical Relations: Verses 1 through 6**

For this paper, I am using the logical relations as defined in the book by E. Wendland (2002), *Analyzing the Psalms*. It is important to have some knowledge of connected and distant parallelism to understand Hebrew poetry and the types of semantic relations evident in such parallels. Wendland provides an ideal framework for such an analysis.

Parallelism is immediately noticeable in the first verse of the Psalm (the superscription of *David* has been left out for the purpose of the analysis).

- 1 *Yahweh is my light and my salvation; whom will I fear?  
Yahweh is the fortress of my life; whom will I dread?*

The first clauses in each line are similar in that both attribute to God certain means for survival and life. These lines immediately set the tone of the psalm. David recognizes his need for salvation which requires the protection of a fortress. These attributive clauses are each followed by a rhetorical question with each basically having the same illocutionary force of the statement, *I will not fear*.

Verse 2, whether translated as present or past tense, seems to be a flashback of sorts wherein David intentionally recalls a time when the Lord did deliver him. The term *evildoers* is amplified in the second line. The last part of the utterance describes what simultaneously occurred when these evil people attacked him.

- 2 *When evildoers came towards me to devour my flesh,  
my oppressors and enemies,  
they stumbled and fell towards me!*

Certainly an argument could be made for sequential time occurrence, but read it again. The author does not express it this way.

Verse 3 contains recursion of the rhetorical questions in verse 1.

- 3 *If an army encamps against me, my heart will not fear.  
If war arises against me, in this<sup>1</sup> will I be trusting:*

The second clause in line 1 uses a synecdoche, *my heart*, in place of *I*, and the word for *fear* is the same word used in the first line of verse 1. The second clause of the second line, *in this I will be trusting*, may, in the mind of the psalmist, mean basically the same thing as *my heart will not fear*. Perhaps David is plainly stating that for him to not fear the terror of war or evildoers is to trust in Yahweh. I propose the general theme of the psalm as a whole is a person can either fear man or trust Yahweh. I mention it here and we will return to later.

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<sup>1</sup> *in this one (thing)*

David also refers to *army* and *war* in this third verse, and these are juxtaposed to the attributes of Yahweh listed in the first verse. These lines of verse 3 are then parallels in one sense by having both restatement and contrast relations with verse 1 and a base-contrast relation internally between *my heart will not fear* and *in this I will be trusting*. The conditional clauses in each utterance in verse 3 serve to highlight the two lines as having a base-restatement relation; however, our decision should not be based on the conditional dependent clause but on the independent clause of the utterances, i.e. *my heart will not fear*. Stepping back and seeing how verses 1, 2 and 3 relate to each other, verse 2 consists of the grounds – the experience – on which David makes these conclusions in verses 1 and 3.

Moving on to verse 4, there is a parallel in the first line wherein *one thing*, אִתְּךָ, is referenced again via the word אִתְּךָ, meaning *it*. We can assume אִתְּךָ is referencing back to *one thing* because of matching in number and gender, and it just makes sense for translation. Now in the first clause, David *asked*; and in the second clause, he will *seek*. Asking and seeking could be considered as similar words in the sense of prayer. With the first (*ask*) God must respond. With the latter (*seek*) being in the piel (intensive) stem, there is a sense that David will work incessantly to ensure what he seeks after he will attain. Might it be that we have yet another place in Scripture where both faith and works are in the same expression? We will leave this for theological reflection and conversation at another time. Important for our discussion presently is the base-amplification relationship between the two clauses. Together these two clauses represent two things that must occur in order for the *one thing* to be granted: asking and seeking. Of course, if one considers the asking and seeking as hendiadys, the relation would be taken as base-restatement.

- 4 *One thing I asked for from Yahweh; that one thing<sup>2</sup> will I seek after:  
my dwelling in the house of Yahweh all the days of my life,  
to behold the beauty of Yahweh,  
and to inquire in his temple.*

The next three lines of verse 4 provide details concerning the *one thing*. Together, these three lines represent the purpose of his first statement. Here David is undertaking actions to obtain what he desires and work as the means to reach that purpose. The three lines of this purpose statement either can be viewed as acting as a triplet with a general-specific-specific relationship, or as a general-specific relationship with the second and third lines holding a base-addition sub-relation. This second understanding is my choice and is reflected in the chart analysis in Appendix B. The initial line states the place and duration of the request. The second and third lines describe the activities David desires to carry out within the house of the Lord.

Looking at verse 5, the first two lines are clearly parallels:

- 5a *For he will hide me in his covering in a day of distress.  
He will conceal me in the shelter of his dwelling place.*

God is the agent performing the hiding and concealing of David in his *covering* and *shelter*. Even the word translated as *covering* can be translated as *shelter*. So while the first line designates the time when the experience of safety occurs (*a day of distress*), the second line reveals the place of shelter (*his dwelling place*). Thus the two lines can best be understood as base-restatement. One could also argue for a base-amplification relation; however the focus is on the agent and his action, both of which are restated in the second line.

I am inclined to depart from all other translations I have seen and regard the last line in verse 5 as paired with verse 6. Much of my reason for this has to do with the translation of the word אֵתְּךָ in verse 6 which is often translated as *and now*. There is also reason enough to consider the clause as being in closer relation with verse 6 if one simply looks for the parallelism. So, let us consider the two clauses together:

- 5b *Upon a rock he will lift me,*

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<sup>2</sup> *it*

6 *and at that moment<sup>3</sup> my head will be raised above my enemies surrounding me.*

What do the two lines have in common? Elevation. In the first line, David comments that Yahweh will lift him up upon a rock. Then in verse 6, he is above his enemies and his head will be raised. These events are quite different from those of the first two lines in verse 5 where he needs to be hidden. Certainly a high rock is also a safe place to be amid enemies and keeps verse 5 joined with verse 6. However the end of verse 5 seems to be in relation to 6 more than the previous lines. It seems evident verse 6 is a result of the occurrence in the last line of verse 5 with a means-result relationship. Regarding my translation of *וַיִּשָׂא*, please see my section on translation considerations, where I go into more detail on my translation decision.

The second and third lines of verse 6 complete the praise section or what some call “the first half” of this psalm. Here the psalmist responds with actions appropriate for one who is putting his trust in the Lord.

6b *I will surely sacrifice in his tent sacrifices of joyful shouting.  
I will sing and play music to Yahweh.*

The relationship between the two clauses of verse 6b is base-amplification. One might also argue for a general-specific relationship. These two lines are a response to the realizations expressed in 5b and 6a. The relationship is best expressed as grounds-conclusion. David comes to the understanding and/or belief he will worship Yahweh based on his faith in divine protection and help. The psalmist expresses the only thing that could prevent him from obtaining the *one thing* he desires is his enemies – and he deems that hindrance already taken care of by Yahweh. I do not consider this to be a conditional relationship for David is not making these statements with a mind that Yahweh might not act. No, his statements are matter of fact. One might even theorize David convinced himself that he would receive the very thing, the *one thing*, he has asked for and sought after by the time he reached these lines in verse 6.

## **Analysis of Logical Relations: Verses 7 through 12**

The verses following verses 1 through 6 are believed by many to be a second song within the psalm. However the final lines of the psalm (verses 13 and 14) make this difficult to accept because of differences from lines of this lament section. This section is a prayer for acceptance, sustenance, and help. There is not so much a confession of sin as there is an expression of humility. Yahweh’s favor is never considered as being deserved; it is something that must be sought.

Verse 7 contains a parallel with the first line David requesting the Lord hear him, and in the second line is his request for a response. Both lines are a request construct. The relationship between the two lines is base-amplification since the second line is basically revealing the content of the call in the first line. In verse 8 there is a beginning reason for why David believes his prayer should be heard and answered. He has sought the face of Yahweh. Hence verses 7 and 8 represent a request-reason relationship. Within verse 8 itself we see a completive relation in the second line. David is stating he has performed the very thing Yahweh told him to do. However the structure is a more complicated than indicated. My synopsis concludes 8b is a general statement concerning what follows. Verses 9 through 12 further describe the action of seeking by David. The verses taken together are a result of Yahweh speaking to David’s heart, “Seek my face.”

Verses 9 and 10 together provide specifics on David’s seeking and are best considered together. David has told Yahweh he will seek his face, and here we have him keeping his word.

9 *Do not hide your face from me.  
Do not turn your servant aside in anger; my help you have been.  
Do not cast me away! Do not desert me, God, my salvation!*  
10 *My father and my mother have deserted me  
but Yahweh receives me.*

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<sup>3</sup> now

Firstly, let me state the obvious. The first line has the same word for *face* used twice in verse 8. David's intentional use of this word in verse 9 helps the reader/hearer experience a connection between his reason-result utterances in verse 8 and the imperatives contained in verse 9. The next two lines have a parallel of sorts in that they both end with very similar statements about what Yahweh has been for David – his help and salvation. However the structure is a little larger than these two lines. Via the four imperatives in this verse, David seems to express at this moment he was not feeling as if God was near. Still his statement in verse 10 relates directly to the last line in verse 9 and brings him back to the awareness that Yahweh is close and has not deserted him.

Now notice the actions declared in the imperatives of verse 9 and 10. The order of David's utterances seems to describe an order of events:

*do not hide...*  
*do not turn...*  
*do not cast away...*  
*do not desert...*

Embedded in these lines is a process or procedure of not being received. Following these pleas for acceptance David reminds himself in verse 10 that Yahweh does receive him. This turning from doubt to assurance is evident in other psalms and should not be considered surprising here. Isn't David just being honest about his human experience? The life of the Christian is very much like this. Troubles come and the seas roar. We see Jesus sleeping in the boat and say to him, "Lord, don't you care?"

*And a great windstorm arose, and the waves were breaking into the boat, so that the boat was already filling. But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion. And they woke him and said to him, "Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?"*

Mark 4:37-38 ESV

The disciples' utterance was actually a rhetorical question. It seems as if these men had already determined Christ did not care about their fate. No, the Lord does care for his loved ones at all times. David reminds himself of that general truth in verse 10.

While the imperatives all seem to be a part of one process, there are the connections and parallels I mentioned previously. All of these details make the structure as a whole difficult to chart and my overall decision is based on the most prominent relations between the verses and sections. Every parallel and every recursion are not represented in the chart, which is why I mention them here. What we can surmise from the above is that verses 9 and 10 are best thought to be connected and have a base-sequential time (3x) relation. These realities do seem to represent a sequence that is natural to human experience while we know Yahweh has not acted in these ways.

Returning to verse 10 for a moment, notice that a base-contrast relation is expressed.

10 *My father and my mother have deserted me  
but Yahweh receives me.*

Here David recalls having been deserted by his parents. This memory is set against the reception he has experienced in Yahweh. Together these lines in verse 10 present an alternative to his imperatives in verse 9 – that is, an alternative way of thinking. He is pleading for reception in verse 9; in verse 10, he recognizes Yahweh has received him.

Now that the psalmist has returned to an awareness of the truth, that Yahweh hears his voice and receives him, he returns to the issue of his enemies. Also evident is David's realization he will have to deal with his enemies and is in need of two things: 1) knowledge about Yahweh's ways and, 2) an ability to act upon such knowledge.

11 *Teach me, Yahweh, your way  
and lead me on a level path because of my enemies.*

Present in verse 11 is a parallelism of base-restatement; *teach* is similar to *lead* and *way* is similar to *path*. The final clause in the second line can be understood as applying to both lines.

Verse 12 is an imperative like verse 11. It makes sense, then, to look for a relation between the verses.

12 *Do not give me to the desire of my adversaries,  
who have stood against me,  
lying witnesses breathing out violence.*

The relation is not so clear here. One can assume that if Yahweh is to teach and lead David in his ways, he is going to keep him for his own desire. Hence the Lord will not give David over to the desire of his adversaries. Perhaps this is the best way to understand the relationship of verse 11 to verse 12 – as one of base-contrast. The rest of verse 12 consists of a relative clause describing some actions and attributes of adversaries. These two lines are amplifications of the first line.

### **Analysis of Logical Relations: Verses 13 and 14**

Verses 13 and 14 complete the psalm and consist of a statement of faith and an exhortation. In verse 13 David seems to draw his conclusion after having experienced an array of emotions:

1. having exalted Yahweh for his salvation and protection,
2. declaring the only thing he really wants from him,
3. restating his trust in him,
4. doubting whether he is listening,
5. reminding himself that he is near,
6. and then returning to declarations of need.

His conclusion is that Yahweh's blessing will continue to be upon him. In response to this realization in verse 14, he turns to the listener with words of encouragement. Here he expresses to others the actions of good toward them by Yahweh may take time. This requires setting their minds to standing firm in faith and patiently waiting for Yahweh to act. These two verses are not necessarily summaries but reflections or conclusions based on what has just transpired. The mental state the listener is to be left with is one of trust in Yahweh.

To more easily see the relation between these two verses let us look at them as if David was speaking to himself in verse 14:

I believe that I will look upon the goodness  
of Yahweh in the land of the living.  
You, David, wait upon Yahweh.  
You, David, be strong, let your heart be courageous  
and wait upon Yahweh.

My thought here is that David's exhortations in 14 can be understood as having a command-reason relation with verse 13. Exhorting someone to do something usually means we believe that we should do the same. Taking David's exhortation as also for himself, and viewing him speak to himself based on what he believes in verse 13 helps us see that verse 13 is a reason statement in relation to 14. Verse 14 may be described as having a base-amplification-restatement relation with all three imperatives being interrelated. Together verses 13 and 14 are a conclusion. The grounds for the conclusion are all the thoughts expressed in verses 1 through 12.

### **Concluding remarks**

It is clear the focus of David in Psalm 27 is on trust. While he lapses into some moments of doubt and fear (verse 9, particularly), he returns to his experience. Yahweh saved him before and he can and will save him again. I am, therefore, in agreement with Wendland. This psalm is best described as a profession of trust. The authorial lapse into what seems to be a lament is intentional (as David surely could have changed the song before it was made public). The psalm is an effective tool for describing the war for faith. David realized it was not man he should fear but Yahweh. Faith, trust, and hope in Yahweh would always be the solution in any situation.

## Some Translation Considerations

Having analyzed the logical relationships between the verses in the psalm, let us focus on translation decisions presented in this analysis. Departing from what has been commonplace in other translations certainly requires good argument. The two cases that follow represent only a couple of examples of key translation differences suggested with supporting arguments as well.

### בְּזֹאת *in verse 3*

Psalm 27 has been one of my ‘nearest and dearest’ for years. I honestly do not know what it is like to be pursued by a warring people, hiding wherever I can find a haven of safety, and crying out to God under such duress. However, the expressions of physical, and therefore emotional, distress in the Psalms can usually be understood in a spiritual sense. It is for that reason I have loved David’s thought process in this psalm and specifically, his statement of his supreme desire in verse 4.

I have pondered the change that seems to occur between verses 3 and 4 for quite some time. The thoughts from one verse to the next do not flow seamlessly at this point in many English translations. It seemed there must have existed a musical interlude or related canting implication. This analysis of the Hebrew has raised the question whether or not many translations fail to provide the connection that exists between the verses.

In the second line of verse 3 we have the word בְּזֹאת consisting of a preposition and a demonstrative. Typically the preposition בְּ means *at, in, or when*. The demonstrative pronoun can have an array of meanings, such as *this, this one, or here*. Many other variations of meaning are listed in the Brown, Driver, Briggs Hebrew-English Lexicon (2009). A list of popular translations are provided below in order to understand the variation that occurs in translations of verse 3:

ESV	<i>though war arise against me, yet I will be confident.</i>
NET Bible	<i>Even when war is imminent, I remain confident.</i>
NIV	<i>though war break out against me, even then will I be confident</i>
NASB	<i>Though war arise against me, in spite of this I shall be confident.</i>
TEV	<i>even if enemies attack me, I will still trust in God.</i>

A note for the NET Bible even states: *in this* [i.e., “during this situation”] *I am trusting*.

Now, the question that needs to be asked first is: What is זֹאת referencing? The choices are limited because the ending of the word is feminine. If we look back in the verse, we see a conjunction וְ which generally means *though or if*. While it may be possible to reference farther back than this, a conjunction can often cause a break in the ability to back reference. Additionally, looking back to the first noun before the conjunction, it is masculine.

The only feminine noun after the conjunction is the noun meaning *war*. This may be the reason why the NASB adds the words *spite of* and the translators of the NET Bible understand *in this* to mean “during this situation”. Both seem to reference back to *war*. Other translations use the word *yet* or *even* by utilizing בְּזֹאת to keep the logical relation internal to the sentence.

There is another possibility to consider here – one of forward referencing, such as when someone precedes a statement by saying, “This is what I’m going to do,” followed with, “I’m going to do....” In this case the demonstrative is foreshadowing the next utterance. Is it possible this is the case in verse 3? To answer this question we need to look for feminine nouns after בְּזֹאת and determine whether or not the translation would make sense if בְּזֹאת was referencing forward.

The first feminine word we see is אֶחָת which means *one* and is usually translated as *one thing*. It is not a noun but a quantifier, but it is feminine. Looking still further, there is the reference pronoun אֹתָהּ which is a feminine direct object marker that basically can be translated as *it*. Now in the case for verse 4, it seems clear that אֹתָהּ is referencing back to אֶחָת, the word for *one*. The question remaining: Does the word זֹאת reference forward to אֶחָת. My translation allows for referencing forward and highlights the movement between the verses. David’s whole reason for trusting with confidence is a result of what he

has asked for from Yahweh in verse 4. The verses, then, are not just connected. Each is dependent on one other. Verse 5 is a *further* expression of the trusting David claims he is doing in verse 3.

- 3 *If an army encamps against me, my heart will not fear.  
If war arises against me, in this<sup>4</sup> will I be trusting:*
- 4 *One thing I asked for from Yahweh; that one thing<sup>5</sup> will I seek after:  
my dwelling in the house of Yahweh all the days of my life,  
to behold the beauty of Yahweh,  
and to inquire in his temple.*
- 5 *For he will hide me in his covering in a day of distress.  
He will conceal me in the shelter of his dwelling place.  
Upon a rock he will lift me,*
- 6 *and at that moment<sup>6</sup> my head will be raised above my enemies surrounding me.*

I should also mention the word *trusting* is translated quite literally. The Hebrew word is a participle (singular, masculine). Literally the phrase is *in this I trusting*.

### וְעַתָּה in verse 6

וְעַתָּה comes from the word for *time* and can mean *henceforth, now, straightaway, this time or whereas* depending on the context.<sup>7</sup> The vav (ו) in this instance prefixes עַתָּה and is understood to be a conjunction. It is often translated as *and* or *but* depending on the context. Minimally, it expresses continuation and signifies some relationship between the former and the latter utterances.

Many versions have the translation of עַתָּה as *now*. Below are a few versions, but you will notice there are some variations.

ESV	<i>And now my head shall be lifted up above my enemies all around me.</i>
NET Bible	<i>Now I will triumph over my enemies who surround me!</i>
NIV	<i>Then my head will be exalted above my enemies who surround me.</i>
NASB	<i>And now my head will be lifted up above my enemies around me.</i>
TEV	<i>So I will triumph over my enemies around me.</i>

It has been enjoyable looking more deeply into this verse as well for the word *now* has never seemed appropriate. Using a translation of *now* results in some sort of disconnect between the verses. Note that in each verb in the above translation examples are translated as being future tense. The reason for this is the fact that every verb in verses 5 and 6 is in the *yqtl* form. *Yqtl* verbs are generally understood as having *imperfective* aspect, and therefore are often translated in the future tense. So then, why do many translations translate verse 6 using the word *now*? Regarding the matter of time *now* is a word for referencing the present. So herewith I asked myself: Concerning time, how can the idea of *now* be expressed in the future tense?

Of the versions above, I believe the NIV offers the best solution because it expresses the idea this verse is a *result* of the previous clause. Look again at my translation of the psalm. Consider why an understanding of the logical relationship is helpful in making this translation decision.

- 5 *For he will hide me in his covering in a day of distress.  
He will conceal me in the shelter of his dwelling place.  
Upon a rock he will lift me,*
- 6 *and at that moment<sup>8</sup> my head will be raised above my enemies surrounding me.*

<sup>4</sup> *in this one (thing)*

<sup>5</sup> *it*

<sup>6</sup> *now*

<sup>7</sup> According to Strong's Hebrew Dictionary.

<sup>8</sup> *now*



As I stated above, the final clause in verse 5 fits better with verse 6. The same semantic notion is being expressed: a lifting up. Regarding the translation, these lines are best translated into English as future tense, and considering that verse 6 is a result of the final clause in 5, the words *at that moment*, or something quite similar, probably better express what David is saying. He is saying God will set him high on a rock. As a result of that situation, his head will be raised above his enemies. This phrasing properly joins these lines in the psalm with greater fluidity and with greater clarity than other translations without it. The words of the psalmist come alive because *at that moment* of need, Yahweh will take action on his behalf.

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## Appendix A - Translation of Psalm 27

- 1 Of David. Yahweh is my light and my salvation; whom will I fear?  
Yahweh is the fortress of my life; whom will I dread?
- 2 When evildoers came towards me to devour my flesh,  
my oppressors and enemies,  
they stumbled and fell towards me!
- 3 If an army encamps against me, my heart will not fear.  
If war arises against me, in this<sup>9</sup> will I be trusting:
- 4 One thing I asked for from Yahweh; that one thing<sup>10</sup> will I seek after:  
my dwelling in the house of Yahweh all the days of my life,  
to behold the beauty of Yahweh,  
and to inquire in his temple.
- 5 For he will hide me in his covering in a day of distress.  
He will conceal me in the shelter of his dwelling place.  
Upon a rock he will lift me,
- 6 and at that moment<sup>11</sup> my head will be raised  
above my enemies surrounding me.  
  
I will surely sacrifice in his tent sacrifices of joyful shouting.  
I will sing and play music to Yahweh.
- 7 Hear, Lord, my voice when I call.  
Be favorable to me and answer me.
- 8 You have said to my heart, "Seek my face."  
Your face, Yahweh, I will indeed seek.
- 9 Do not hide your face from me.  
Do not turn your servant aside in anger; my help you have been.  
Do not cast me away!  
Do not desert me, God, my salvation!
- 10 My father and my mother have deserted me  
but Yahweh receives me.
- 11 Teach me, Yahweh, your way  
and lead me on a level path because of my enemies.
- 12 Do not give me to the desire of my adversaries,  
who have stood against me,  
lying witnesses breathing out violence.
- 13 I believe that I will look upon the goodness  
of Yahweh in the land of the living.
- 14 Wait upon Yahweh.  
Be strong, let your heart be courageous  
and wait upon Yahweh.

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<sup>9</sup> *in this one (thing)*

<sup>10</sup> *it*

<sup>11</sup> *now*

## Appendix B: Psalm 27 Paragraph Analysis

1	Yahweh is my light and my salvation; whom will I fear?	grounds__base__ conclus_]_____conclus_	_____
2	Yahweh is the fortress of my life; whom will I dread?	grounds__restate  conclus_]_____	_____reason
3	When evildoers came towards me to devour my flesh, my oppressors and enemies, they stumbled and fell towards me!	base__base amplif_]_____grounds_	_____
3	If an army encamps against me, my heart will not fear.	real cond__base__conclus result_]_____	_____
4	If war arises against me, in this <sup>1</sup> will I be trusting:	real cond_contrast  result_]_____	_____base
4	One thing I asked for from Yahweh; that one thing <sup>1</sup> will I seek after:	_____base__means _____amplif_]_____	_____request
5	my dwelling in the house of Yahweh all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of Yahweh, and to inquire in his temple.	_____general_____purpose  base__specif addition_]_____	_____
5	For he will hide me in his covering in a day of distress. He will conceal me in the shelter of his dwelling place.	base__base restate_]_____ground	_____
6	Upon a rock he will lift me, and at that moment <sup>1</sup> my head will be raised above my enemies surrounding me.	means__contrst  result_]_____	_____reason
6	I will surely sacrifice in his tent sacrifices of joyful shouting. I will sing and play music to Yahweh.	_____base__conclus  _____amplif]	_____

