

From Pastor's Desk...

The Lord is My Light and My Salvation

'Lead Kindly Light' is a hymn with words written in 1833 by John Henry Newman as a poem titled "the Pillar of Cloud". As a young priest, Newman became sick while in Italy and was unable to travel for almost three weeks. In his own words:

Before from my own inn, I sat down on bed and began to sob bitterly. My servant, who had acted as my nurse, asked what ailed me. I could only answer, "I have work to do in England." I was aching to get home, yet want of vessel I was kept at Palermo for three weeks. I began to visit the churches, and they calmed my impatience, though I did not attend any services. At last I got off in an orange boat, bound for Marseilles. We were becalmed for the whole week in the strait of Bonifacio, and it was there that I wrote the lines, 'Lead Kindly Light', which have since become so well known (Courtesy to Wikipedia).

John Henry Newman got inspiration to write this well-known hymn from Psalms 27, which was originally written by King David. He begins this Psalm with a declaration of his firm faith in God: "The Lord is my light and my salvation whom shall I fear". The theme of this psalm is "trust in the Lord without wavering".

The concept of 'light' was a powerful image in the ancient world. Darkness was a fearing experience but 'light' was a blessing. God was not only light but He was Salvation and Refuge to David. This confidence is possible because of the character and revelation of God and a true personal relationship with God. This Psalms tells us:

**Fear not
Dread not
Be confident**

in every fearful and dreadful situation.

So let us sing with John Henry Newman:

*Lead kindly Light, amid the encircling gloom,
Lead Thou me on!
The night is dark, and I am far from home -
Lead Thou me on!
Keep Thou my feet; I do not ask to see
The distant scene - one step enough for me.*

God bless you.

Rev. K. M. Varughese

(Senior Pastor, IPC Hebron, Los Angeles)

I am Secure!

Ben Cherian

Fear is very common to humans and at times part of our lives. Even the strongest willful person becomes afraid. Oxford Dictionary defines fear as "an unpleasant emotion caused by the belief that someone or something is dangerous, likely to cause pain, or a threat." Fear comes in various terminologies like anxiety, afraid, depression, scary, horror, terror, morning blues and so forth. Knowingly or not, our minds get filled with fear, and subject to live in us. Even, the strongest Bible characters, who had overcome various challenging moments in their lives had their share.

Psalms 27:1, "*The Lord is the light and my Salvation, whom shall I fear?*" A powerful song from the bottom of King David's heart with the highest degree of confidence. He sang this song from his personal experiences, overcoming various breath taking fearful moments solely by trusting in His Savior.

David declares that it is the Lord who provides us the light to live in this world through His Word – The Bible. The Bible guides and lead us to God's will, build us up to NOT be afraid of any situation by trusting in His countless promises. The psalmist also reminds us of the great salvation, He has secured for us by the death of His Son on Calvary. When troubles come and fears us, as children of God, we ought to remind ourselves of His promises and the Word to face the situation with boldness. Indeed, we are secure!

God is our light and our salvation

Femila Biju, Sunday School Teacher

Jesus said, "*I am the light of the world. He that follows me shall not walk in darkness but shall have the light of life*". That true light lightens our hearts and directs us to eternal salvation. In the past, we were in darkness. But God commanded the light to shine out of darkness, which shined in our hearts to give the light of wisdom. Apostle Peter says, you are called out of darkness into His marvelous light.

Jesus appointed us as the light of the world. Let our light shine before men that they may see our good works and glorify our Father in heaven. According to Apostle Paul, we are all the children of light and the children of day. Therefore, let us not sleep as do others but let us watch and be sober. (1 Thess. 5: 5, 6).

Again, Jesus said, "*I am the way, the truth and the life. No one shall inherit the kingdom of God except me*". When we walk with this true light, we will inherit the kingdom of God and be saved. When Jesus was in the temple as a baby, Simeon, an old prophet who was waiting for the consolation of Israel took him in the arms and said, "*My eyes has seen your salvation which you have prepared in sight of all nations, a light for revelation to gentiles*". The same way, hundreds of years ago, King David saw the same vision and proclaimed God is my light and my salvation. If we walk in this light we will reach to the eternal salvation.

Therefore, let us throw off everything that hinders - the sin that entangles; and fix our eyes on Jesus, the true light that will lead and guide us to run the race with perseverance.