

Psalm 4 Commentary

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EXPLANATION - The following comments are predominantly from Spurgeon's great work **The Treasury of David** supplemented by cross references from the Treasury of Scripture Knowledge and other commentary notes.

TITLE. This Psalm is apparently intended to accompany the third, and make a pair with it. If the last may be entitled THE MORNING PSALM, this from its matter is equally deserving of the title of THE EVENING HYMN. May the choice words Psalms 4:8 be our sweet song of rest as we retire to our repose!

"Thus with my thoughts composed to peace, I'll give mine eyes to sleep; Thy hand in safety keeps my days, And will my slumbers keep."

The Inspired title runs thus: "To the chief Musician on Neginoth, a Psalm of David." The chief musician was the master or director of the sacred music of the sanctuary. Concerning this person carefully read 1 Chronicles 6:31, 1 Chronicles 6:32; 1 Chronicles 15:16-22; 1 Chronicles 25:1, 1 Chronicles 25:7. In these passages will be found much that is interesting to the lover of sacred song, and very much that will throw a light upon the mode of praising God in the temple. Some of the titles of the Psalms are, we doubt not, derived from the names of certain renowned singers, who composed the music to which they were set.

On Neginoth, that is, on stringed instruments, or hand instruments, which were played on with the hand alone, as harps and cymbals. The joy of the Jewish church was so great that they needed music to set forth the delightful feelings of their souls. Our holy mirth is none the less overflowing because we prefer to express it in a more spiritual manner, as becometh a more spiritual dispensation. In allusion to these instruments to be played on with the hand, Nazianzen says, "Lord, I am an instrument for thee to touch." Let us lay ourselves open to the Spirit's touch, so shall we make melody. May we be full of faith and love, and we shall be living instruments of music. Hawker says: "The Septuagint read the word which we have rendered in our translation chief musician Lamenez, instead of Lamenezoth, the meaning of which is unto the end. From whence the Greek and Latin fathers imagined, that all psalms which bear this inscription refer to the Messiah, the great end. If so, this Psalm is addressed to Christ; and well it may, for it is all of Christ, and spoken by Christ, and hath respect only to his people as being one with Christ. The Lord the Spirit give the reader to see this, and he will find it most blessed.

DIVISION. In Psalms 4:1 David pleads with God for help. In Psalms 4:2 he expostulates with his enemies, and continues to address them to the end of Psalms 4:5. Then from Psalms 4:6 to the close he delightfully contrasts his own satisfaction and safety with the disquietude of the ungodly in their best estate. The Psalm was most probably written upon the same occasion as the preceeding, and is another choice flower from the garden of affliction. Happy is it for us that David was tried, or probably we should never have heard these sweet sonnets of faith.

Related Resources:

- [Psalm 4 Peace for Communion](#) - David Holwick
- [Psalm 4 Heavenly Sleep](#) - David Holwick
- [Psalm 4 Inventory and Confession](#) - David Holwick
- [Psalm 4 The Quest for Happiness](#) - Joseph Parker
- [Psalm 4:4-8 NOW I LAY ME DOWN TO SLEEP](#) - Chuck Smith
- [Psalm 4:6 WHO WILL SHOW US ANY GOOD](#) - Chuck Smith
- [Psalm 4:7 More Joy](#) - Sam Storms

- [Psalm 4:1-8 A Prayer of Faith](#) - Chris Benfield
- [Psalm 4: The God Who's Answers Pray](#) - Geoff Thomas
- [Psalm 4:3 The Privileges of the Godly](#) - Charles Simeon
- [Psalm 4:4,5 A Practical Exhortation](#) - Charles Simeon
- [Psalm 4:6 God's Favor the Only Substantial Good](#) - Charles Simeon
- [Psalm 4:2 Christ's Glory Turned to Shame](#) - C H Spurgeon
- [Psalm 4:3 A Peculiar People](#) - C H Spurgeon
- [Psalm 4:4, 5 Plain Directions to Those Who Would Be Saved From Sin](#) - C H Spurgeon
- [Psalm 4:6 The Search After Happiness](#) - C H Spurgeon
- [Psalm 4](#) - Bruce Waltke
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Psalm 4:1 For the choir director; on stringed instruments. A Psalm of David. Answer me when I call, O God of my righteousness! You have relieved me in my distress; Be gracious to me and hear my prayer.

KJV <To the chief Musician on Neginoth, A Psalm of David.> Hear me when I call, O God of my righteousness: thou hast enlarged me when I was in distress; have mercy upon me, and hear my prayer.

NET For the music director, to be accompanied by stringed instruments; a psalm of David. When I call out, answer me, O God who vindicates me! Though I am hemmed in, you will lead me into a wide, open place. Have mercy on me and respond to my prayer!

NLT For the choir director: A psalm of David, to be accompanied by stringed instruments. Answer me when I call to you, O God who declares me innocent. Free me from my troubles. Have mercy on me and hear my prayer.

BGT ε ς τ τ λ ο ς ν ψ α λ μ ο ς δ τ Δ α υ ι δ 2 ν τ π ι κ α λ ε σ θ α μ ε ε σ κ ο υ σ ν μ ο υ θ ε ς τ ς δ ι κ α ι ο σ ν η ς μ ο υ ν θ λ ψ ε ι π λ τ υ ν ς μ ο ι ο κ τ ρ η σ ν μ ε κ α ε σ κ ο υ σ ο ν τ ς π ρ ο σ ε υ χ ς μ ο υ

LXE < <For the End, a Song of David among the Psalms.> When I called upon him, the God of my righteousness heard me: thou hast made room for me in tribulation; pity me, and hearken to my prayer.

CSB For the choir director: with stringed instruments. A Davidic psalm. Answer me when I call, God, who vindicates me. You freed me from affliction; be gracious to me and hear my prayer.

ESV To the choirmaster: with stringed instruments. A Psalm of David. Answer me when I call, O God of my righteousness! You have given me relief when I was in distress. Be gracious to me and hear my prayer!

NIV For the director of music. With stringed instruments. A psalm of David. Answer me when I call to you, O my righteous God. Give me relief from my distress; be merciful to me and hear my prayer.

YLT To the Overseer with Stringed Instruments. -- A Psalm of David. In my calling answer Thou me, O God of my righteousness. In adversity Thou gavest enlargement to me; Favour me, and hear my prayer.

- Neginoth (KJV): Ps 6:1 Ps 67:1 Ps 76:1 *titles Hab 3:19 *marg:
- O (KJV): Ps 11:7 Ps 24:5 Ps 41:12 Isa 45:24 Jer 23:6 1Co 1:30 2Co 5:20,21
- thou (KJV): Ps 18:18,19 Ps 31:8 Ps 40:1-3 Ps 116:6,16 1Sa 17:37 1Sa 19:11,12 1Sa 23:26-28 Job 36:16 2Co 1:8,10
- have mercy upon me (KJV): or, be gracious unto me, Ps 56:1 Ps 57:1 Ps 86:3-5 Ps 119:75-77,132 Ps 143:2 Ex 34:6,7

For the choir director; on stringed instruments. A Psalm of David.- This superscription gives us three helpful pieces of information about Psalm 4.

For the choir director Hebrew **lamnatseach**, from natsach, conveys the idea of overseeing or directing. The psalm was entrusted to the leader responsible for Israel's public worship music (cf. 1Chr 15:16–22; 25:1–7). This tells us that Psalm 4 was not merely David's private prayer. His personal distress became a song for God's people. What David learned about trusting God in trouble was intended to strengthen the faith of others.

On stringed instruments Hebrew **bineginoth** indicates that the psalm was to be accompanied by stringed instruments (cf. Ps 6 title; 54 title; 55 title; 67 title; 76 title). Instruments such as lyres and harps were regularly employed in Israel's worship (1Chr 15:16; Ps 33:2–3; 150:3–5). Thus Psalm 4 was intended not simply to be read but sung in corporate worship.

A Psalm of David Hebrew **mizmor leDavid**. The traditional superscription attributes the psalm to David. Although the precise historical circumstances are not stated, the psalm clearly reflects a time when David faced distress, opposition, false accusations, and discouragement (Ps 4:1–2, 6). Some associate it with Absalom's rebellion because of its proximity to Psalm 3, but the text itself does not specifically identify that event.

There is something encouraging in the superscription itself. David's distress eventually became Israel's worship (cf "for the choir director"). God took the painful experience of one man and used it to encourage generations of His people, including us dear reader!

***God can turn the songs we learn in the night
into encouragement for others in the morning.***

Answer me when I call David expresses confidence and urgency in prayer. He is not speaking into the air but calling upon the living God Who has heard him before (Ps 18:6; 34:4, 17). Biblical prayer expects God to hear, while leaving the manner and timing of His answer to His wisdom (Ps 5:3; 1Jn 5:14–15).

Note that **answer** is an imperative (I always signify imperatives in Greek and Hebrew with **bold red** font), but David is certainly not commanding God as though God were obligated to obey him. The Hebrew verb 'ānā ("answer") in this context expresses the urgency and intensity of David's plea, not an attempt to exercise authority over God or force His hand! In fact, Biblical prayers frequently use imperatives when petitioning God (e.g., Ps 5:1–2; Ps 17:1; Ps 27:7; Ps 86:1), but these are the cries of humble, needy, dependent souls to the sovereign Lord. In fact, David's next words make his humble attitude unmistakable "Be gracious to me and hear my prayer." In other words, David does not appeal to personal merit or demand what God owes him. He appeals entirely to God's grace and mercy (cf. Ps 51:1; Ps 86:3–5).

***The imperative expresses earnest dependence,
not presumptuous demand.***

Bob Utley adds - Notice the IMPERATIVES used to implore God. - answer me – Qal IMPERATIVE, cf. Ps. 27:7 be gracious to me – Qal IMPERATIVE, cf. Ps. 25:16; 69:16 hear my prayer – Qal IMPERATIVE, cf. Ps. 17:6; 39:12 The psalmist expects God to hear and act (cf. Ps. 3:4; 6:8,9; 17:6; 86:7)! Prayer is not only request, it is fellowship! We need Him even more than our answered requests!

O God of my righteousness! This can mean "the God Who vindicates me" or "the God who is the source of my righteousness." David's confidence is ultimately not in his own goodness but in God. For believers, this truth finds its fullest expression in Christ, for God made Christ, Who knew no sin, "to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him" (2Co 5:21; cf. Ro 3:21–24; Php 3:9) and "by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, Who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption." (1Co 1:30)

You have relieved me in my distress - David rightly remembers past faithfulness (always a good practice beloved) which is new every morning. The verb **relieved** (rachab) carries the idea of making room, enlarging, or bringing into a broad place. **Distress** (**tsar**) pictures narrowness or being hemmed in. David is essentially saying, "When I was squeezed into a tight place, You made room for me." Practically speaking, past deliverances should become fuel for present faith (Ps 18:19; Ps 118:5). We should imitate David who remembers what God has done as the basis for trusting what God will do.

Bob Utley on **relieved** (set me at large) - The Hebrew word (BDB 931, KB 1210, *Hiphil* PERFECT) is an idiom for a wide space (cf. Ps. 18:19), the opposite of "restriction" (i.e., oppression, tribulation, narrow straights, BDB 865, "distress"). Its figurative usage can be seen in Gen. 26:22; Deut. 33:20; Ps. 25:17; Isa. 54:2; 57:8.

Be gracious to me and hear my prayer - As alluded to above, this plea shows that David does not approach God demanding what he deserves. He appeals to grace. He appeals as a beggar. This is always the proper posture of prayer. We can be confident because of Who God is, yet humble because of who we are (Ps 51:1; Ps 86:5; Heb 4:16).

Matthew Henry Concise (UPDATED IN MODERN ENGLISH WITH SCRIPTURES ADDED) - Our best plea before God is never our own merit, but His mercy: "Be gracious to me and hear my prayer" (Ps 4:1; cf. Ps 51:1; Lk 18:13). The greatest blessings God offers, forgiveness of sins, justification through faith, and eternal life, are not things we can afford to neglect (Ro 3:23–24; 5:1; 6:23). How tragic that anyone would refuse what God freely offers in Christ (Jn 3:16, 36; Heb 2:3). We come to God with empty hands, trusting not in what we have done, but in what Christ has done for us (Php 3:9; Titus 3:5–7).

The psalmist then warns, "Tremble, and do not sin" (Ps 4:4). Maintain a holy reverence for the majesty and holiness of God (Pr 9:10;

1Pe 1:15–17). Then, “Meditate in your heart upon your bed, and be still.” Take time to talk seriously with your own heart. Examine your motives, attitudes, words, and actions in the light of God's Word (Ps 119:59; 139:23–24; 2Co 13:5). Before going to sleep, review the day before God. Where you have sinned, do not excuse, rationalize, or conceal it, but confess and forsake it, remembering that “if we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins” (1Jn 1:9; cf. Pr 28:13). Even during sleepless nights, turn your thoughts toward God and meditate on His Word and faithfulness (Ps 63:6; 119:148).

Then “be still” (Ps 4:4). After searching your heart, stop defending yourself and listen before God. Let His Word have the final verdict. “Search me, O God, and know my heart...and see if there be any hurtful way in me” (Ps 139:23–24). Genuine self-examination should lead not merely to regret but to repentance, obedience, and renewed trust. Thus David continues, “Offer the sacrifices of righteousness, and trust in the LORD” (Ps 4:5). Right worship must be accompanied by right living (1Sa 15:22; Ro 12:1), and ultimately our confidence must rest not in ourselves, but in the LORD (Pr 3:5–6; Ps 37:5).

C H Spurgeon - This is another instance of David's common habit of pleading past mercies as a ground for present favour. Here he reviews his Ebenezers and takes comfort from them. It is not to be imagined that he who has helped us in six troubles will leave us in the seventh. God does nothing by halves, and he will never cease to help us until we cease to need. The manna shall fall every morning until we cross the Jordan.

Observe, that David speaks first to God and then to men. Surely we should all speak the more boldly to men if we had more constant converse with God. He who dares to face his Maker will not tremble before the sons of men.

The name by which the Lord is here addressed,

God of my righteousness, deserves notice, since it is not used in any other part of Scripture. It means, Thou art the author, the witness, the maintainer, the judge, and the rewarder of my righteousness; to thee I appeal from the calumnies and harsh judgments of men. Herein is wisdom, let us imitate it and always take our suit, not to the petty courts of human opinion, but into the superior court, the King's Bench of heaven.

Thou hast enlarged me when I was in distress. A figure taken from an army enclosed in a defile, and hardly pressed by the surrounding enemy. God hath dashed down the rocks and given me room; he hath broken the barriers and set me in a large place. Or, we may understand it thus: “God hath enlarged my heart with joy and comfort, when I was like a man imprisoned by grief and sorrow.” God is a never-failing comforter.

Have mercy upon me. Though thou mayest justly permit my enemies to destroy me, on account of my many and great sins, yet I flee to thy mercy, and I beseech thee hear my prayer, and bring thy servant out of his troubles. The best of men need mercy as truly as the worst of men. All the deliverances of saints, as well as the pardons of sinners, are the free gifts of heavenly grace.

EXPLANATORY NOTES AND QUAIN SAYINGS

Hear me when I call, etc. Faith is a good orator and a noble disputer in a strait; it can reason from God's readiness to hear: “Hear me when I call, O God.” And from the everlasting righteousness given to the man in the justification of his person: O God of my righteousness. And from God's constant justice in defending the righteousness of his servant's cause: “O God of my righteousness.” And from both present distresses and those that are by-past, wherein he hath been, and from by-gone mercies received: Thou hast enlarged me when I was in distress. And from God's grace, which is able to answer all objections from the man's unworthiness or ill-deserving: Have mercy upon me, and hear my prayer. David Dickson, 1653.

Hear me. The great Author of nature and of all things does nothing in vain. He instituted not this law, and, if I may so express it, art of praying, as a vain and insufficient thing, but endows it with wonderful efficacy for producing the greatest and happiest consequences. He would have it to be the key by which all the treasures of heaven should be opened. He has constructed it as a powerful machine, by which we may, with easy and pleasant labour, remove from us the most dire and unhappy machinations of our enemy, and may with equal ease draw to ourselves what is most propitious and advantageous. Heaven and earth, and all the elements, obey and minister to the hands which are often lifted up to heaven in earnest prayer. Yea, all works, and, which is yet more and greater, all the words of God obey it. Well known in the sacred Scriptures are the examples of Moses and Joshua, and that which (James 5:17) particularly mentions of Elijah, whom he expressly calls keraunoboloz, a man subject to like infirmities with ourselves, that he might illustrate the admirable force of prayer, by the common and human weakness of the person by whom it was offered. And that Christian legion under Antonius is well known and justly celebrated, which for the singular ardour and efficacy of its prayers, obtained the name of keraunoboloz, the thundering legion. Robert Leighton, D.D., Archbishop of Glasgow, 1611-1684.

HINTS TO THE VILLAGE PREACHER

Is full of matter for a sermon upon, past mercies a plea for present help. The first sentence shows that believers desire, expect, and believe in a God that heareth prayer. The title God of my righteousness, may furnish a text (see exposition), and the last sentence

may suggest a sermon upon, "The best of saints must still appeal to God's mercy and sovereign grace."

WORKS UPON THE FOURTH PSALM

- Choice and Practical Expositions on four select Psalms: namely, Fourth Psalm, in eight Sermons, etc. THOMAS HORTON, D.D. 1675
- Meditations, Critical and Practical, on Psalm IV., in Archbishop Leighton's Works.

F B Meyer - HEAR ME WHEN I CALL!

A PRAYER (Psa 4:1).

We must be sure that our cause is a righteous one before we can ask God to vindicate it; and we do well to go back to God's former deliverances. Build supplication on recollection.

AN EXPOSTULATION (Psa 4:2-3).

Vanity refers to Psa 2:1 --"a vain thing"; leasing is Old English for lying. Absalom's rebellion is a type of all those plots against Christ and His saints which begin in falsehood, and end in confusion. The Hebrew word translated godly means one who loves. Dost thou love God first, and afterwards His saints? Then know that God hath set thee apart (i.e., separated) for Himself. Seek his praise alone. Be content to let the world go by. Thou canst not fail; his cause and thine are one (Lam 3:58).

LOVING COUNSEL (Psa 4:4-5).

The Apostle gives a very remarkable application of Psa 4:4 in Eph 4:26. If men communed with each other less, and with God more, allowing the heat of passion to cool in the silences of the night, they would discover the futility of fuming and fretting against the Lord's people and cause. To all of us the injunction, Be still, is most appropriate. It is only in standing water that silt settles, and in quiet nights that the dew distills. In the night, when the eye is closed to all the world, let it be opened to self-examination. Sacrifice here is the whole burnt offering, and corresponds to entire surrender, out of which trust naturally springs.

A WISE DEDUCTION AND RESOLVE (Psa 4:6-8).

How true is this of the "many" everywhere who know not God!--But all is vain when God's face is hidden. How rich is the soul on which its light rests! (Num 6:24-26). Absalom, and his conspirators, with all that David had left them, had not as much true bliss as the fugitive monarch enjoyed. In the hour of his sin he had asked to hear joy and gladness (Psa 51:8); and this was the reply. The saint has no need to envy the prosperous worldling (Jn 4:13-14). May the Holy Spirit "put gladness in our hearts" to-day (Gal 5:22). Psa 4:8 means, "I shall go to sleep as soon as I lie down." God alone is enough for any soul. He suffices for heaven: why not for earth? In solitude, let us turn to Him (Eze 34:25).

James Smith - ENLARGEMENT IN AND THROUGH SORROWS PSALM 4:1

I. Freedom. Blessed Liberty when in Sorrow.

1. "Thou hast set me at large when I was in distress" (R.V.).
2. He is with us in our sorrows, and gives wonderful compensations.
3. He gives a sense of glorious enlargement in soul and spirit.
4. The sick room has not the ceiling and walls for an horizon. The soul mounts upward, still upward.

II. Enlargement through Distresses.

1. An enlarged heart. Room for others.
2. An enlarged sympathy. Thought for others.
3. Enlarged prayers. Prayers for others.
4. Enlargement of gratitude. Our songs of praise for personal deliverances increase in volume and sweetness.

GOD'S CARE OF THE RIGHTEOUS

"Blessed is he that considereth the poor: the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble." Psalm 4:1

1. God Delivers the Righteous in Times of Trouble
2. God Preserves the Righteous in Times of Adversity
3. God Strengthens the Righteous in Times of Weakness

Streams in the Desert - "Thou hast enlarged me when I was in distress." (Psalm 4:1.)

THIS is one of the grandest testimonies ever given by man to the moral government of God. It is not a man's thanksgiving that he has been set free from suffering. It is a thanksgiving that he has been set free through suffering: "Thou hast enlarged me when I was in distress." He declares the sorrows of life to have been themselves the source of life's enlargement.

And have not you and I a thousand times felt this to be true? It is written of Joseph in the dungeon that "the iron entered into his soul." We all feel that what Joseph needed for his soul was just the iron. He had seen only the glitter of the gold. He had been rejoicing in youthful dreams; and dreaming hardens the heart. He who sheds tears over a romance will not be most apt to help reality; real sorrow will be too unpoetic for him. We need the iron to enlarge our nature. The gold is but a vision; the iron is an experience. The chain which unites me to humanity must be an iron chain. That touch of nature which makes the world akin is not joy, but sorrow; gold is partial, but iron is universal.

My soul, if thou wouldst be enlarged into human sympathy, thou must be narrowed into limits of human suffering. Joseph's dungeon is the road to Joseph's throne. Thou canst not lift the iron load of thy brother if the iron hath not entered into thee. It is thy limit that is thine enlargement. It is the shadows of thy life that are the real fulfillment of thy dreams of glory. Murmur not at the shadows; they are better revelations than thy dreams. Say not that the shades of the prison-house have fettered thee; thy fetters are wings—wings of flight into the bosom of humanity. The door of thy prison-house is a door into the heart of the universe. God has enlarged thee by the binding of sorrow's chain.—George Matheson.

If Joseph had not been Egypt's prisoner, he had never been Egypt's governor. The iron chain about his feet ushered in the golden chain about his neck.—Selected.

James Smith - WHOLESOME WORDS PSALM 4

This psalm is dedicated to the leader of those who use stringed instruments. It is indeed a psalm of life. There are in it notes that speak of sadness, gladness, and madness. The various conditions, or seasons, of the life year are here, in a way, represented. We shall try and gather up the truth taught as having reference to three classes of individuals.

I. Words of Encouragement to the Believing. This testimony of the psalmist should be an inspiration to every child of God. What God did for him He can still do for those who put their trust in Him. What was that?

1. HE MADE HIM FREE. "Thou hast set me at large when I was in distress" (v. 1, R.V.). Through fear and distress, he had been like one in a prison, but the Lord set him at liberty. It is when men are at their wit's end, that they are made to see the salvation of God. We are shut up to faith that we might be brought out into a large place. To be set at large by the saving grace of God is a great deliverance.

2. HE MADE HIM GLAD. "Thou hast put gladness in my heart" (v. 7). The gladness of a harvest time is not to be compared with the gladness of a great spiritual deliverance. "Com and wine," the richest of earth's blessings, come far short of the "joy of the Lord." God put gladness in the heart, by the manifestation of His grace and power on our behalf. Although we see Him not, yet believing, we rejoice, with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

3. HE MADE HIM SAFE. "Thou Lord makest me dwell in safety" (v. 8). He could lie down, and sleep the sleep of peace; for the Lord gave him that sweet assurance of His protecting care, that all fear fled. "The beloved of the Lord shall dwell in safety by Him" (Deut. 33:12). Free, Glad, and Safe, is the condition of all, who by faith have received the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. They are set apart by the Lord as His own peculiar, personal treasure (v. 3).

II. Words of Rebuke to the Unbelieving. There are three things those "Sons of men" were guilty of, and for which the psalmist rebukes them. Three sins which many of the unbelieving "sons of men" in our own day are guilty of.

1. PRACTISING RIDICULE. "How long will ye turn my glory into dishonour?" (v. 2, R.V.). The glory of David was in that he trusted and hoped in the Lord (Psa. 3:3). Any fool may mock at faith, as he may mock at sin. The man must be morally mad who would attempt to make confidence in God appear to be a dishonourable thing. Yet some do it.

2. LOVING VANITY. "How long will ye love vanity?" They love vanity who love that which is worthless to satisfy, that which is uncertain, that which has the appearance of being what it is not—the world. The experience of Solomon stands as a warning and a rebuke to all who set their hearts on earthly things. Anything

and everything that occupies the place Christ should have, is vanity (1 John 2:15).

3. SEEKING FALSEHOOD. "How long will ye ... seek after falsehood" (v. 2, R.V.). One does not need to go far in search of falsehood. He will find it in his own heart. To seek falsehood, for its own sake instead of the truth, is a positive proof of a mind at enmity with God. The false and deceitful heart seeks food convenient for it. Christ is the truth; true and honest hearts will seek Him. "Without are dogs ... and every one that loveth a lie" (Rev. 22:15, R.V.).

III. Words of Entreaty to the Anxious. Let us now hear as with trumpet tone, a call to—

1. STAND. "Stand in awe, and sin not" (v. 4). Stop, before you go any further in sinful unbelief, and consider where, and what you are. Stand in awe at the thought of disobeying God's Word (Psa. 119:161). Stand in awe at the thought of the wages of sin (Rom. 6:23). Stand in awe at the thought of opportunities lost, the uncertainty of life, and the certainty of judgment. Stand in awe as you think of the infinite love and mercy of God towards sinners, in the sufferings and death of His Son. Stand in awe, lest ye should resist the gracious stirrings of His Holy Spirit and die in your sin.

2. COMMUNE. "Commune with your heart upon your bed, and be still." Have a quiet time with your own heart. Examine yourself. "If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged" (1 Cor. 11:31). The heart is deceitful. Commune with it, find out its motives, search into its desires, and cross-question its purposes. In the solitude of the bed-chamber, and in the stillness of the night, there is a favourable opportunity of finding out the true character of our own hearts. "Prove your own selves" (2 Cor. 13:5). The bed and the heart are fields in which many startling discoveries have been made, many great battles fought, and many victories lost and won—bloodless battles, whose issues reach away into the depths of eternity.

3. SACRIFICE. "Offer the sacrifices of righteousness" (v. 5). As the result of standing and communing, there are sure to be revelations. Things to be given up, or offered unto God as sacrifices. Then let the sacrifice be righteous. Let there be a willing and whole-hearted surrender to the will of God. There are sacrifices, like Absalom's which are not righteous, but only a hypocritical performance, to blind the eyes of the God-fearing, and secure some personal advantage (2 Sam. 15:12). Your reasonable service is to present yourselves unto God, "for ye are not your own, ye are bought with a price." Let us not forget Him, who did offer unto God the sacrifice of righteousness, when He offered Himself without spot. He hath left us "an example that we should follow His steps."

4. TRUST. "Trust in the Lord." Trust and obey, there is no other way. The standing in awe, and the communing with the heart should lead to faith or it will end in failure. Trust is a very simple and sweet word, associated as it is with the greatest of all names, JEHOVAH, and the most precious of all privileges and blessings. Any child can understand it, but does any man, or angel in Heaven, understand to the full all the possibilities that lie within it, as the link that binds the soul to the Eternal God?

Timothy S. Lane and Paul David Tripp - Psalm 4 - Good relationships are always built on the foundation stones of identity and worship. Even though these ideas may seem distant from our daily struggles, nothing can shelter our relationships from difficulty if we aren't building community on this foundation. We often mistakenly think that our relationships are difficult because, like a child learning to walk, we simply lack the skills and experience not to fall. This may be true in part, but the greater problem is the foundation we are walking on. For our relationships to be what God designed them to be, the rebuilding, restoring, and reconciling must start with a solid new foundation.

This foundation is not what we do and say. It begins in the heart, the source of the thoughts and motives that shape what we do and say. Your heart is always with you, and in profound ways it shapes your interactions with others. If our heart's foundation is solid, based on God's truth, design, and purpose for us, we will be able to build healthy, God-honoring relationships even though we are flawed people living in a broken world. By contrast, broken community is always the result of broken foundations.

Croft Pentz - GOD'S PROTECTION Psalm 4:1–8

I. The petition—v. 1

- A. Plea—"Hear me when I call, O God."
- B. Provision—"Thou hast enlarged me when I was in distress." God helped the Psalmist when in trouble.
- C. Prayer—"Have mercy upon me, and hear my prayer."

II. The perversion—v. 2

Two of man's greatest mistakes, which hurt him and also hurt God and His work.

A. Shame. Turning God's glory into shame. This is done by rejecting God and renouncing God. Man, who was created by God for God's glory, turns away from God.

B. Self. Man's worst enemy. Self becomes an idol. Selfish plans and ambitions come before God. God gives man twenty-four hours per day, yet how much time daily is given back to God?

III. The promise—v. 3

A. Purity. Those who live pure lives are set apart by God. Jesus taught that the pure in heart would see God—Matt. 5:8.

B. Promise. The Lord does hear those who call upon Him in simple prayer—Jer. 33:3; Matt. 7:7–9. God answers all prayers of man. He answers yes, no, or wait.

IV. The prayer—vv. 4, 5

A. Serious. Be careful how you live. Don't sin. Others are watching you. Read 1 Peter 4:17, 18.

B. Sacrifices—v. 5. Sacrifices of righteousness. Live right and put your trust in the Lord.

V. The protection—vv. 6, 7

A. Doubt—v. 6. The ungodly doubt if we Christians have any good in serving God. The non-Christian can't understand why we live without all the things of the world. Yet, we have more enjoyment than they.

B. Delight—v. 7. Gladness in our hearts. It comes from knowing the Lord. It is more than fun—it's joy. It's lasting joy.

VI. The peace—v. 8

A. Peace—"I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep." All about us may be war, problems, and trouble, but we have the peace of God within our hearts.

B. Protection—"For thou, Lord, only makest me dwell in safety." Note David's words in Ps. 26:4.

John Butler - PRAYER FOR HELP Psalm 4:1 - [Sermon Starters](#)

"Hear me when I call, O God of my righteousness; thou hast enlarged me when I was in distress; have mercy upon me, hear my prayer" (Psalm 4:1).

David is praying in this verse and in so doing gives us a good example of how to seek help from the Lord.

FIRST—THE PETITION FOR HELP

"Hear me when I call ... hear my prayer."

The verse begins and ends nearly the same. It pleads with God for help. David, who was doing the praying here often had need of help because of his enemies. Here, in comparison with the last chapter, we learn that David needed help from the attacks of those who would push him off the throne. But the particular request does not alter the principles of this prayer for help. It is an earnest appeal to God for help. The principles apply to all.

SECOND—THE PERSON WHO WILL HELP

"O God of my righteousness." David pursues God for help.

- The power in the Person. Divine help is much better than help from the government, family or friends, but we often seek and look for help from them before we seek and look for help from God.
- The purity in the Person. "God of my righteousness." Righteousness comes from God. Those who are godly live better lives than the ungodly because God is a God of righteousness. The Gospel is seen here, too. God provides through Christ the righteousness which we need to be saved (2 Corinthians 5:21)

THIRD—THE PRAISE FOR HELP

"Thou has enlarged me when I was in distress." If you want God to help you, it is wise to honor God. David honors God here by praising God for past deliverances.

FOURTH—THE PRECEDENCE FOR HELP

"Thou has enlarged me when I was in distress."

David has a good precedence for his prayer. God had helped him greatly in the past so he appeals to God to help him in the present. Let the former blessings be encouragements to pray for future blessings. "Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the

Scriptures might have hope” (Romans 15:4). We have many examples in Scripture and in our own life that ought to encourage seeking God for help.

FIFTH—THE PREMISE FOR HELP

“Have mercy upon me.”

If you want real help from God plead for help on the basis of His mercy. David did not plead merit here though David had plenty of merit. Most of us have little merit to plead, but even if we did, we should plead mercy. You will get more if you plead for help on the basis of Divine mercy than if you pray for it on the basis of your own merit. Merit makes us proud and limits our blessing, and we all over estimate our merit. But the mercy of God throws the gates of blessing wide open for unlimited and abundant blessing.

WHEN DISTRESS PRESSES IN, LET GOD ENLARGE YOU WITHIN

Sometimes the discouraging voices around us can make a difficult situation even harder. In Psalm 4 David hears the pessimistic question, “Who will show us any good?” (Ps 4:6). Circumstances looked bleak, and those around him apparently saw little reason for hope. Discouragement can be contagious, especially when it comes from those closest to us. But David refused to allow the unbelief around him to determine the faith within him. Instead, he turned his eyes upward: “Lift up the light of Your countenance upon us, O LORD!” (Ps 4:6; cf. Ps 42:5, 11).

David had learned from experience that pressure on the outside can produce growth on the inside. He testified, “You have relieved me in my distress” (Ps 4:1). The Hebrew expression literally carries the idea of being enlarged or given room in a tight place. David felt hemmed in by trouble, but God made room for him. The trial had not merely squeezed him; God had used it to enlarge his faith. As James reminds us, “the testing of your faith produces endurance” (Jas 1:3; cf. Ro 5:3–5).

Trials can make us bitter or better, smaller or stronger. Much depends upon where we turn when the pressure comes. Paul experienced overwhelming affliction that taught him “not to trust in ourselves, but in God” (2Co 1:8–9). God may not immediately enlarge our circumstances, but He can enlarge our capacity to trust Him within those circumstances (2Co 4:16–18).

Notice the remarkable transformation in David. He moves from distress to gladness: “You have put gladness in my heart” (Ps 4:7). His circumstances had not necessarily changed, but his heart had. His joy did not depend upon outward prosperity, for he possessed something greater than an abundant harvest. God Himself was the source of his gladness (cf. Ps 16:11; 43:4; Hab 3:17–18).

David then moves from anxiety to peace: “In peace I will both lie down and sleep, for You alone, O LORD, make me to dwell in safety” (Ps 4:8). He could sleep because he had placed both himself and his circumstances into God’s hands. “You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You” (Isa 26:3; cf. Php 4:6–7; 1Pe 5:7).

David discovered that what was happening within him was ultimately more important than what was happening around him. God does not always remove the pressure immediately; sometimes He uses the pressure to deepen our faith, strengthen our endurance, and increase our dependence upon Him. “After you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace...will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish you” (1Pe 5:10).

APPLICATION

Are you feeling hemmed in by circumstances today? Don’t allow the voices of discouragement around you to become the voice controlling you within. Cry out to God, trust His character, and allow Him to use the pressure to deepen your faith (Ps 4:1; Ps 56:3–4).

You may ask God to change your circumstances, but also ask Him to change you through your circumstances.

God may not immediately enlarge the place around you, but He can enlarge the faith within you.

Trials don’t have to make us smaller; in God’s hands, they can make us stronger.

BLESSINGS IN THE TIGHT PLACES

David was in a “tight place.” Psalm 4 was born out of distress, opposition, and discouragement. Some of David’s troubles were consequences of his own sin. God had forgiven him, but forgiveness did not necessarily remove all the temporal consequences of what he had sown (2Sa 12:10–14; Gal 6:7). Yet Psalm 4 reminds us that even when God permits us to enter tight places, He does not abandon us there (Ps 34:17–19; Heb 13:5).

1. GOD GIVES ENLARGEMENT IN DISTRESS — Psalm 4:1

David declares, "You have relieved me in my distress." The idea behind relieved is to make wide or enlarge. When David was hemmed in, God gave him room. God sometimes uses enlarged troubles to enlarge His people.

Joseph is a classic example. The pit, slavery, false accusation, and prison were God's training ground for the palace (Ge 37:23–28; 39:20–23; 41:39–41). His trials developed the man whom God would later use to preserve many lives (Ge 50:20). David likewise testified, "He brought me forth also into a broad place" (Ps 18:19; cf. Ps 18:36).

God may use a narrow place to prepare us for a larger place of usefulness. Trials test our faith, produce endurance, and mature our character (Jas 1:2–4; Ro 5:3–5).

2. GOD GIVES ENCOURAGEMENT IN OPPOSITION — Psalm 4:2–3

David was surrounded by people who dishonored him, loved what was worthless, and pursued deception. But rather than concentrating on what his enemies were doing, David reminded himself of what God had done:

"But know that the LORD has set apart the godly man for Himself; the LORD hears when I call to Him." (Ps 4:3)

What encouragement! People may oppose us, misunderstand us, or disappoint us, but they cannot overturn God's purposes for us (Ps 33:10–11; Ro 8:31). David's confidence was not in the loyalty of people but in the faithfulness of God.

When discouraging voices grow louder, listen more carefully to what God has said.

3. GOD GIVES ENABLEMENT IN TEMPTATION — Psalm 4:4–5

Trials not only test our faith; they can also tempt us to sin. David warns, "Tremble, and do not sin; meditate in your heart upon your bed, and be still" (Ps 4:4).

Difficulty can provoke anger, resentment, retaliation, fear, and unbelief. Scripture therefore warns, "the anger of man does not achieve the righteousness of God" (Jas 1:20; cf. Eph 4:26–27).

Instead of reacting impulsively, David tells us to "meditate...and be still." Take the matter before God. Examine your own heart (Ps 139:23–24), refuse revenge (Ro 12:19), and "offer the sacrifices of righteousness, and trust in the LORD" (Ps 4:5).

Trials reveal whether we will react in the flesh or respond by faith.

4. GOD GIVES LIGHT AND JOY IN DISCOURAGEMENT — Psalm 4:6–7

Others were asking pessimistically, "Who will show us any good?" David answers by looking upward:

"Lift up the light of Your countenance upon us, O LORD!" (Ps 4:6; cf. Nu 6:24–26).

David's circumstances may not have changed, but God changed David's heart: "You have put gladness in my heart" (Ps 4:7). His joy exceeded even the happiness produced by material prosperity.

Christian joy is not dependent upon everything going well around us. "Rejoice in the Lord always" (Php 4:4; cf. Hab 3:17–18). Circumstances change; the Lord does not.

5. GOD GIVES PEACE IN UNCERTAINTY — Psalm 4:8

David ends the psalm not fighting, worrying, or pacing the floor, but sleeping:

"In peace I will both lie down and sleep, for You alone, O LORD, make me to dwell in safety."

David could rest because he had entrusted himself to God. The same Lord who watched over David watches over His children today (Ps 121:3–4). When we exchange anxiety for prayer and thanksgiving, "the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension," guards our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus (Php 4:6–7; cf. Isa 26:3).

APPLICATION

God's purpose in our trials is greater than simply making us comfortable. He wants to make us more like Christ (Ro 8:28–29; 2Co 3:18). The tight places can become God's classrooms, where He enlarges our faith, encourages our hearts, enables obedience, restores our joy, and teaches us to rest in Him.

So when you find yourself hemmed in, don't waste the tight place. Ask not only, "Lord, when will You get me

out of this?" but also, "Lord, what do You want to work into me through this?"

God sometimes allows the tight places around us to enlarge the faith within us.

Psalm 4:2 O sons of men, how long will my honor become a reproach? How long will you love what is worthless and aim at deception? Selah.

KJV O ye sons of men, how long will ye turn my glory into shame? how long will ye love vanity, and seek after leasing? Selah.

NET You men, how long will you try to turn my honor into shame? How long will you love what is worthless and search for what is deceptive? (Selah)

NLT How long will you people ruin my reputation? How long will you make groundless accusations? How long will you continue your lies? Interlude

BGT υ ο νθρ πων ως π τε βαρυκ ρδιοι να τ γαπ τε μαται τητα κα ζητε τε ψε δος δι ψαλμα

LXE O ye sons on men, how long will ye be slow of heart? wherefore do ye love vanity, and seek falsehood? Pause.

CSB How long, exalted men, will my honor be insulted? How long will you love what is worthless and pursue a lie? Selah

ESV O men, how long shall my honor be turned into shame? How long will you love vain words and seek after lies? Selah

NIV How long, O men, will you turn my glory into shame? How long will you love delusions and seek false gods? Selah

YLT Sons of men! till when is my glory for shame? Ye love a vain thing, ye seek a lie. Selah.

- O (KJV): Ps 57:4 Ps 58:1 Ec 8:11 Ec 9:3
- how (KJV): Ps 72:2 Ex 10:3 Nu 14:11 Pr 1:22
- my glory (KJV): Ps 3:3 Ps 14:6 Ps 106:20 Isa 20:5 Isa 45:17 Jer 2:11 Ho 4:7 1Co 1:31
- love (KJV): Ps 2:1 1Sa 12:21 Isa 59:4 Jer 2:5 Jon 2:8
- leasing (KJV): Ps 5:6 Ps 58:3 Ps 63:11 Jer 9:3 Eph 4:25

O sons of men, how long will my honor become a reproach? How long will you love what is worthless and aim at deception? Selah. - While the meaning of Selah is not known with certainty the idea seems to be something like *'Don't rush past truth that deserves time to sink into your heart.'*

Bob Utley - The author develops the antagonistic setting by two questions directed to those who oppose. reproach/shame — worthless/vain words — deception/lies — As God is called "my righteousness" in Ps. 4:1, now He is called on to reveal the attitude, motives, and actions of those who would do the psalmist harm.

Selah (05542) [selah](#) is used 3x in this chapter (Hab 3:3, 3:9, 3:13) which are the only uses outside of Psalms where it is found 71 times. **Selah** invites the reader/singer to stop and think about that thought. This expression is thought to be equivalent to a musical *rest* in which the reader or singer was instructed to stop and think about what he just sang or read. It affords an opportunity for pause and reflection upon what has been said. Someone has suggested that when we read it, we probably should not vocalize it anymore than a singer would vocalize the *rests* of a musical composition. Whatever its meaning, an obvious break was intended in the middle of Hab 3:3. For some reason, the **ESV** choose to place **Selah** at the end of verse. The **NJB** translates it as **"Pause."** (Related - [What Does Selah Mean?](#))

Gilbrant - Various theories have been suggested for its meaning:

- (1) The Septuagint translates it with the Greek word ***diaspalma***, which is usually understood as a "musical interlude."
- (2) Strong and others have suggested that it be explained as a "pause," claiming that it comes from the verb *sālāh* in the sense of "to weigh," so that it means "suspension"; thus, a "pause."
- (3) A Palestinian Jewish tradition adopted by Jerome translated it as "forever," though the basis for this

rendering is slim. It was seen as a direction to insert a benediction or chorus at that point.

(4) Most commentators believe it is derived from the verb *sālal*, which means "to lift up," "to exalt." If so, there is still room for discussion as to whether it means to raise one's voice and sing loudly or to lift up the volume of the instrumental accompaniment. (The Complete Biblical Library Hebrew-English Dictionary – Nun-Ayin.

C H Spurgeon - In this second division of the Psalm, we are led from the closet of prayer into the field of conflict. Remark the undaunted courage of the man of God. He allows that his enemies are great men (for such is the import of the Hebrew words translated sons of men), but still he believes them to be foolish men, and therefore chides them, as though they were but children. He tells them that they love vanity, and seek after leasing, that is, lying, empty fancies, vain conceits, wicked fabrications. He asks them how long they mean to make his honour a jest, and his fame a mockery? A little of such mirth is too much, why need they continue to indulge in it? Had they not been long enough upon the watch for his halting? Had not repeated disappointments convinced them that the Lord's anointed was not to be overcome by all their calumnies? Did they mean to jest their souls into hell, and go on with their laughter until swift vengeance should turn their merriment into howling? In the contemplation of their perverse continuance in their vain and lying pursuits, the Psalmist solemnly pauses and inserts a *Selah*. Surely we too may stop awhile, and meditate upon the deep-seated folly of the wicked, their continuance in evil, and their sure destruction; and we may learn to admire that grace which has made us to differ, and taught us to love truth, and seek after righteousness.

EXPLANATORY NOTES AND QUAIN T SAYINGS

O ye sons of men, how long will ye turn my glory into shame? how long will ye love vanity, and seek after leasing? *Selah*. Prayer soars above the violence and impiety of men, and with a swift wing commits itself to heaven, with happy omen, if I may allude to what the learned tell us of the augury of the ancients, which I shall not minutely discuss. Fervent prayers stretch forth a strong, wide-extended wing, and while the birds of night hover beneath, they mount aloft, and point out, as it were, the proper seats to which we should aspire. For certainly there is nothing that cuts the air so swiftly, nothing that takes so sublime, so happy, so auspicious a flight as prayer, which bears the soul on its pinions, and leaves far behind all the dangers, and even the delights of this low world of ours. Behold this holy man, who just before was crying to God in the midst of distress, and with urgent importunity entreating that he might be heard, now, as if he were already possessed of all he had asked, taking upon him boldly to rebuke his enemies, how highly soever they were exalted, and how potent soever they might be even in the royal palace. Robert Leighton, D.D.

O ye sons of men, how long will ye turn my glory into shame? etc. We might imagine every syllable of this precious Psalm used by our Master some evening, when about to leave the temple for the day, and retiring to his wonted rest at Bethany (Psalms 4:8), after another fruitless expostulation with the men of Israel. And we may read it still as the very utterance of his heart, longing over man, and delighting in God. But, further, not only is this the utterance of the Head, it is also the language of one of his members in full sympathy with him in holy feeling. This is a Psalm with which the righteous may make their dwellings resound, morning and evening, as they cast a sad look over a world that rejects God's grace. They may sing it while they cling more and more every day to Jehovah, as their all-sufficient heritage, now and in the age to come. They may sing it, too, in the happy confidence of faith and hope, when the evening of the world's day is coming, and may then fall asleep in the certainty of what shall greet their eyes on the resurrection morning

"Sleeping embosomed in his grace, Till morning-shadows flee.

Andrew A. Bonar, 1859

Love vanity. They that love sin, love vanity; they chase a bubble, they lean upon a reed, their hope is as a spider's web.

Leasing. This is an old Saxon word signifying falsehood.

How long will ye love vanity, and seek after leasing? "Vanity of vanities, and all is vanity." This our first parents found, and therefore named their second son Abel, or vanity. Solomon, that had tried these things, and could best tell the vanity of them, he preacheth this sermon over again and again. "Vanity of vanities, and all is vanity." It is sad to think how many thousands there be that can say with the preacher, "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity;" nay, swear it, and yet follow after these things as if there were no other glory, nor felicity, but what is to be found in these things they call vanity. Such men will sell Christ, heaven, and their souls, for a trifle, that call these things vanity, but do not cordially believe them to be vanity, but set their hearts upon them as if they were their crown, the top of all their royalty and glory. Oh! let your souls dwell upon the vanity of all things here below, till your hearts so thoroughly convinced and persuaded of the vanity of them, as to trample upon them, and make them a footstool for Christ to get up, and ride in a holy triumph in your hearts.

Gilemex, king of Vandals, led in triumph by Belisarius, cried out, "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity." The fancy of Lucian, who placeth Charon on the top of a high hill, viewing all the affairs of men living, and looking on their greatest cities as little bird's nests, is very

pleasant. Oh, the imperfection, the ingratitude, the levity, the inconstancy, the perfidiousness of those creatures we most servilely affect! Ah, did we but weigh man's pain with his payment, his crosses with his mercies, his miseries with his pleasures, we should then see that there is nothing got by the bargain, and conclude, "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity." Chrysostom said once, "That if he were the fittest in the world to preach a sermon to the whole world, gathered together in one congregation, and had some high mountain for his pulpit, from whence he might have a prospect of all the world in his view, and were furnished with a voice of brass, a voice as loud as the trumpets of the archangel, that all the world might hear him, he would choose to preach upon no other text than that in the Psalms, O mortal men, 'How long will ye love vanity, and follow after leasing?'" Thomas Brooks, 1608-1680.

Love vanity. Men's affections are according to their principles; and every one loves that most without him which is most suitable to somewhat within him: liking is founded in likeness, and has therefore that word put upon it. It is so in whatsoever we can imagine; whether in temporals or spirituals, as to the things of this life, or of a better. Men's love is according to some working and impression upon their own spirits. And so it is here in the point of vanity; those which are vain persons, they delight in vain things; as children, they love such matters as are most agreeable to their childish dispositions, and as do suit them in that particular. Out of the heart comes all kind of evil. Thomas Horton, 1675.

HINTS TO THE VILLAGE PREACHER

Depravity of man as evinced

(1) by continuance in despising Christ, (2) by loving vanity in his heart, and (3) seeking lies in his daily life.

The length of the sinner's sin. "How long?" May be bounded by repentance, shall be by death, and yet shall continue in eternity.

Verses 2-8

HINTS TO THE VILLAGE PREACHER

The means which a believer should use to win the ungodly to Christ.

(1) Expostulation, ver. 2. (2) Instruction, ver. 3. (3) Exhortation, ver. 4-5. (4) Testimony to the blessedness of true religion as in ver. 6-7. (5) Exemplification of that testimony by the peace of faith, ver. 8.

C H Spurgeon - Morning and Evening - O ye sons of men, how long will ye turn my glory into shame?" — Psalm 4:2

An instructive writer has made a mournful list of the honours which the blinded people of Israel awarded to their long expected King.

1. They gave him a procession of honour, in which Roman legionaries, Jewish priests, men and women, took a part, he himself bearing his cross. This is the triumph which the world awards to him who comes to overthrow man's direst foes. Derisive shouts are his only acclamations, and cruel taunts his only paeans of praise.
2. They presented him with the wine of honour. Instead of a golden cup of generous wine they offered him the criminal's stupefying death-draught, which he refused because he would preserve an uninjured taste wherewith to taste of death; and afterwards when he cried, "I thirst," they gave him vinegar mixed with gall, thrust to his mouth upon a sponge. Oh! wretched, detestable inhospitality to the King's Son.
3. He was provided with a guard of honour, who showed their esteem of him by gambling over his garments, which they had seized as their booty. Such was the body-guard of the adored of heaven; a quaternion of brutal gamblers.
4. A throne of honour was found for him upon the bloody tree; no easier place of rest would rebel men yield to their liege Lord. The cross was, in fact, the full expression of the world's feeling towards him; "There," they seemed to say, "thou Son of God, this is the manner in which God himself should be treated, could we reach him."
5. The title of honour was nominally "King of the Jews," but that the blinded nation distinctly repudiated, and really called him "King of thieves," by preferring Barabbas, and by placing Jesus in the place of highest shame between two thieves. His glory was thus in all things turned into shame by the sons of men, but it shall yet gladden the eyes of saints and angels, world without end.

KJV But know that the LORD hath set apart him that is godly for himself: the LORD will hear when I call unto him.

NET Realize that the LORD shows the godly special favor; the LORD responds when I cry out to him.

NLT You can be sure of this: The LORD set apart the godly for himself. The LORD will answer when I call to him.

BGT καὶ γινέτω τὸ θαυμάσιον αὐτοῦ ὁ ὁσίος ἐσάκοσέτα μου· νῦν κερᾶναι με πρὸς αὐτόν

LXE But know ye that the Lord has done wondrous things for his holy one: the Lord will hear me when I cry to him.

CSB Know that the LORD has set apart the faithful for Himself; the LORD will hear when I call to Him.

ESV But know that the LORD has set apart the godly for himself; the LORD hears when I call to him.

NIV Know that the LORD has set apart the godly for himself; the LORD will hear when I call to him.

YLT And know ye that Jehovah Hath separated a saintly one to Himself. Jehovah heareth in my calling to Him.

- that the (KJV): Ex 33:16 Eph 2:10 2Th 2:13,14 2Ti 2:19 1Pe 2:9 2Pe 2:9
- for (KJV): Tit 2:14
- the Lord (KJV): Ps 34:15 Ps 55:16,17 Ps 56:9 Ps 91:14,15 Joh 15:16

But know that the LORD has set apart the godly man for Himself; The LORD hears when I call to Him.

C H Spurgeon - But know. Fools will not learn, and therefore they must again and again be told the same thing, especially when it is such a bitter truth which is to be taught them, viz.: the fact that the godly are the chosen of God, and are, by distinguishing grace, set apart and separated from among men. Election is a doctrine which unrenewed men cannot endure, but nevertheless, it is a glorious and well-attested truth, and one which should comfort the tempted believer. Election is the guarantee of complete salvation, and an argument for success at the throne of grace. He who chose us for himself will surely hear our prayer. The Lord's elect shall not be condemned, nor shall their cry be unheard. David was king by divine decree, and we are the Lord's people in the same manner: let us tell our enemies to their faces, that they fight against God and destiny, when they strive to overthrow our souls. O beloved, when you are on your knees, the fact of your being set apart as God's own peculiar treasure, should give you courage and inspire you with fervency and faith. "Shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him?" Since he chose to love us he cannot but choose to hear us.

EXPLANATORY NOTES AND QUAIN SAYINGS

The Lord hath set apart him that is godly for himself. When God chooseth a man, he chooseth him for himself; for himself to converse with, to communicate himself unto him as a friend, a companion, and his delight. Now, it is holiness that makes us fit to live with the holy God for ever, since without it we cannot see him (Hebrews 12:14), which is God's main aim, and more than our being his children; as one must be supposed a man, one of mankind, having a soul reasonable, ere we can suppose him capable of adoption, or to be another man's heir. As therefore it was the main first design in God's eye, before the consideration of our happiness, let it be so in ours. Thomas Goodwin, 1600-1679.

What rare persons the godly are: "The righteous is more excellent than his neighbour." Proverbs 12:26. As the flower of the sun, as the wine of Lebanon, as the sparkling upon Aaron's breastplate, such is the orient splendour of a person embellished with godliness ... The godly are precious, therefore they are set apart for God, Know that the Lord hath set apart him that is godly for himself. We set apart things that are precious; the godly are set apart as God's peculiar treasure (Psalms 135:4); as his garden of delight (So 4:12); as his royal diadem (Isaiah 43:3); the godly are the excellent of the earth (Psalms 16:3); comparable to fine gold (Lamentations 4:2); double refined (Zechariah 13:9). They are the glory of the creation. (Isaiah 46:13). Origen compares the saints to sapphires and crystals: God calls them jewels (Malachi 3:17). Thomas Watson.

The Lord will hear when I call unto him. Let us remember that the experience of one of the saints concerning the verity of God's promises, and of the certainty of the written privileges of the Lord's people, is a sufficient proof of the right which all his children have to the same mercies, and a ground of hope that they also shall partake of them in their times of need. David Dickson, 1653.

HINTS TO THE VILLAGE PREACHER

Election. Its aspects toward God, our enemies, and ourselves.

The Lord will hear when I call unto him. Answers to prayer certain to special persons. Mark out those who can claim the favour.

The gracious Separatist. Who is he? Who separated him? With what end? How to make men know it?

F B Meyer - Psalm 4:3 Know that the Lord hath set apart him that is godly for Himself.

The Lord sets apart for his own enjoyment. — “A garden enclosed is, my sister.” Out of the wild prairie Christ encloses favoured bits of land, that they may become fair gardens in which to walk. God must have spirits with which He can commune; and therefore He shuts selected ones away in sick chambers, in loneliness, and in prisons, that there may be nothing to divert them from the holy intercourse with Himself which he his refreshment and delight.

The Lord sets apart for fellowship in intercessory prayer.—He leads three of the apostles into the shadows of Gethsemane, that they may add their intercessions with his. In each church there is a favoured band to whom He tells his secret anxiety for other souls, and whom He leads out in prayer on the behalf of them and of the world.

The Lord sets apart for service.—Those that separate themselves from evil become vessels unto honour, sanctified and meet for the Master’s use. Do not be surprised if you are withdrawn from the molding crowd, from the ambitions and interests of earlier years; it is the Lord’s way of engaging you for special service.

We can never forget how the Holy Ghost bade the early Church separate Barnabas and Saul to their appointed ministry. They were separated unto the Holy Ghost. A similar separation may become ours. Let us live in the world as those who are set apart for God, like the Temple vessels that might not be put, as Belshazzar attempted to put them, to idolatrous and lascivious purposes. Oh to know what God means when He puts his reserve on the soul, and says, This is my rest for ever, here will I dwell!

Forever Loved - play Don Francisco's "[Forever Loved](#)"

Know that the Lord has set apart his faithful servant for himself. Psalm 4:3

It’s almost impossible for us to get through a day without being snubbed, ignored, or put down in some way. Sometimes we even do it to ourselves.

David’s enemies were talking smack—bullying, threatening, pummeling him with insults. His sense of self-worth and well-being had plummeted (Ps. 4:1–2). He asked for relief “from my distress.”

***Lord, thank You that You assure us
that we are loved forever.***

Then David remembered, “Know that the Lord has set apart his faithful servant for himself” (v. 3). Various English versions try to capture the full essence of David’s bold statement by translating “faithful servant” as “godly.” The Hebrew word here, *hesed*, literally refers to God’s covenant love and might well be rendered “those whom God will love forever and ever and ever.”

Here’s what we too must remember: We are loved forever, set apart in a special way, as dear to God as His own Son. He has called us to be His children for all eternity.

Instead of despairing, we can remind ourselves of the love we freely receive from our Father. We are His dearly beloved children. The end is not despair but peace and joy (vv. 7–8). He never gives up on us, and He never ever stops loving us.

Father in heaven, the words of others can wound us deeply. Your words to us heal and comfort, and You assure us that we are loved forever.

The true measure of God’s love is that He loves without measure.
Bernard of Clairvaux

INSIGHT: How could we not care what others think or say about us? So much in life seems to depend on how others regard us. Maybe David wrote his fourth psalm after hearing rumors that he still thought he had gotten away with murder and with his scandalous affair with Bathsheba. Maybe he was told how others accused him of using his false humility and self-centered spirituality as a cover for his lust for power. As if knowing our own weak points he wrote, “How long will you people ruin my reputation? . . . How long will you continue your lies?” (v. 2 nlt). The answer doesn’t seem to be what we might have expected. Without explanation, the songwriter seems to be like a television viewer changing channels. Suddenly the issue is no longer how long others are going to say thoughtless things about him, but rather how long his God is going to love him unconditionally—forever. The thought is better than warm milk and a soft pillow. With the love of God filling his heart, the words of enemies fade into silence. How does God’s unconditional love comfort you?

God's love has no limit because God Himself is love.

You can measure the ocean more easily than you can measure God's love.

God's love cannot be exhausted because it has no end.

There is no boundary beyond which God's love cannot reach.

God's love is greater than our failures and deeper than our fears.

We may reach the end of ourselves, but never the end of God's love.

God's love is not measured by our worthiness but by His character.

The cross is the measure of a love beyond measure. (Ro 5:8)

Calvary reveals how far God's love was willing to go. (Jn 3:16)

God's love reaches farther than we can wander and deeper than we can fall.

Nothing can separate the believer from the immeasurable love of God. (Ro 8:38–39)

God's love is wide enough to embrace us, deep enough to rescue us, and strong enough to keep us. (Eph 3:18–19)

We cannot comprehend the dimensions of God's love, but we can spend a lifetime experiencing them.

The love of Christ surpasses knowledge but never ceases to satisfy the heart. (Eph 3:19)

Direct Connection

The Lord will hear when I call to Him. — Psalm 4:3

Today's Scripture : Psalm 61

The 1993 Christmas issue of Newsweek magazine carried an article on angels, a rather surprising topic to find in a secular publication. As might be expected, though, many points were in conflict with Scripture.

For instance, Professor Robert Ellswood, a specialist in unorthodox religions, made this assertion: "With angels around, people feel they don't have to bother an Almighty God in order to get help."

And André D'Angelo, a minister in Carmel, California, suggested that God is like the CEO of a large corporation, and "an angel is like a good executive secretary."

Is our heavenly Father so busy operating the cosmos that He can't be bothered with our requests for help? Not the God of the Bible who reveals Himself as the only true God—the One who sustains the countless star clusters in all their immensity and yet notes the sparrow's fall. He invites us to talk with Him about even our trivial cares.

It is true that angels serve God and help believers (Heb. 1:13-14), but we do not need their assistance to get through to our Father in heaven. We can communicate directly with Him (4:14-16). With the psalmist we too can say, "The Lord will hear when I call to Him" (Ps. 4:3). By: Vernon Grounds (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

For answered prayer we thank You, Lord;

We know You're always there

To hear us when we call on You;

We're grateful for Your care.

—JDB

God is never too busy to listen to His children.

Psalm 4:4 Tremble, and do not sin; Meditate in your heart upon your bed, and be still. Selah.

KJV Stand in awe, and sin not: commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still. Selah.

NET Tremble with fear and do not sin! Meditate as you lie in bed, and repent of your ways! (Selah)

NLT Don't sin by letting anger control you. Think about it overnight and remain silent. Interlude

BGT ργ ξεσθε κα μ μαρτ νετε λ γετε ν τα ς καρδ αις μ ν κα π τα ς κο ταις μ ν καταν γητε δι ψαλμα

LXE Be ye angry, and sin not; feel compunction upon your beds for what ye say in your hearts. Pause.

CSB Be angry and do not sin; on your bed, reflect in your heart and be still.Selah

ESV Be angry, and do not sin; ponder in your own hearts on your beds, and be silent. Selah

NIV In your anger do not sin; when you are on your beds, search your hearts and be silent. Selah

YLT 'Tremble ye, and do not sin;' Say ye thus in your heart on your bed, And be ye silent. Selah.

- Stand (KJV): Ps 2:11 Ps 33:8 Ps 119:161 Jer 5:22
- sin (KJV): Job 28:28 Pr 3:7 Pr 16:6,17 Eph 4:26
- commune (KJV): Ps 63:6 Ps 77:6 2Co 13:5
- be still (KJV): Ps 46:10 Hab 2:20
- Selah (KJV): Ps 3:2,4

Septuagint - orgizesthe (2PPMM: be angry, furious, enraged Ep4:26) kai me hamartanete (2PPAM) legete (2PPAM) en tais kardiais humon kai epi tais koitais humon katanugete (2PAPM: katanussomai lit. be pierced through, stabbed, pricked deeply; idiomatically katanussesthai ten kardian = of the sharp pain felt in the heart fr. conviction or remorse = lit. be pierced as to the heart, i.e. be greatly distressed, be very troubled Ac2.37) diapsalma (Musical interlude)

Tremble, and do not sin; Meditate (literally utter or say) **in your heart upon your bed, and be still. Selah.**

TREMBLE: Qal Imp: root = quake or shake; agitation growing out of some deeply rooted emotion. The Lxx translation is quoted verbatim by Paul in [Ep 4:26]. The Septuagint as well as Paul's usage of this passage in the NT suggests that "trembling" is the picture of one "shaking with anger" or literally quivering from this violent emotion. In context it seems to be a righteous indignation directed against the sons of men who love what is worthless (empty) & seek falsehood. he NIV picks up the idea of anger "In your anger do not sin; when you are on your beds, search your hearts and be silent.Selah" as does the NKJV "Be angry & do not sin...".

DO NOT SIN: Qal Impf: miss the way, err, swerve fr the truth = falling short of God's standard.

MEDITATE: major word for "saying" in OT. The basic idea is the uttering of some type of spoken word.

BE STILL: Qal Imp: Several times in the Psalms this verb is used of being still before the Lord in quiet meditation (Ps131:2). We are to rest in the Lord and wait patiently for him (Ps 37:7).

Bob Utley - be still" The word has several usages. (1) fear in battle – Exod. 15:14-16 (2) speechless in judgment – 2 Sam. 2:9 (3) silence in death – Ps. 31:17; 94:17; Jer. 48:2; 49:26 (4) shocked silence at destruction – Jer. 25:37 (5) silence of wisdom in an appropriate moment – Ps. 4:4; 62:5; 131:2; Amos 5:13

C H Spurgeon - Tremble and sin not. How many reverse this counsel and sin but tremble not. O that men would take the advice of this verse and commune with their own hearts. Surely a want of thought must be one reason why men are so mad as to despise Christ and hate their own mercies. O that for once their passions would be quiet and let them be still, that so in solemn silence they might review the past, and meditate upon their inevitable doom. Surely a thinking man might have enough sense to discover the vanity of sin and the worthlessness of the world. Stay, rash sinner, stay, ere thou take the last leap. Go to thy bed and think upon thy ways. Ask counsel of thy pillow, and let the quietude of night instruct thee! Throw not away thy soul for nought! Let reason speak! Let the clamorous world be still awhile, and let thy poor soul plead with thee to bethink thyself before thou seal its fate, and ruin it for ever!

Selah. O sinner! pause while I question thee awhile in the words of a sacred poet,

"Sinner, is thy heart at rest? Is thy bosom void of fear? Art thou not by guilt oppress'd? Speaks not conscience in thine ear?

Can this world afford thee bliss? Can it chase away thy gloom? Flattering, false, and vain it is; Tremble at the worldling's doom!

Think, O sinner, on thy end, See the judgment-day appear, Thither must thy spirit wend, There thy righteous sentence hear.

Wretched, ruin'd, helpless soul, To a Saviour's blood apply; He alone can make thee whole, Fly to Jesus, sinner, fly!"

EXPLANATORY NOTES AND QUAIN T SAYINGS

Stand in awe and sin not. Jehovah is a name of great power and efficacy, a name that hath in it five vowels, without which no language can be expressed; a name that hath in it also three syllables, to signify the Trinity of persons, the eternity of God, One in Three and Three in One; a name of such dread and reverence amongst the Jews, that they tremble to name it, and therefore they use the name Adonai (Lord) in all their devotions. And thus ought every one to "stand in awe, and sin not," by taking the name of God in vain; but to sing praise, and honour, to remember, to declare, to exalt, to praise and bless it; for holy and reverend, only worthy and excellent is his name. Rayment, 1630.

Commune with your own heart. The language is similar to that which we use when we say, "Consult your better judgment," or "Take counsel of your own good sense." Albert Barnes, in loc.

If thou wouldst exercise thyself to godliness in solitude, accustom thyself to soliloquies, I mean to conference with thyself. He needs never be idle that hath so much business to do with his own soul. It was a famous answer which Antisthenes gave when he was asked what fruit he reaped by all his studies. By them, saith he, I have learned both to live and talk with myself. Soliloquies are the best disputes; every good man is best company for himself of all the creatures. Holy David enjoineth this to others, Commune with your own hearts upon your bed, and be still.

Commune with your own hearts; when ye have none to speak with, talk to yourselves. Ask yourselves for what end ye were made, what lives ye have led, what times ye have lost, what love ye have abused, what wrath ye have deserved. Call yourselves to a reckoning, how ye have improved your talents, how true or false ye have been to your trust, what provision ye have laid in for an hour of death, what preparation ye have made for a great day of account.

Upon your beds. Secrecy is the best opportunity for this duty. The silent night is a good time for this speech. When we have no outward objects to disturb us, and to call our eyes, as the fools' eyes are always, to the ends of the earth; then our eyes, as the eyes of the wise, may be in our heads; and then our minds, like the windows in Solomon's temple, may be broad inwards. The most successful searches have been made in the night season; the soul is then wholly shut up in the earthly house of the body, and hath no visits from strangers to disquiet its thoughts. Physicians have judged dreams a probable sign whereby they might find out the distempers of the body. Surely, then, the bed is no bad place to examine and search into the state of the soul.

And be still. Self-communion will much help to curb your headstrong, ungodly passions. Serious consideration, like the casting up of earth amongst bees, will allay inordinate affections when they are full of fury, and make such a hideous noise. Though sensual appetites and unruly desires are, as the people of Ephesus, in an uproar, pleading for their former privilege, and expecting their wonted provisions, as in the days of their predominancy, if conscience use its authority, commanding them in God's name, whose officer it is, to keep the king's peace, and argue it with them, as the town-clerk of Ephesus, "We are in danger to be called in question for this day's uproar, there being no cause whereby we may give an account of this day's concourse;" all is frequently by this means hushed, and the tumult appeased without any further mischief. George Swinnock, 1627-1673.

Commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still. When we are most retired from the world, then we are most fit to have, and usually have, most communion with God. If a man would but abridge himself of sleep, and wake with holy thoughts, when deep sleep falleth upon sorrowful labouring men, he might be entertained with visions from God, though not such visions as Eliphaz and others of the saints have had, yet visions he might have. Every time God communicates himself to the soul, there is a vision of love, or mercy, or power, somewhat of God in his nature, or in his will, is showed unto us. David shows us divine work when we go to rest. The bed is not all for sleep: "Commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still." Be still or quiet, and then commune with your hearts; and if you will commune with your hearts, God will come and commune with your hearts, too, his Spirit will give you a loving visit and visions of his love. Joseph Caryl.

Stand in awe.

With sacred awe pronounce his name, Whom words nor thoughts can reach.

John Needham, 1768.

HINTS TO THE VILLAGE PREACHER

The sinner directed to review himself, that he may be convinced of sin. Andrew Fuller, 1754 - 1815.

Be still. Advice good, practical, but hard to follow. Times when seasonable. Graces needed to enable one to be still. Results of quietness. Persons who most need the advice. Instances of its practice. here is much material for a sermon.

[C H Spurgeon - Plain directions to those who would be saved from sin](#)

'Stand in awe, and sin not: commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still. Selah. Offer the sacrifices of righteousness,

and put your trust in the LORD.' Psalm 4:4–5

'Commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still.' Do you know what that means? There comes a time with men whom God is saving when all grows quiet within them. Their old pleasures and desires are hushed; the voice of the outside world is still and they hear in the silence of their souls the 'still small voice' of conscience. Oh that you were at this moment still enough to hear that warning note! Memory also commences her rehearsals: it tells of the past and brings forgotten things before the soul. Oh that all of you would remember that God requires that which is past. Best of all, God speaks in the soul. It was at night, when young Samuel was on his bed, that the Lord said to him, 'Samuel, Samuel', and it is when the heart at last has grown still that God's voice of mercy is heard calling to the man by name. Oh that in such a case you may have grace to answer, 'Speak, LORD; for thy servant heareth'! I beseech you, give yourselves space for thought, before thought becomes the worm of eternal misery to you. Remember, before you hear that voice from heaven which spoke to the rich man in hell and said to him, 'Son, remember'. You slaves of fashion and frivolity, think, I pray you! You serfs of daily money-grubbing, rest a while and hear what God the Lord shall speak to you! You can hardly hear the great bell of St Paul's when the traffic is thundering around, but it sounds solemnly in the stillness of night. We who live in the more remote suburbs hear Big Ben of Westminster at night, but we seldom note it amid the stir and noise of the day. Do give an opportunity for the eternal voices to pierce the clamours of the hour.

SUMMARY OF [Plain directions to those who would be saved from sin](#)

Spurgeon taught that true salvation is not earned by good works, but is a free gift received by placing your faith and trust completely in Jesus Christ.

Spurgeon provided these simple, foundational steps for anyone seeking to be saved:

Admit your weakness: Recognize that you cannot save yourself or overcome sin on your own strength.

Trust entirely in Jesus: Let go of any trust in your own goodness. Put your faith solely in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ to forgive your sins.

Turn your back on the love of sin: While no one becomes perfectly free from sin instantly, a saved person stops loving sin and begins to sincerely seek God and holiness.

Pray directly to God: Cry out to God at the mercy seat, confessing your sins and asking Him for mercy and forgiveness for Jesus' sake.

Spurgeon emphasized that the act of simply relying on Christ can be done by anyone, no matter how young or old.

James Smith - THE VALUE OF AWE PSALM 4:4

Strange.

1. What a strange exhortation to come immediately after the exulting claim to be the Lord's own.
2. "Awe!" Not fear or reverence. Awe is a holy dread, a reverential fear.
3. But there is a most fruitful connection between the two.

The World and Awe.

1. Verse 2, lying and falsehood, are two fruits of a lack of awe.
2. What strikes one more than anything else when looking at the mass of men and women of to-day is the utter absence of awe.
 - a. There is no awe of life. Life is not treated with solemnity and reverence. There is levity and frivolity.
 - b. There is no awe of death. Jesus came to take away the fear, but not awe of death, e.g., How lightly people take their own lives.
 - c. There is no awe of God. If John 3:16 takes away the awful fear, it ought to make all the inhabitants of the earth stand in awe of Him. We should not be afraid of God; we should be in awe of Him.

The Church and Awe.

1. But we must not dream that awe is lost only in the thought and life of the worldling.
2. There is an absence of awe even amongst Christians.
3. Why, it is never or seldom spoken of in our pulpits!
4. What a loss that means.

One has said that the world that has banished awe has banished wholesome laughter. The ages that have known most of religious

awe are the ages from which have come the most lyrical notes of Christian joy. The older ages lived and breathed and rejoiced in God amidst their dark theologies. Bernard had stern stupendous ideas of the Deity, and yet it was he who sang, "Jesus, the very thought of Thee." Samuel Rutherford was clasped in all the rigours of a Calvinism which touches the very springs of awe in the human breast, and yet from him came the love letters of Christianity.

Note the connection of Verses 3 and 4.

1. Though I am His possession, I must not take liberties with Him; I must be respectful and reverential.
2. And it means, too, that such a fact of God setting sinners apart for Himself is awe-inspiring.

Why this Strange Union of Awe and Sin?

1. Awe is not everything.
2. The Hindus treat cruelly the cattle they worship.
3. And there is One who can keep us from sin.

No Cause For Alarm

"Be angry, and do not sin": do not let the sun go down on your wrath. —Ephesians 4:26

Today's Scripture : Ephesians 4:25-32

The sound of the alarm blaring from inside the church struck panic in my heart. I had arrived at church early one Sunday morning, planning to spend a little time in peace and quiet before the congregation arrived. But I forgot to disarm the burglar alarm. As I turned the key, the disruptive and annoying blasting of the alarm filled the building—and no doubt the bedrooms of sleeping neighbors.

Anger is a lot like that. In the midst of our peaceful lives, something turns a key in our spirit and triggers the alarm. And our internal peace—not to mention the tranquillity of those around us—is interrupted by the disruptive force of our exploding emotions.

Sometimes anger appropriately calls our attention to an injustice that needs to be addressed, and we are spurred to righteous action. Most of the time, however, our anger is selfishly ignited by the violation of our expectations, rights, and privileges. In any case, it's important to know why the alarm is sounding and to respond in a godly way. But one thing is sure, anger was never intended to continue unchecked.

It's no wonder that Paul reminds us of the psalmist's warning: "'Be angry, and do not sin'; do not let the sun go down on your wrath" (Eph. 4:26; Psalm 4:4). By: Joe Stowell (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Spirit of God, please change my heart
And give me a new desire;
Help me to be a man of peace
Who's not controlled by anger's fire.
—K. De Haan

Anger left unchecked is cause for alarm.

Anger ignored today can become bitterness tomorrow.

Unchecked anger soon becomes controlling anger.

Anger is a warning light; don't ignore it.

Anger entertained soon becomes anger enthroned.

Don't nurse anger; it grows quickly.

Anger given room will soon take over the room.

A spark of anger left unchecked can become a fire of bitterness.

Anger may knock at the door, but you don't have to invite it in.

Deal with anger quickly before anger deals with you.

Anger prolonged gives the devil a foothold. (Eph 4:26–27)

Today's anger can become tomorrow's bitterness. (Eph 4:31)

Control anger before anger controls you.

Don't let a moment of anger become a lifetime of regret.

Anger is a poor master and a dangerous counselor.

The longer anger stays, the harder peace is to find.

Anger is a warning light; heed it before it becomes a fire.

No Grudges After Sunset

Do not let the sun go down on your wrath. — Ephesians 4:26

A little boy got into a fight with his brother and the whole experience left him feeling bitter. When his brother wanted to make things right, he refused to listen. In fact, he would not speak to his brother all day.

Bedtime came, and their mother said to the boy, "Don't you think you should forgive your brother before you go to sleep? Remember, the Bible says, 'Do not let the sun go down on your wrath'" (Ephesians 4:26). The boy looked perplexed. He thought for a few moments and then blurted out, "But how can I keep the sun from going down?"

He reminds me of some Christians. They're angry at certain people and hold grudges. When they are confronted with their unforgiving attitude and urged to make things right, they sidestep the issue and refuse to heed the clear instruction of Scripture. True, we cannot change another person's heart, but we are responsible for our own attitude. The Bible says, "Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you" (Ephesians 4:32).

No, we can't keep the sun from going down. But we can keep it from setting-on our anger. And that means we must forgive. By: Richard DeHaan (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Anger, malice, and ill will
Can leave a stain of sorrow;
Ask forgiveness by His grace
Before it is tomorrow!
-Bosch

For every minute you are angry, you lose sixty seconds of happiness.

Anger steals the joy of the moment and often the peace of the day.

Every moment spent nursing anger is a moment surrendered to bitterness.

Anger carried too long becomes a burden heavier than the offense.

Don't let another person's wrong rob you of today's joy.

Holding onto anger gives yesterday's hurt control over today's happiness.

Anger may begin with another person's offense, but bitterness becomes our choice.

The longer we hold onto anger, the longer anger holds onto us.

A grudge keeps the wound open; forgiveness allows healing to begin.

Don't give anger more time than the offense deserves.

Unresolved anger rents space in the heart and pays with your peace.

Anger looks backward; grace enables us to move forward.

Forgiveness releases the heart that anger keeps imprisoned.

Don't let the setting sun find anger still occupying your heart. (Eph 4:26)

Put away anger before anger puts away your joy. (Eph 4:31–32)

A heart ruled by Christ has no room for cherished resentment. (Col 3:8, 13)

Psalm 4:5 Offer the sacrifices of righteousness, And trust in the LORD.

KJV Offer the sacrifices of righteousness, and put your trust in the LORD.

NET Offer the prescribed sacrifices and trust in the LORD!

NLT Offer sacrifices in the right spirit, and trust the LORD.

BGT θ σατε θυσ αν δικαιοσ νης κα λπ σατε π κ ριον

LXE Offer the sacrifice of righteousness, and trust in the Lord.

CSB Offer sacrifices in righteousness and trust in the LORD.

ESV Offer right sacrifices, and put your trust in the LORD.

NIV Offer right sacrifices and trust in the LORD.

YLT Sacrifice ye sacrifices of righteousness, And trust ye unto Jehovah.

- Offer (KJV): Ps 50:14 Ps 51:19 De 33:19 2Sa 15:12 Isa 1:11-18 Isa 61:8 Mal 1:8,11-14 Mt 5:23,23 Heb 13:15,16
- put (KJV): Ps 2:12 Ps 26:1 Ps 37:3 Ps 62:8 Ps 84:11,12 Isa 26:3,4 Isa 50:10 1Pe 4:19

Offer the sacrifices of righteousness, And trust in the LORD.

OFFER THE SACRIFICES OF RIGHTEOUSNESS: don't be deceived...it does "cost" ("offer the sacrifices") to be a godly man...the cost is denying self, taking up one's cross daily (in NT terms). But the price to enable such a mindset has been paid at Calvary & is available in the new mind of the man regenerated and bound by the New Covenant of grace. Such a man is now blessed (Ja1:25) The Int'l Children's Bible has an interesting paraphrase "Do what is right as a sacrifice to the Lord." Remember though Samuel told Saul (1Sa15:22-23)

What are the sacrifices of righteousness? In a word "obedience"! Doing what is right in His eyes.

TRUST IN THE LORD: Qal Imp: Lxx almost always translates this Hebrew word with ELIPZO = hope (Mt12:21)

Bob Utley - "trust in the Lord" This is a recurrent theme (BDB 105, KB 120).

1. a call to sinners – Ps. 4:5
2. a call to the faithful – Ps. 9:10; 32:10; 37:3,5; 40:3; 55:23; 56:4,11; 84:12; 91:2; 112:7; 115:11; 125:1; 143:8; Prov. 16:20; 29:25; Isa. 26:3-4
3. the king – Ps. 21:7; 25:2; 26:1; 28:7
4. the fathers – Ps. 22:4-5
5. O people – Ps. 62:8; 115:9
6. priests – Ps. 115:10

It is trust in YHWH and His word that brings hope (cf. Ps. 4:3), joy (cf. Ps. 4:7), and peace (cf. Ps. 4:8) in this fallen world.

C H Spurgeon - Provided that the rebels had obeyed the voice of the last verse, they would now be crying, "What shall we do to be saved?" And in the present verse, they are pointed to the sacrifice, and exhorted to trust in the Lord. When the Jew offered sacrifice righteously, that is, in a spiritual manner, he thereby set forth the Redeemer, the great sin-atonement Lamb; there is, therefore, the full gospel in this exhortation of the Psalmist. O sinners, flee ye to the sacrifice of Calvary, and there put your whole confidence and trust, for he who died for men is the LORD JEHOVAH.

EXPLANATORY NOTES AND QUAIN SAYINGS None

HINTS TO THE VILLAGE PREACHER

The nature of those sacrifices of righteousness which the Lord's people are expected to offer. William Ford Vance, 1827.

Charles Stanley - **ENGINEERED BY GOD** - [Pathways to His Presence: A Daily Devotional](#) - Page 7

SCRIPTURE READING: PSALM 4:1–8

KEY VERSE: PSALM 4:5

Offer the sacrifices of righteousness,
And put your trust in the Lord.

The thought of failing can stir up feelings of anxiety and fear. We wonder to ourselves, If I fail, what will others think of me? If I am defeated instead of constantly victorious, how will that reflect upon my life?

Failure is sometimes engineered by God to bring about a stark revelation about ourselves: we need to trust God in every aspect of our lives. Whether our failure relates to a particular sin that seems impossible to conquer or a venture within ministry or a business or a relationship, it helps us to understand that we need to depend totally upon God. There are times in our lives where we strike out on our own, possibly even attempting to do something for God. But when we try these things in our own strength, failure is imminent.

David understood both failure and victory, experiencing both in many different areas of his life. And it was through his defeats that he recognized how desperately he needed God to permeate every place in his heart.

As we place our dependence upon God, an incredible freedom and peace will begin to rest in our hearts. And reaching that point in our lives makes every failure worth it.

Lord, permeate my being so that in failure I can see victory, and in victory I can see You.

Psalm 4:6 Many are saying, "Who will show us any good?" Lift up the light of Your countenance upon us, O LORD!

KJV There be many that say, Who will shew us any good? LORD, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us.

NET Many say, "Who can show us anything good?" Smile upon us, LORD!

NLT Many people say, "Who will show us better times?" Let your face smile on us, LORD.

BGT πολλοι λγουσιν τςδεξειμντγαθσημειθηφμςτφςτοπροσπουσουκριε

LXE Many say, Who will shew us good things? the light of thy countenance, O Lord, has been manifested towards us.

CSB Many are saying, "Who can show us anything good?" Look on us with favor, LORD.

ESV There are many who say, "Who will show us some good? Lift up the light of your face upon us, O LORD!"

NIV Many are asking, "Who can show us any good?" Let the light of your face shine upon us, O LORD.

YLT Many are saying, 'Who doth show us good?' Lift on us the light of Thy face, O Jehovah,

- many (KJV): Ps 39:6 Ps 49:16-20 Ec 2:3-26 Isa 55:2 Lu 12:19 Lu 16:19 Jas 4:13 Jas 5:1-5
- lift (KJV): Ps 21:6 Ps 42:5 Ps 44:3 Ps 67:1 Ps 80:1-3,7,19 Ps 89:15 Ps 119:135 Nu 6:26

WHAT IS YOUR PERSPECTIVE? HORIZONTAL OR VERTICAL?

Many are saying, "Who will show us any good?" -Many are saying... reveal the widespread discouragement surrounding David (Have you ever been there beloved?). Circumstances were difficult, and many were essentially asking, "Where is anything good going to come from? Who is going to help us? Is there any reason left for hope?" It is the language of discouragement bordering on despair. And remember the Devil "majors" in the tool of discouragement! But here is the key that opens the door of joy described in Ps 4:7. David refuses to allow the pessimism around him to determine the attitude within him. This is not just grin and bear it. No, while many look around and ask, "Who?" David looks up and answers, "O LORD!" Instead of searching horizontally for some change in circumstances, he prays vertically, "Lift up the light of Your countenance upon us, O LORD!"

Lift up the light of Your countenance upon us, O LORD! Notice that **light of Your countenance** recalls the famous Aaronic blessing, "The LORD make His face shine on you, and be gracious to you" (Nu 6:25; cf. Ps 31:16; 67:1). It pictures God's favorable presence, blessing, grace, and approval, the "smile" of God if you will. David realizes that his greatest need is not necessarily better circumstances but the presence and favor of God in the midst of his circumstances. And notice the beautiful progression that follows so that God's countenance upon him (Ps 4:6) produces God's gladness within him (Ps 4:7), which results in God's peace sustaining him (Ps 4:8). While others are asking, "Who will show us any good?", David is soon able to lie down and sleep in peace because his confidence rests in the LORD.

THOUGHT When everyone around you is asking, "What good can possibly come from this?", let your faith (Heb 11:1, 2Co 5:7, 2Co 4:18, Col 3:1,2) look beyond circumstances and seek the face of God (Ps 27:8; 105:4). Succinctly stated, when others look around in despair, faith looks up in prayer. See Vertical Vision Transforms Horizontal Living

Matthew Henry Concise (UPDATED WORDING)- Ps 4:6-8. Worldly people often ask, "Who will show us any good?" (Ps 4:6), but the "good" they seek is usually temporary and earthly: good food, financial security, material prosperity, success, and comfortable circumstances. There is nothing inherently wrong with these blessings, but none of them is the highest good. The gracious heart desires something greater: the favor and presence of God. David therefore prays, "Lift up the light of Your countenance upon us, O LORD!" (Ps 4:6). In effect he is saying, "Lord, give us Your favor and assure us of Your lovingkindness, and we will have what matters most." Many spend their lives searching for happiness, but David had discovered its true Source. When God puts grace in the heart, He puts gladness in the heart (Ps 4:7). Thus satisfied in God, David could look at the prosperity of the wicked without either envying or fearing them (cf. Ps 73:2-3, 25-26). He could entrust himself and his circumstances to the Lord and rest peacefully in His sovereign care (Ps 4:8). Ultimately, however, God's saving favor is found in Christ alone, the one Mediator between God and man (1Ti 2:5; Jn 14:6). Therefore, "Tremble, and do not sin" (Ps 4:4), but turn in faith to the only One who can reconcile sinners to God (2Co 5:18-21).

C H Spurgeon - We have now entered upon the third division of the Psalm, in which the faith of the afflicted one finds utterance in sweet expressions of contentment and peace.

There were many, even among David's own followers, who wanted to see rather than to believe. Alas! this is the tendency of us all! Even the regenerate sometimes groan after the sense and sight of prosperity, and are sad when darkness covers all good from view. As for worldlings, this is their unceasing cry.

Who will shew us any good? Never satisfied, their gaping mouths are turned in every direction, their empty hearts are ready to drink in any fine delusion which impostors may invent; and when these fail, they soon yield to despair, and declare that there is no good thing in either heaven or earth. The true believer is a man of a very different mould. His face is not downward like the beasts', but upward like the angels'. He drinks not from the muddy pools of Mammon, but from the fountain of life above. The light of God's countenance is enough for him. This is his riches, his honour, his health, his ambition, his ease. Give him this, and he will ask no more. This is joy unspeakable, and full of glory. Oh, for more of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, that our fellowship with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ may be constant and abiding!

EXPLANATORY NOTES AND QUAIN T SAYINGS

Where Christ reveals himself there is satisfaction in the slenderest portion, and without Christ there is emptiness in the greatest fullness. Alexander Grosse, on enjoying Christ, 1632.

Many, said David, ask who will shew us any good? meaning riches, and honour, and pleasure, which are not good. But when he came to godliness itself, he leaves out "many," and prayeth in his own person, Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us; as if none would join with him. Henry Smith.

Who will shew us any good? This is not a fair translation. The word any is not in the text, nor anything equivalent to it; and not a few have quoted it, and preached upon the text, placing the principal emphasis upon this illegitimate. The place is sufficiently emphatic. There are multitudes who say, Who will shew us good? Man wants good; he hates evil as evil, because he has pain, suffering, and death through it; and he wishes to find that supreme good which will content his heart, and save him from evil. But men mistake this good. They look for a good that is to gratify their passions; they have no notion of any happiness that does not come to them through the medium of their senses. Therefore they reject spiritual good, and they reject the Supreme God, by whom alone all the powers of the soul of man can be gratified. Adam Clarke.

Lift thou up, etc. This was the blessing of the high priest and is the heritage of all the saints. It includes reconciliation, assurance, communion, benediction, in a word, the fulness of God. Oh, to be filled therewith! C.H.S.

HINTS TO THE VILLAGE PREACHER

The cry of the world and the church contrasted. Vox populi not always Vox Dei.

The cravings of the soul all satisfied in God.

Verses 6-7

EXPLANATORY NOTES AND QUAIN T SAYINGS

Lest riches should be accounted evil in themselves, God sometimes gives them to the righteous; and lest they should be considered as the chief good, he frequently bestows them on the wicked. But they are more generally the portion of his enemies than his friends. Alas! what is it to receive and not to be received? to have none other dews of blessing than such as shall be followed by showers of brimstone? We may compass ourselves with sparks of security, and afterwards be secured in eternal misery. This world is a floating island, and so sure as we cast anchor upon it, we shall be carried away by it. God, and all that he has made, is not more than God without anything that he has made. He can never want treasure who has such a golden mine. He is enough without the creature, but the creature is not anything without him. It is, therefore, better to enjoy him without anything else, than to enjoy everything else without him. It is better to be a wooden vessel filled with wine, than a golden one filled with water. William Secker's Nonsuch Professor, 1660.

Lest riches should be accounted evil in themselves, God sometimes gives them to the righteous; and lest they should be considered as the chief good, he frequently bestows them on the wicked. But they are more generally the portion of his enemies than his friends. Alas! what is it to receive and not to be received? to have none other dews of blessing than such as shall be followed by showers of brimstone? We may compass ourselves with sparks of security, and afterwards be secured in eternal misery. This world is a floating island, and so sure as we cast anchor upon it, we shall be carried away by it. God, and all that he has made, is not more than God without anything that he has made. He can never want treasure who has such a golden mine. He is enough without the creature, but the creature is not anything without him. It is, therefore, better to enjoy him without anything else, than to enjoy everything else without him. It is better to be a wooden vessel filled with wine, than a golden one filled with water. William Secker's Nonsuch Professor, 1660.

HINTS TO THE VILLAGE PREACHER

An assurance of the Saviour's love, the source of unrivalled joy.

An assurance of the Saviour's love, the source of unrivalled joy.

James Smith - ONLY GOOD, THE LIGHT OF HIS COUNTENANCE PSALM 4:6

The clamour of many is after the supreme good. Here we have the many asking an important question. It is the voice of the worldling. Many replies have been given and tried, but all to no purpose. What about the Lord's own dear children? They, too, sometimes ask the same question, only in the very next breath they own up to the real source of all good: "Lift Thou up upon us a banner as the light of Thy countenance" (Edersheim). What is the meaning of this? It means that the Psalmist was not so much seeking for good as the Good One; not good in the abstract, but good in the Person; and this is only another way of saying, as he does elsewhere: "I have no good beyond Thee" (Psa. 16:2., R.V.). That is to say, our Heaven is the consciousness of His smile.

"The light of His countenance," meaning the Lord's smile and benediction. The Lord taught Israel it was the best thing Aaron and the priests could ask for Israel (Num. 6:26). This means:

I. Life. For "In the light of the King's countenance is life" (Prov. 16:15).

II. Joy. For "Thou hast made me exceeding glad with Thy countenance" (Psa. 21:6). Quoted "Full of joy" in Acts 2:28.

III. Good. All good. What a word is GOOD! All that that word stands for, and more, we have in Christ.

Overcoming Bad News

Lord, lift up the light of Your countenance upon us. — Psalm 4:6

Today's Scripture : Psalm 4

"There are many who say, 'Who will show us any good?'" (Ps. 4:6). These words of David seem to describe the pessimistic outlook we so easily develop in our world today. The front page of newspapers and the top stories on the Internet or television seem to focus on crime, accidents, politics, the economy, and prominent people behaving badly. Our conversations at work and home begin to dwell on difficulties, and it's enough to discourage anyone. Where can we turn for better news?

In the midst of his troubles, David turned to the Lord, who relieved his distress (v.1) and heard his prayer (v.3). Instead of hoping for temporary good from altered circumstances, he found unceasing encouragement in God. "Lord, lift up the light of Your countenance upon us" (v.6). The result was a gladness of heart that surpassed any earthly prosperity or success (v.7).

Throughout David's life, before and after he became king of Israel, he was never without opposition. But at the end of the day, he could say, "I will both lie down in peace, and sleep; for You alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety" (v.8).

Pondering the truths in Psalm 4 about God's care for us is a good way to begin and end every day. By: David C.

McCasland (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

In His care confiding
I will sweetly sleep,
For the Lord my Savior
Will in safety keep.
—Psalter

God is a safe dwelling place in life's storms.

God is our shelter when life's storms are strongest.
When the storm rages, run to the Rock that cannot be moved.
The safest place in any storm is near to God.
God may not still every storm, but He will shelter us through every storm.
When everything around you is shaking, take refuge in the One who never changes.
Life's storms cannot overwhelm the soul that takes refuge in God.
When the winds rise, remember where your Refuge lies.
God is not merely shelter from the storm; He is security in the storm.
The storm may surround you, but God surrounds the storm.
No storm is greater than the Shelter God provides.
When life's storms threaten, hide yourself in the cleft of the Rock of Ages.
The stronger the storm, the more precious the Shelter.
You don't have to escape the storm to experience God's peace.
The safest dwelling is beneath the shadow of the Almighty. (Ps 91:1)
God is our refuge and strength, always available when trouble comes. (Ps 46:1)
For Psalm 4:8, I especially like:
When you make God your dwelling place, you can rest even while the storm is raging.

Psalm 4:7 You have put gladness in my heart, More than when their grain and new wine abound.

KJV Thou hast put gladness in my heart, more than in the time that their corn and their wine increased.
NET You make me happier than those who have abundant grain and wine.
NLT You have given me greater joy than those who have abundant harvests of grain and new wine.
BGT ὥκας ε φροσ νην ε ς τ ν καρδ αν μου π καιρο σ του κα ο νου κα λα ου α τ ν πληθ νθησαν
LXE Thou hast put gladness into my heart: they have been satisfied with the fruit of their corn and wine and oil.
CSB You have put more joy in my heart than they have when their grain and new wine abound.
ESV You have put more joy in my heart than they have when their grain and wine abound.
NIV You have filled my heart with greater joy than when their grain and new wine abound.
YLT Thou hast given joy in my heart, From the time their corn and their wine Have been multiplied.

- put (KJV): Ps 37:4 Ps 43:4 Ps 63:2-5 Ps 92:4 Song 1:4 1Pe 1:8
- the time (KJV): Judges 9:27 Isa 9:3 Jer 48:33

THE JOY OF THE LORD

IS DAVID'S STRENGTH

You have put gladness ([simchah](#); LXX - [euphrosune](#) - state of happiness, rejoicing, cheerfulness - Acts 2:28, Ps 15:11) **in my heart** ([leb](#); LXX - [kardia](#) = innermost self, source and seat of functions of soul and spirit in the emotional life, the volitional life, the rational life), **More than when their grain and new wine abound.** Notice the words "You have put" are crucial. This speaks of the source of David's joy. One recalls the words of Neh 8:10 "Do not be grieved, for the joy of the LORD is your strength." David does not manufacture this joy. God graciously gives it to him, putting it in the right place, not the head (not intellectual knowledge) but in his heart. His circumstances are still difficult, his enemies are still present, and people around him are asking, "**Who will show us any good?**" (Ps 4:6). Yet David possesses a joy greater than the happiness that those experience when they have an abundant harvest. Note the two sources - supernatural joy versus natural joy. Joy independent of circumstances versus joy dependent on circumstances. While not specifically mentioned the source is surely the Holy Spirit, the "Chief Operating Officer" of the Holy Trinity, bestowing the fruit of joy as in Gal 5:22.

In sum, the imagery of "**grain and new wine**" describes material prosperity and the happiness associated with that prosperity (cf. Dt 7:13; Ps 104:14-15). David is essentially saying "Lord, the joy You give me in adversity is greater than the happiness the world receives from prosperity."

This anticipates Habakkuk's remarkable declaration in Hab 3:17-18

Though the fig tree should not blossom And there be no fruit on the vines,
Though the yield of the olive should fail And the fields produce no food,
Though the flock should be cut off from the fold And there be no cattle in the stalls,
18 Yet I will exult in the LORD, I will rejoice in the God of my salvation.

And Paul expresses the same principle: "Rejoice in the Lord always" (Php 4:4; cf. Jn 15:11; Ro 15:13; 1Pe 1:8).

***Happiness depends on what we have;
biblical joy depends on Whom we have.***

There is an enormous difference between happiness from God's gifts and gladness in God Himself. The first rises and falls with our circumstances; the second rests upon an unchanging God. The world needs favorable circumstances to make the heart glad; God can put gladness in the heart despite unfavorable circumstances.

Gladness (joy, pleasure, delight) ([08057](#)) [simchah](#) rom samach = to rejoice, be glad) is a feminine noun which means joy, gladness (with one's entire being as indicated by its association with the heart cf. Ex 4:14; Ps 19:8; 104:15; 105:3, soul Ps 86:4, cp verb samach in Pr 15:30 = "bright eyes gladden the heart") and refers to both the emotion and the manifestation of the emotion (Ezra 3:12, 13). Simchah refers to the reality, the experience and manifestation of joy and gladness. Joy is happiness over an unanticipated or present good. Delight or gladness in our heart comes from God (Psalm 4:7, cp 2Chr 20:27, 30:21). David prays "make me know joy and gladness (simchah)." (Ps 51:8) God desires that we serve Him with joy (Dt 28:47). Jdg 16:23 describes pagan (Philistines) rejoicing upon conquering their enemy (Israel). We see joy associated with music and/or singing (1Sa 18:6, 1Ki 1:40, 1Chr 15:16, 2Chr 23:18, 29:30). We see joy associated with willing offering from a whole heart (1Chr 29:9, 17). Joy was associated with celebration of the feast (2Chr 30:21, 23, 26, Ezra 6:22) In God's "presence is fullness of joy" (Ps 16:11). God gives a person "gladness of heart" in the labor and toil of this earthly life (Eccl. 5:20). One's wedding day is a day of rejoicing (Song 3:11). The "joy of the godless" is momentary (Job 20:5) because it depends on joy producing circumstances. Even as God can give joy, He can also take it away (Isa 16:10, Jer 7:34, Joel 1:16). One source says simchah has as its root meaning "to shine, to be bright."

SIMCHAH IN PSALMS - Ps. 4:7; Ps. 16:11; Ps. 21:6; Ps. 30:11; Ps. 43:4; Ps. 45:15; Ps. 51:8; Ps. 68:3; Ps. 97:11; Ps. 100:2; Ps. 106:5; Ps. 137:3; Ps. 137:6

SPURGEON - "It is better," said one, "to feel God's favour one hour in our repenting souls, than to sit whole ages under the warmest sunshine that this world affordeth." Christ in the heart is better than corn in the barn, or wine in the vat. Corn and wine are but fruits of the world, but the light of God's countenance is the ripe fruit of heaven. "Thou art with me," is a far more blessed cry than "Harvest home." Let my granary be empty, I am yet full of blessings if Jesus Christ smiles upon me; but if I have all the world, I am poor without him.

We should not fail to remark that this verse is the saying of the righteous man, in opposition to the saying of the many. How quickly doth the tongue betray the character! "Speak, that I may see thee!" said Socrates to a fair boy. The metal of a bell is best known by its sound. Birds reveal their nature by their song. Owls cannot sing the carol of the lark, nor can the nightingale hoot like the owl. Let us, then, weigh and watch our words, lest our speech should prove us to be foreigners, and aliens from the commonwealth of Israel.

The believer's joys.

(1) Their source, Thou; (2) Their season even now Thou hast; (3) Their position, in my heart; (4) Their excellence, more than in the time that their corn and their wine increased.

Another excellent theme suggests itself "The superiority of the joys of grace to the joys of earth;" or, "Two sorts of prosperity which is to be the more desired?"

EXPLANATORY NOTES AND QUIANT SAYINGS

What madness and folly is it that the favourites of heaven should envy the men of the world, who at best do but feed upon the scraps that come from God's table! Temporals are the bones; spirituals are the marrow. Is it below a man to envy the dogs, because of the bones? And is it not much more below a Christian to envy others for temporals, when himself enjoys spirituals? Thomas Brooks.

Thou hast put gladness in my heart. The comforts which God reserves for his mourners are filling comforts (Romans 15:13); "The God of hope fill you with joy" (John 16:24); "Ask that your joy may be full." When God pours in the joys of heaven they fill the heart, and make it run over (2 Corinthians 7:4); "I am exceeding joyful;" the Greek is, I overflow with joy, as a cup that is filled with wine till it runs over. Outward comforts can no more fill the heart than a triangle can fill a circle. Spiritual joys are satisfying (Psalms 63:5); "My heart shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips;" "Thou hast put gladness in my heart." Worldly joys do put gladness into the face, but the spirit of God puts gladness into the heart; divine joys are heart joys (Zechariah 10:7 John 16:22); "Your heart shall rejoice" (Luke 1:47); "My spirit rejoiced in God." And to show how filling these comforts are, which are of a heavenly extraction, the psalmist says they create greater joy than when "corn and wine increase." Wine and oil may delight but not satisfy; they have their vacuity and indigence. We may say, as Zechariah 10:2, "They comfort in vain;" outward comforts do sooner cloy than cheer, and sooner weary than fill. Xerxes offered great rewards to him that could find out a new pleasure; but the comforts of the Spirit are satisfactory, they recruit the heart (Psalms 94:19), "Thy comforts delight my soul." There is as much difference between heavenly comforts and earthly, as between a banquet that is eaten, and one that is painted on the wall. Thomas Watson.

John Butler - REAL JOY - [Sermon Starters](#)

Psalm 4:7 "Thou hast put gladness in my heart more than in the time that their corn and wine increased" (Psalm 4:7).

We used to sing a chorus when I was a boy which said, "If you want joy, real joy, let Jesus come into your heart." That agrees with our text which speaks of real joy.

FIRST—THE SOURCE OF THIS JOY

"Thou." True joy is found where few look for it. It is found in the Lord. True joy is not found in money. Carnegie said, "Millionaires seldom smile. Jay Gould, a multi-millionaire said, when dying, "I suppose I am the most miserable devil on the earth." True joy is not found in fleshly pleasure. Lord Byron, who drunk deep of every forbidden fruit of fleshly pleasure wrote on his last birthday, "My days are in the yellow leaf, the flowers and fruits of life are gone, the worm, the canker and grief are mine alone." True joy is not found in rejection of God. Voltaire, a most famous infidel wrote, "I wish I had never been born." True joy is in the Lord. Marcus Dodds, a great world traveler said, "I have been to every land on which the sun shines and never have I anywhere seen a single happy hopeful face among women where the Gospel of Jesus Christ has not been preached." Apostle Paul told the Philippian saints to, "Rejoice in the Lord" (Philippians 4:4). That's where real joy is. Paul did not say to rejoice in their circumstances, for they were very bad at that time. True joy is in the Lord.

SECOND—THE SITE OF THIS JOY

"In my heart." The kind of joy we are speaking about is the joy of the heart. It is joy that is deep joy, it is real joy. Much joy today is only surface joy and not deep joy. It is not stable and this joy can leave quickly. Often our joy is in things that are not lasting or steadfast. That is not the joy of the heart. People get joy when their team scores points but the other team may score points shortly thereafter, so what happens to your joy then? This joy of our text is in the heart where real joy is.

THIRD—THE SUPERIORITY OF THIS JOY

"More than in the time that their grain and wine increased." This joy of our text is superior joy. The psalmist compares it to the joy of prosperity and it excels that joy, it is "more" in both quantity and quality. It lasts longer and is more abundant. This joy is superior in that it satisfies. The world does not satisfy. There is nothing in the world that can compare to this joy. When I was a boy we did not have much. My father was forced off the farm by the depression and dust storms of the thirties. Today we would have been the target of all sorts of welfare programs—food stamps and the like. But Dad was a worker and worked hard for small pay. In spite of the fact we did not have much we did have the Lord and we were a very happy family. Every night we gathered together as a family

in our living room and Dad read the Scripture and prayed. Today, we are not so poor, but we still find our chief joy in the Lord. It is superior to any joy of this world.

What's In A Smile?

You have put gladness in my heart. — Psalm 4:7

Today's Scripture : Psalm 4:1-8

According to an article in The New York Times, the act of smiling can promote good feelings. Writer Daniel Goleman cites experiments in which researchers found that saying the word cheese caused a person to smile, which in turn created pleasant feelings. On the other hand, saying the word frow created a different facial expression, which resulted in negative emotions.

Interesting as such a study may be, there's a better way to have peace and gladness. It works from the inside out, not from the outside in.

In Psalm 4, David set forth several courses of action he took when he was feeling deeply distressed. He asked God for relief and mercy (v.1). He took comfort in knowing that he was favored by Him and that the Lord heard him when he called (v.3). David was quiet before God (v.4). He did what was right and put his trust in Him (v.5). He rested in the assurance of God's peace and safety (v.8). David was confident that he would receive gladness in his heart (v.7) as a gift from God, not as the result of some forced smile that might bring a temporary good feeling.

Father, help us in our low moments to look up to You. Grant us the peace and gladness that David experienced when he called on You. —By: Mart DeHaan (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

A smile may help to lift our load
When filled with anxious care,
But trusting God brings inner peace
And joy beyond compare.
—Sper

The heart touched by God's grace brings joy to the face.

A heart filled with God's joy cannot help but brighten the face.
When grace fills the heart, joy finds its way to the face.
God's grace in the heart puts gladness on the face.
A joyful face is often the overflow of a grace-filled heart.
The smile on the face often begins with grace in the heart.
When God's grace reaches the heart, His joy becomes visible.
Grace received within produces gladness seen without.
A heart resting in God has reason to smile.
God's grace changes the heart, and the heart changes the countenance.
The joy of the Lord within has a way of showing without.
A glad heart gives light to the face. (Pr 15:13)
The face often reveals what grace is doing in the heart.
Grace in the heart becomes sunshine on the face.
A heart looking to God can wear a face filled with hope.

Sweet Rest -

You have put gladness in my heart. —Psalm 4:7

Try as we might—tossing, turning, fluffing the pillow, pounding the pillow—sometimes we just can't fall asleep. After offering some

good suggestions on how to get a better night's sleep, a news article concluded that there really is no "right way" to sleep.

There are numerous reasons why sleep eludes us, many of which we can't do much about. But sometimes unwanted wakefulness is caused by anxious thoughts, worry, or guilt. It's then that the example of David in Psalm 4 can help. He called out to God, asking for mercy and for God to hear his prayer (v.1). He also reminded himself that the Lord does hear him when he calls on Him (v.3). David encourages us: "Meditate within your heart on your bed, and be still" (v.4). Focusing our minds on the goodness, mercy, and love of God for His world, our loved ones, and ourselves can aid us in trusting the Lord (v.5).

The Lord desires to help us set aside our worries about finding solutions to our problems and place our trust in Him to work things out. He can "put gladness" in our hearts (v.7), so that we might "lie down in peace, and sleep; for You alone, O Lord, make [us] dwell in safety" (v.8). - David Egner (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Give me a spirit of peace, dear Lord,
Midst the storms and the tempests that roll,
That I may find rest and quiet within,
A calm buried deep in my soul.
—Dawe

Even when we cannot sleep, God can give us rest.

INSIGHT: The Bible is not an unrealistic book, for it expresses the full range of human experience. Yet the negative is often accompanied by a redeeming faith in God that helped the writers to endure trials and strengthened their character—and it does the same for us today. This psalm by King David is animated with a variety of life experiences. He takes both the good and the bad and projects them heavenward to God in prayer. He writes: "I will both lie down in peace, and sleep; for You alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety" (v.8). The peace available to us in God quiets us in a way that the world does not understand or enjoy.

Charles Stanley - THE POWER OF SOLITUDE - [I Lift Up My Soul: Devotions to Start Your Day with God - Page 12](#)

SCRIPTURE READING: PSALM 4:1–8

KEY VERSE: PSALM 4:7

You have put gladness in my heart,
More than in the season that their grain and wine increased.

The phrase "quiet time" has become widely used in Christian circles over the past several years. Preachers preach it, teachers teach it, and prayer warriors rely on it. However, when we say "quiet time," what are we really thinking? (**ED:** SEE [Quiet Time: 7 Minutes With God](#) AND [Thoughts on the Quiet Time](#))

Most likely, as you read this very passage, you are in the midst of your own quiet time. Perhaps you have soft Christian music in the background, a Bible on the table, and a soothing cup of coffee at your side. Maybe you have a cat nestled at your feet, and a lovely green yard outside the window. What warm and comfortable images!

All of these things are conducive to a refreshing prayer experience, a lengthy discussion with the Lord, or a moment of individual worship. However, even this peaceful scene is full of distractions.

Right now, you are actively reading; in a moment, you will spend a minute or two in prayer. However, this is not true "quiet time." Your mind is full of thoughts, words, and quiet conversation. Although this time is vital, it is not solitude.

Richard Foster writes, "Without silence, there is no solitude." A true moment of silence does not involve formulating your next thought or action, but instead is a moment of complete silence. Calm your mind, and even stop praying for a moment. Sit back and listen for a while. You may be surprised by what you hear.

Lord, I am unaccustomed to solitude—the deep silence in which You dwell. Teach me how to quiet the noise around me to hear Your voice.

What Is Your 'Set Point'?

You have put gladness in my heart. — Psalm 4:7

Today's Scripture : Psalm 4:1-8

David Lykken, Emeritus Professor at the University of Minnesota, has developed what he calls a "set point" theory of happiness. He

contends that most people return to their previous level of happiness within 6 months to a year after dramatic events like the sorrow of losing a loved one or the thrill of moving into a dream home. He calls that original reference point of happiness their “set point.”

The Christian, however, has a different kind of “set point”—one that does not depend on the normal highs and lows of human experience. The Bible tells us to find our joy and sense of well-being in the unchanging God rather than in our changing circumstances. The psalmist David praised the Lord, saying, “You have put gladness in my heart, more than in the season that their grain and wine increased” (4:7). He had a source of joy that was not tied to economic prosperity. In fact, the gladness God gave him was greater than that from any financial windfall.

We will have the same experience as the psalmist when we stop saying, “I would be happier if . . .,” and begin affirming, “I am thankful to God because . . .” Joy that is centered in our unchanging God, no matter what our circumstances, should be the Christian’s “set point.” By: David C. McCasland (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Reflect & Pray

Now none but Christ can satisfy,
None other name for me;
There's love and life and lasting joy,
Lord Jesus, found in Thee.
—McGranahan

To know lasting happiness, we must get to know Jesus.

Psalm 4:8 In peace I will both lie down and sleep, For You alone, O LORD, make me to dwell in safety.

KJV I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for thou, LORD, only makest me dwell in safety.

NET I will lie down and sleep peacefully, for you, LORD, make me safe and secure.

NLT In peace I will lie down and sleep, for you alone, O LORD, will keep me safe.

BGT ν ε ρ ν π τ α τ κοιμηθ σομαι κα πν σω τι σ κ ρ ι ε κατ μ ν ας π λ π δι κατ κ ι σ ς με

LXE I will both lie down in peace and sleep: for thou, Lord, only hast caused me to dwell securely.

CSB I will both lie down and sleep in peace, for You alone, LORD, make me live in safety.

ESV In peace I will both lie down and sleep; for you alone, O LORD, make me dwell in safety.

NIV I will lie down and sleep in peace, for you alone, O LORD, make me dwell in safety.

YLT In peace together I lie down and sleep, For Thou, O Jehovah, alone, In confidence dost cause me to dwell!

- I will (KJV): Ps 3:5 Ps 16:8 Job 11:18,19 Pr 3:24 1Th 4:13,14 1Th 5:10 Rev 14:13
- for (KJV): Lev 25:18,19 Lev 26:5 De 12:10 De 33:27-29 Eze 34:25 Ho 2:18 Ro 8:35-39

In peace I will both lie down and sleep, (Job11:18,19; Ps3:5): How is this possible? Why is he able to do this?

For You alone, O LORD, make me to dwell in safety. (Lv25:18,19; 26:5; Dt12:10):

C H Spurgeon - Sweet Evening Hymn! I shall not sit up to watch through fear, but I will lie down; and then I will not lie awake listening to every rustling sound, but I will lie down in peace and sleep, for I have nought to fear. He that hath the wings of God above him needs no other curtain. Better than bolts or bars is the protection of the Lord. Armed men kept the bed of Solomon, but we do not believe that he slept more soundly than his father, whose bed was the hard ground, and who was haunted by blood-thirsty foes. Note the word only, which means that God alone was his keeper, and that though alone, without man's help, he was even then in good keeping, for he was "alone with God." A quiet conscience is a good bedfellow. How many of our sleepless hours might be traced to our untrusting and disordered minds. They slumber sweetly whom faith rocks to sleep. No pillow so soft as a promise; no coverlet so warm as an assured interest in Christ.

O Lord, give us this calm repose on thee, that like David we may lie down in peace, and sleep each night while we live; and joyfully

may we lie down in the appointed season, to sleep in death, to rest in God!

Dr. Hawker's reflection upon this Psalm is worthy to be prayed over and fed upon with sacred delight. We cannot help transcribing it.

"Reader! let us never lose sight of the Lord Jesus while reading this Psalm. He is the Lord our righteousness; and therefore, in all our approaches to the mercy seat, let us go there in a language corresponding to this which calls Jesus the Lord our righteousness. While men of the world, from the world are seeking their chief good, let us desire his favour which infinitely transcends corn and wine, and all the good things which perish in the using. Yes, Lord, thy favour is better than life itself. Thou causest them that love thee to inherit substance, and fillest all their treasure.

"Oh! thou gracious God and Father, hast thou in such a wonderful manner set apart one in our nature for thyself? Hast thou indeed chosen one out of the people? Hast thou beheld him in the purity of his nature, as one in every point Godly? Hast thou given him as the covenant of the people? And hast thou declared thyself well pleased in him? Oh! then, well may my soul be well pleased in him also. Now do I know that my God and Father will hear me when I call upon him in Jesus' name, and when I look up to him for acceptance for Jesus' sake! Yes, my heart is fixed, O Lord, my heart is fixed; Jesus is my hope and righteousness; the Lord will hear me when I call. And henceforth will I both lay me down in peace and sleep securely in Jesus, accepted in the Beloved; for this is the rest wherewith the Lord causeth the weary to rest, and this is the refreshing."

EXPLANATORY NOTES AND QUAINT SAYINGS

It is said of the husbandman, that having cast his seed into the ground, he sleeps and riseth day and night, and the seed springs and grows he knoweth not how. Mark 4:26, Mark 4:27. So a good man having by faith and prayer cast his care upon God, he resteth night and day, and is very easy, leaving it to his God to perform all things for him according to his holy will. Matthew Henry.

When you have walked with God from morning until night, it remaineth that you conclude the day well, when you would give yourself to rest at night. Wherefore, first, look back and take a strict view of your whole carriage that day past. Reform what you find amiss; and rejoice, or be grieved, as you find you have done well or ill, as you have advanced or declined in grace that day. Secondly, since you cannot sleep in safety if God, who is your keeper (Psalms 121:4-5), do not wake and watch for you (Psalms 127:1); and though you have God to watch when you sleep, you cannot be safe, if he that watcheth be your enemy. Wherefore it is very convenient that at night you renew and confirm your peace with God by faith and prayer, commending and committing yourself to God's tuition by prayer (Psalms 3:4-5 Psalms 92:2), with thanksgiving before you go to bed. Then shall you lie down in safety. Psalms 4:8. All this being done, yet while you are putting off your apparel, when you are lying down, and when you are in bed, before you sleep, it is good that you commune with your own heart. Psalms 4:4. If possibly you can fall asleep with some heavenly meditation, then will your sleep be more sweet (Proverbs 3:21, Proverbs 3:24-25); and more secure (Proverbs 6:21-22); your dreams fewer, or more comfortable; your head will be fuller of good thoughts (Proverbs 6:22), and your heart will be in a better frame when you awake, whether in the night or in the morning. Condensed from Henry Scudder's Daily Walk, 1633.

I will both, etc. We have now to retire for a moment from the strife of tongues and the open hostility of foes, into the stillness and privacy of the chamber of sleep. Here, also, we find the "I will" of trust. I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep; for thou, Lord, only makest me dwell in safety. God is here revealed to us as exercising personal care in the still chamber. And there is something here which should be inexpressibly sweet to the believer, for this shows the minuteness of God's care, the individuality of his love; how it condescends and stoops, and acts, not only in great, but also in little spheres; not only where glory might be procured from great results, but where nought is to be had save the gratitude and love of a poor feeble creature, whose life has been protected and preserved, in a period of helplessness and sleep. How blessed would it be if we made larger recognition of God in the still chamber; if we thought of him as being there in all hours of illness, of weariness, and pain; if we believed that his interest and care are as much concentrated upon the feeble believer there as upon his people when in the wider battle field of the strife of tongues. There is something inexpressibly touching in this "lying down" of the Psalmist. In thus lying down he voluntarily gave up any guardianship of himself; he resigned himself into the hands of another; he did so completely, for in the absence of all care he slept; there was here a perfect trust. Many a believer lies down, but it is not to sleep. Perhaps he feels safe enough so far as his body is concerned, but cares and anxieties invade the privacy of his chamber; they come to try his faith and trust; they threaten, they frighten, and alas! prove too strong for trust. Many a poor believer might say, "I will lay me down, but not to sleep." The author met with a touching instance of this, in the case of an aged minister whom he visited in severe illness. This worthy man's circumstances were narrow, and his family trials were great; he said, "The doctor wants me to sleep, but how can I sleep with care sitting on my pillow?" It is the experience of some of the Lord's people, that although equal to an emergency or a continued pressure, a re-action sets in afterwards; and when they come to be alone their spirits sink, and they do not realise that strength from God, or feel that confidence in him which they felt while the pressure was exerting its force. ... There is a trial in stillness; and oftentimes the still chamber makes a larger demand upon loving trust than the battle field. O that we could trust God more and more with personal things! O that he were the God of our chamber, as well as of our temples and houses! O that we could bring him more and more into the minutiae of daily life! If we did thus, we should experience a measure of rest to which we are, perhaps, strangers now; we should have less dread of

the sick chamber; we should have that unharassed mind which conduces most to repose, in body and soul; we should be able to say, "I will lie down and sleep, and leave to-morrow with God!" Ridley's brother offered to remain with him during the night preceeding his martyrdom, but the bishop declined, saying, that "he meant to go to bed, and sleep as quietly as ever he did in his life." Philip Bennett Power's 'I Wills' of the Psalms.

Due observation of Providence will both beget and secure inward tranquillity in your minds amidst the vicissitudes and revolutions of things in this unstable vain world. I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep; for the Lord only maketh me dwell in safety. He resolves that sinful fears of events shall not rob him of his inward quiet, nor torture his thoughts with anxious presages; he will commit all his concerns into that faithful fatherly hand that had hitherto wrought all things for him; and he means not to lose the comfort of one night's rest, nor bring the evil of to-morrow upon the day; but knowing in whose hand he was, wisely enjoys the sweet felicity of a resigned will. Now this tranquillity of our minds is as much begotten and preserved by a due consideration of providence as by anything whatsoever. John Flavel, 1627-1691.

Happy is the Christian, who having nightly with this verse, committed himself to his bed as to his grave, shall at last, with the same words, resign himself to his grave as to his bed, from which he expects in due time to arise, and sing a morning hymn with the children of the resurrection. George Horne, D.D., 1776.

Sleep,

"How blessed was that sleep The sinless Saviour knew! In vain the storm-sinds blew, Till he awoke to others woes, And hushed the billows to repose.

How beautiful is sleep The sleep that Christians know! Ye mourners! cease your woe, While soft upon his Saviour's breast, The righteous sinks to endless rest."

Mrs. M'Cartree.

HINTS TO THE VILLAGE PREACHER

The peace and safety of the good man. Joseph Lathrop, D.D., 1805.

A bedchamber for believers, a vesper song to sing in it, and a guard to keep the door.

The Christian's good night.

Psalm 4:9 In peace I will both lie down and sleep, For You alone, O LORD, make me to dwell in safety.

WORK UPON THE FOURTH PSALM

Choice and Practical Expositions on four select Psalms: namely the Fourth Psalm in eight Sermons, etc. By THOMAS HORTON, D.D. 1675.

Meditations, Critical and Practical, on Psalm IV., in Archbishop Leighton's Works.

Robert Hawker - I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for thou, Lord, only makest me dwell in safety.—Psalm 4:8.

My soul! it is blessed, indeed, to lie down or arise, when Jesus is thy rest and refreshment! But, void of security and safety in him, both the daylight and the darkness have their horrors. And how unsatisfying is every thing where Jesus is not! This is strikingly exemplified, day by day, among all carnal characters. "There be many," saith the psalmist, (in this divine psalm,) "There be many that say, who will show us any good?" Yea, the whole world, who know not the blessedness of Jesus, will thus say! What a busy life some men make of it! And what is it for? Be their pursuits what they may; let them be ever so much diversified, one object is the aim of all. The apostle hath said what it is; "to make provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof." (Rom. 13:14.) My soul! what is the first and last, the greatest and most momentous desire of thine affections? Canst thou, and dost thou adopt the words of the psalmist, in this sweet psalm: "Lord! lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon me: and it shall put more gladness in my heart than in the time that corn and wine increase?" Oh! the blessedness of such a state! May it be mine! Dearest Lord Jesus! grant it me day by day; and in the evening and night-watches, let thy sweet visits be unceasingly renewing: and then will I take this precious portion for my song, both when undressing for the bed of sleep, and the bed of death: "I will lay me down in peace, and sleep: for thou, Lord, only makest me dwell in safety!"

Robert Morgan - Sweet Dreams [From This Verse: 365 Scriptures That Changed the World](#)

We've been working with a high school student named Eric whose newfound Christianity is ... well, under construction. The other day, for example, he told me of sharing Christ to friends at school.

"How did it go?" I asked.

"Not so well," replied Eric. "When my friend didn't listen to me, we got into an argument, and I slapped him across the face."

"Eric," I moaned, "We've got to work on your witnessing techniques."

We've also had to work on his dreams. Shortly after his conversion, Eric complained of vivid, recurring nightmares. "I'm clinging to a cliff," he told us, "about to drop. A friend is gripping me by the arm, and I'm screaming for her to pull me up. But a dark figure whispers in her ear. She lets go of me, and I plunge into the chasm and wake up in terror." **NOW THE DAY IS OVER**

"When I finally go back to sleep, I dream I'm in a boat. Another friend smiles at me, but then pushes me into the water. When I scream for help, she runs over me with the boat. I start sinking, going down and down and down until I descend into a ring of fire. Then a black figure approaches me, saying, 'This is where you belong and this is where you will stay.' Fire explodes all around me, and I wake up drenched in sweat."

"How can I get rid of these dreams?" Eric asked.

We offered a simple suggestion: "Try memorizing Psalm 4:8 and fall asleep quoting it. Ask the Lord to use it to drive away the nightmares."

Eric took our advice. He memorized the verse before bedtime one evening, and now he falls asleep meditating on it.

It has proved effective.

"I have never had the nightmares since," said Eric, grinning. "I lie down now, and I sleep in peace, because the Lord alone makes me dwell in safety."

Today's Suggested Reading

Psalm 4:1–8

I will both lie down in peace, and sleep; for You alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety. Psalm 4:8

Kenneth Osbeck - March 30 NOW THE DAY IS OVER [Amazing Grace: 366 Inspiring Hymn Stories for Daily Devotions](#) or [BORROW](#)

Sabine Baring-Gould, 1834–1924

I will lie down and sleep in peace, for You alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety. (Psalm 4:8)

Upon God's care I lay me down, as a child upon its mother's breast;

No silken couch, nor softest bed could ever give me such deep rest.

—Unknown

Trusting God throughout the day allows us to rest peacefully at night. Fear and anxiety are the chief causes of the tension that leads to disturbed rest. And sound rest is an absolute necessity for the renewing of our bodies, minds, and emotions. Only a peaceful relationship with God and with others allows us this total renewal at the close of each day. We must learn to relax and release our cares and burdens to the Lord and then claim His promised rest.

'Tis sweet to keep my hand in His, while all is dim—

To close my weary, aching eyes, and trust in Him!

—Unknown

Whenever there are those occasional times when sleep eludes us, it is important to center our thoughts on God, the Scriptures, and the loving concern of the Lord rather than upon the solving of life's many problems.

"Now the Day is Over" was written by Sabine Baring-Gould (composer of "Onward, Christian Soldiers"). The author, a minister in the Anglican church, was recognized as one of England's most prolific writers of his time. Baring-Gould wrote this charming text for the children of his parish at Horbury Bridge, near Wakefield, England. It was based on Proverbs 3:24—"When thou liest down, thou shalt not be afraid; yea, thou shalt lie down, and thy sleep shall be sweet." The hymn first appeared in the Church Times on March 16, 1865. It is still a favorite hymn with children everywhere.

Now the day is over, night is drawing nigh; shadows of the evening steal across the sky.

Jesus, give the weary calm and sweet repose; with Thy tend' rest blessing may mine eyelids close.

Thru the long night-watches may Thine angels spread their white wings above me, watching round my bed.

When the morning wakens, then may I arise pure and fresh and sinless in Thy holy eyes.

For Today: Psalm 3:5; Psalm 37:7; Psalm 63:1–8; Psalm 139:11, 12

Determine to begin and end each day with your mind centered on God. Thank Him for providing the renewal of your body, mind, and emotions. Sing and share this lovely children's hymn before retiring—

Always Awake

I will both lie down in peace, and sleep; for You alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety. —Psalm 4:8

Today's Scripture : Psalm 121

A mother and her 4-year-old daughter were preparing for bed. The child was afraid of the dark. When the lights were turned off, the girl noticed the moon shining through the window. "Mommy," she asked, "is that God's light up there?" "Yes, it is," came the reply. Soon another question: "Will He put it out and go to sleep too?" "Oh no, He never goes to sleep." After a few silent moments, the little girl said, "As long as God is awake, I'm not scared." Realizing that the Lord would be watching over her, the reassured child soon fell into a peaceful sleep.

As Christians, we may confidently commit both the night and the day to our ever-faithful God. He is fully aware of our fears in the dark as well as our frustrations in the light. We can be assured of His constant care. His loving eye and protecting hand are always upon us.

Perhaps you face lonely hours because of illness or the loss of a loved one. The shadows of the night make the anxiety of your situation seem greater than ever. Doubts arise and fears flood your soul, robbing you of your needed rest.

Trust the heavenly Father, and with the psalmist you will be able to say, "I will both lie down in peace, and sleep; for You alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety" (Psalm 4:8). Remember, God is always awake. By: Paul Van Gorder (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

In His care confiding
I will sweetly sleep,
For the Lord my Savior
Will in safety keep.
—Psalter

If you have trouble getting to sleep, try resting in the Lord.

When you cannot sleep, rest in the One who never does. (Ps 121:3–4)

If worries keep you awake, turn them into prayers.

Rest comes easier when your burdens are resting with God.

Give God your worries before you give your head to the pillow.

The safest pillow is trust in the promises of God.

Before you close your eyes, place your cares in God's hands.

A heart at rest in God can rest through the night.

Don't take tomorrow's worries to bed with you; leave them with God.

Sleep comes easier when faith has put worry to bed.

Let prayer be the last conversation of your day.

You can sleep because your Keeper never does. (Ps 121:4)

Faith rests because God remains awake.

When anxiety says, "Stay awake," faith says, "God is watching."

Close the day with prayer and your eyes with trust.

Leave your problems with God; He'll be awake all night anyway.

You can rest through the night because God watches through the night.

Tossing and Turning

In peace I will lie down and sleep, for you alone, Lord, make me dwell in safety. Psalm 4:8

Today's Scripture & Insight : Psalm 4

What keeps you awake at night? Lately I've been losing sleep, tossing and turning on my bed, trying to work out a solution to an issue. Eventually I begin fretting about not getting enough rest to handle the challenges of the next day!

Sound familiar? Troubled relationships, an uncertain future, whatever it is—we all give in to worry at one point or another.

King David was clearly in distress when he penned Psalm 4. People were ruining his reputation with groundless accusations (v. 2). And some were questioning his competency to rule (v. 6). David probably felt angry for being treated so unfairly. Surely he could have spent nights stewing about it. Yet we read these remarkable words: “In peace I will lie down and sleep” (v. 8).

Charles Spurgeon explains verse 8 beautifully: “In thus lying down, . . . [David] resigned himself into the hands of another; he did so completely, for in the absence of all care, he slept; there was here a perfect trust.” What inspired this trust? From the start, David was confident that God would answer his prayers (v. 3). And he was sure that since God had chosen to love him, He would lovingly meet his needs.

May God help us to rest in His power and presence when worries threaten. In His sovereign and loving arms, we can “lie down and sleep.” By: Poh Fang Chia (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Reflect & Pray

Dear Father, thank You for hearing me when I call. I surrender my worries to You and rest in Your power and presence.

We can entrust our cares to a wholly trustworthy God.

Sweet Slumber

I will both lie down in peace, and sleep; for You alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety. —Psalm 4:8

Today's Scripture : Leviticus 26:1-12

Photographer Anne Geddes has made an art form out of taking pictures of sleeping babies. Her photos evoke smiles. Nothing is a better image of peace than a sleeping child.

But between naps and nighttime, caring for children is an exhausting and relentless responsibility. In their innocence and enthusiasm, children can get themselves into life-threatening situations in no time. After a hectic day of chasing, entertaining, protecting, feeding, dressing, guarding, guiding, and making peace between squabbling siblings, parents are eager for bedtime. After the toys are put away and the pajamas are put on, the sleepy toddler slows down, cuddles with mom or dad for a bedtime story, and finally falls asleep. Later, before putting themselves to bed, parents check on their children one more time to make sure all is peaceful in dreamland. The serene beauty of a sleeping child makes all the day's frustrations worthwhile.

Scripture indicates that God's ideal condition for His children is peace (Lev. 26:6), but too often in our immaturity we get into trouble and cause conflict. Like parents of young children, God desires for us to become weary of wrongdoing and to rest in the safety and contentment of His loving ways. By: Julie Ackerman Link (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Lord, help me not to squabble and cause friction with others about unimportant matters. May I instead find rest in Your love and wisdom, and seek peace. Amen.

In His will is our peace. —Dante

Rest—In Peace

I will both lie down in peace, and sleep; for You alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety. —Psalm 4:8

Today's Scripture : Psalm 4:1-8

Some time ago I read about a youngster who was rattling off the words of this bedtime prayer:

Now I lay me down to sleep,
I pray Thee, Lord, my soul to keep;
If I should die before I wake,
I pray Thee, Lord, my soul to take.

But when he came to the line “If I should die before I wake,” he got mixed up and said, “If I should wake before I die.”

This started me thinking. Many people lay their heads on their pillows at night without being sure of the destiny of their souls should

they die before they wake. Others have so much anxiety about the next day that they would prefer to die before they wake. Family problems, emotional struggles, or employment difficulties make them wish they would be taken out of this life before the morning sun forces them to face another agonizing day.

This doesn't need to be our experience. By placing our trust in the Lord, we can close our eyes at night with the assurance that the problems of tomorrow will not be greater than the God of eternity. Yes, we can fall asleep with the confidence that we are in God's care. We can have the certainty that whether we die before we wake, or wake before we die, all is well. By: Richard DeHaan (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Tomorrow's plans I do not know,
I only know this minute;
But He will say, "This is the way,
Don't be afraid, walk in it."
—Anon.

When you put your cares in God's hands, He puts his peace in your heart.

Put your worries in God's hands and leave them there.
Give God your anxiety, and receive His peace.
What you place in God's hands you no longer need to carry in your heart.
Turn your cares into prayers, and God will turn your anxiety into peace.
Prayer transfers the burden from your shoulders to God's hands.
When worries become prayers, anxiety gives way to peace.
Cast your cares on God and rest in His care for you. (1Pe 5:7)
The heart that gives its burdens to God makes room for the peace of God.
God's peace begins where our anxious grasping ends.
Take your burden to the throne and leave with peace in your heart.
Don't carry what God has invited you to cast upon Him. (Ps 55:22)
The burden surrendered to God becomes the birthplace of peace.
Prayer may not immediately change your circumstances, but it can change the heart facing them.
Place tomorrow in God's hands and receive His peace for today.
God's peace guards the heart that entrusts its cares to Him. (Php 4:6–7)

REST IN PEACE

I will both lie down in peace, and sleep; for You alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety. —Psalm 4:8

A man has created a safety bed which he claims will provide protection against hurricanes, tornadoes, thieves, kidnappers and terrorists. The inventor's website calls it "the safest rest you've ever had."

When a motion sensor detects a threat, the 'Quantum Sleeper' automatically folds up around its occupant. Inside the bulletproof canopy an alarm awakens the protected sleeper, who can spray tear gas on the intruder—or watch a film on the DVD player while waiting out a storm. Even so, I suspect that not even an armoured bed can guarantee a good night's sleep untouched by anxiety or fear.

Psalm 4:4-5 has a three part recipe for finding peace in a troubled world: When you're angry, don't express it by disobeying God. Live sacrificially, putting your trust in the Lord. An old hymn (Play [Leaning on the Everlasting Arms](#)) affirms this biblical instruction:

Leaning, leaning, safe and secure from all alarms;
Leaning, leaning, leaning on the everlasting arms.

David concluded his psalm, "I will both lie down in peace, and sleep; for You alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety" (v.8). And that is without a doubt the safest rest we'll ever have. -- David C. McCasland (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

HE RESTS WELL WHO RESTS IN JESUS.

Quiet Rest

I will both lie down in peace, and sleep; for You alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety. —Psalm 4:8

Today's Scripture & Insight: Mark 6:30-32;

Some years ago my son Brian and I agreed to haul some equipment into an isolated Idaho backcountry ranch for a friend. There are no roads into the area, at least none that my truck could negotiate. So Ralph, the young ranch manager, arranged to meet us at road's end with a small wagon hitched to a pair of mules.

On the way into the ranch, Ralph and I started chatting and I learned that he lived on the property year-round. "What do you do in the winter?" I asked, knowing that winters in the high country were long and bitter and that the ranch had no electricity or telephone service, only a satellite radio. "How do you endure it?"

"Actually," he drawled, "I find it right peaceable."

In the midst of our pressure-filled days, we sometimes crave peace and quiet. There is too much noise in the air; there are too many people around. We want to "come aside . . . and rest a while" (Mark 6:31). Can we find a place to do this?

Yes, there is such a place. When we take a few moments to reflect on God's love and mercy and cast our burdens on Him, we will find in that quiet God-filled space the peace that the world has taken away. By: David H. Roper (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

There is a place of quiet rest,
Near to the heart of God,
A place where all is joy and peace,
Near to the heart of God.
—McAfee

Spending quiet time with God will bring quiet rest.

G Campbell Morgan - Ps. 4:8

Thou, Lord, alone makest me dwell in safety.—Psa. 4.8

This was a song at eventide, a meditation at the close of a day which had been by no means free from trouble. It has been very generally associated with the previous Psalm as having been written during the period of Absalom's rebellion. This suggestion is entirely speculative, and certainly not proven. The value of it remains, whatever the local circumstances which gave rise to it. It is the song of a soul, keenly conscious of the difficulties of life, and of hostile forces; but completely confident in God. The meditation closes with words expressing the singer's determination to lie down and sleep; and giving the reason for this determination. This reason is declared in these last words of the Psalm. We are in danger of missing something of their beauty by treating the word "alone" as though it meant only, and relating it to Jehovah, as though it meant that only Jehovah could do this. While that is true, it is not what the singer meant. The thought of the word alone is "in loneliness," or as Rotherham renders it "in seclusion"; and the word refers to the one who is going to sleep. This is a glorious conception of sleep. Jehovah gathers the trusting soul into a place of safety by taking it away from all the things which trouble or harass. The difficulties and dangers, the mocking foes and opposing forces, are all excluded by Jehovah; and the tried and tired child of His love is pavilioned in His peace. The soul trusting completely in God, may ever lie down under the wing of the night singing.

Upon God's Will I lay me down
As child upon its mother's breast;
No silken couch, nor softest bed,
Could ever give me such deep rest.
