

Psalm 4

To the Chief Musician. With Stringed Instruments. A Psalm of David.

¹ Hear me when I call, O God of my righteousness! You have relieved me in my distress; Have mercy on me, and hear my prayer.

² How long, O you sons of men, Will you turn my glory to shame? How long will you love worthlessness And seek falsehood? Selah

³ But know that the LORD has set apart for Himself him who is godly; The LORD will hear when I call to Him.

⁴ Be angry, and do not sin. Meditate within your heart on your bed, and be still. Selah

⁵ Offer the sacrifices of righteousness, And put your trust in the LORD.

⁶ There are many who say, "Who will show us any good?" LORD, lift up the light of Your countenance upon us.

⁷ You have put gladness in my heart, More than in the season that their grain and wine increased.

⁸ I will both lie down in peace, and sleep; For You alone, O LORD, make me dwell in safety.

A Plea to God **Psalm 4**

INTRO:

While we cannot accurately identify what was happening in David's life when God had him write this Psalm, we can identify easily with the issues he experienced. The song opens with David pleading with God with a note of desperation in his voice. Then he has a discussion with those who oppose him. Finally, the song ends on a note of trust in the LORD.

I. David's Plea (v.1)

II. David's Statement to His Oppressors (v.2-6)

III. David's Trust (v.7-8)

I. David's Plea (v. 1)

Psalm 4:1 *“Hear me when I call, O God of my righteousness! Be gracious to me, and hear my prayer.”*

A. As with many Psalms, David begins his song with a Plea. The source of this plea is two-fold. First, David sensed a real crisis in his spirit. Second, he recognized his own unworthiness before God. Hence, he wrote, *“Be gracious to me, and hear my prayer.”* He did not write, God I can demand you answer. David recognized that God was Lord and King of all. So, he asked based not on his worthiness, but because of God's grace.

B. Another resource for David was remembering what God did in the past for him. *“Be gracious to me, and hear my prayer.”*

Much of our confidence in the prayer closet comes from our reminding ourselves of what God had done. How often do you think David reminded himself of the victory the LORD gave him over Goliath? I think quite often because of how he prepared himself for that battle in the presence of King Saul.

1 Samuel 17:34–37 *“But David said to Saul, ‘Your servant used to keep his father’s sheep, and when a lion or a bear came and took a lamb out of the flock, I went out after it and struck it, and delivered the lamb from its mouth; and when it arose against me, I caught it by its beard, and struck and killed it. Your servant has killed both lion and bear; and this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, seeing he has defied the armies of the living God.’ Moreover David said, ‘The LORD, who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear, He will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine.’ And Saul said to David, ‘Go, and the LORD be with you!’”*

II. David's Statement to His Oppressors (v. 2-6)

verses 2-6 *“How long, O you sons of men, Will you turn my glory to shame? How long will you love worthlessness and seek falsehood? Selah But know that the LORD has set apart for Himself him who is godly; The LORD will hear when I call to Him. Be angry, and do not sin. Meditate within your heart on your bed, and be still. Selah Offer the sacrifices of righteousness, and put your trust in the LORD. There are many who say, ‘Who will show us any good?’ LORD, lift up the light of Your countenance upon us.”*

A. In **verses 2**, David asks his enemies how long they will seek to hurt him. *“How long, O you sons of men, Will you turn my glory to shame? How long will you love worthlessness and seek falsehood? Selah”*

The parallelism is profound. *“How long will you turn my glory into shame?”* is equivalent to *“How long will you love worthlessness and seek falsehood.”* This

is a long winded way to ask how long will you go on lying about me. David did not imply he was sinless. He just was not guilty of the gossip launched against him.

B. David holds onto two truths and thrust them forth like a weapon against those who would harm his reputation. Truth 1 is

“But know that the LORD has set apart for Himself him who is godly;”

Yahweh, the covenant keeping God, has set apart those He made godly as His own. God delights to fellowship with His people. The LORD will defend the people who are His. Truth 2 is

“The LORD will hear when I call to Him.”

Yahweh the always faithful God will hear when I pray. This is the same David who pleaded in **verse 1**. Do we really doubt he believed God would answer his prayer? Watch your step because God will answer me and deal with you.

C. Here, then, is what you should do.

1. First,

“Be angry, and do not sin. Meditate within your heart on your bed, and be still. Selah”

Paul when he cited this verse in **Ephesians 4** took it from the Septuagint. The Hebrew is probably better, ***“tremble and do not sin.”*** e.g. NASB ***Psalm 4:4*** ***“Tremble, and do not sin.”*** This means they should tremble at the character of the living God. This is why they should ***“meditate within your heart on your bed, and be still. Selah.”*** Often we overlook the fact that God is the unseen witness to all we say about one another.

2. Second,

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

In the Old Testament economy there were sacrifices that needed to be offered for sin. For us in the New Covenant we need to confess our sins to Christ and accept His forgiveness.

D. This concludes with the common complaint that there is no one out there who gives us good things.

“There are many who say, ‘Who will show us any good?’ LORD, lift up the light of Your countenance upon us.”

Many in our day and age fall into this trap. They think they are the result of a cosmic accident. No one is there to show us good. David answers this with a prayer to our holy, loving, faithful, personal LORD to shine His face upon us. This is echoed in Paul’s question. ***“If God be for us, who can be against us?”***

III. David's Trust (v.7-8)

v.7-8 *“You have put gladness in my heart, More than in the season that their grain and wine increased. I will both lie down in peace, and sleep; For You alone, O LORD, make me dwell in safety”*

A. David concludes his song with two statements of his great faith in God. First, he reminds himself of all the times God has put joy in his heart.

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

This a big part of how we can rejoice in the Lord. We must like David and many other Psalmist speak to ourselves and one another about the great things He has done.

B. Instead of meditating on our sin let us remind ourselves of all God has done and promised to us. Let us trust and then let us sleep.

“I will both lie down in peace, and sleep; For You alone, O LORD, make me dwell in safety.””

Thoughts for Application

1. We need to learn how to plead with God. While we come boldly to the throne of Grace (**Hebrews 4:17**) we do not come with arrogance. We come always knowing we can come because the Lord Jesus has gone before us.
2. When we are unrighteously attacked we need to remember *“that the LORD has set apart for Himself him who is godly.”* We are His and He will defend us.
3. We must not forget the LORD hears all we say and we need to tremble at His nature.
4. We must remember the things He has done for us. The joy He gives, and trust Him to keep us in safety.

Hymn #178 O Sacred Heart Now Wounded