

Psa. 4:0 To the chief Musician on Neginoth, A Psalm of David.

Psa. 4:1 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.

“mercy” = to bend or stoop in kindness to an inferior; to favor, bestow; causatively to implore (i.e. move to favor by petition):

David is calling out to God for mercy in a time of distress/trouble. The word “hear” means more than listen; it means to listen attentively and respond with an answer/action. David recognizes that he can only be righteous and prosperous as the Lord provides for him. The word for “distress” implies being in a tight, narrow place. David is saying that it is the Lord who gives him relief by enlarging him, giving him room to breathe and be comforted. David is acknowledging God’s power and authority and recognizing his helplessness before and dependence upon the Lord by asking for mercy.

Psa. 4:2 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.

“leasing” = falsehood, deceitful

David is speaking to the men of Jerusalem/Israel. It would seem that David is bothered by the actions of the people that separate them from himself as a follower of God. God is the one who has honored him. When they dishonor David as King, they are in effect dishonoring God. Their time and efforts are spent in participating in worthless activities, following lies and allowing themselves to be deceived.

“Selah” = suspension (of music), a pause

Psa. 4:3 But know that the LORD hath set apart him that is godly for himself: the LORD will hear when I call unto him.

David is declaring his confidence in God. He knows that he has been set apart for God’s purpose as one who is godly (kind, good, and merciful). He is confident that God will answer him when he calls out to Him for deliverance and comfort.

Psa. 4:4 Stand in awe, and sin not: commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still. Selah.

“awe” = to quiver (with any violent emotion, especially anger or fear)

After looking up the word “awe,” I immediately thought of the following verse in Ephesians:

Eph. 4:26 Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath.

Reminder - David is talking to the men of Jerusalem/Israel. He is telling them that anger or fear is not an excuse for sin. He wants them to be honest with themselves and recognize their need for repentance as they reflect on their character in the still of the night. He is encouraging them to exercise self-discipline and faith in God.

“commune with your own heart” - That is a phrase with which I greatly identify. The problem is that the heart is “deceitful above all things” (Jeremiah 17:9). One of the things I most look forward to in eternity is being able to know that my heart is pure and free from sin and deceit.

Psa. 4:5 Offer the sacrifices of righteousness, and put your trust in the LORD

True repentance will result in responding to God with a sincere heart. A person can go through the motions of performing a sacrifice without a right heart attitude. David is encouraging these men to repent and obey God and live in a way that shows that you are trusting YHWH.

Samuel gave the same message to Saul when he disobeyed the Lord after conquering the Amalekites:

1Sam. 15:22 And Samuel said, Hath the LORD *as great* delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey *is* better than sacrifice, *and* to hearken than the fat of rams.

Psa. 4:6 There be many that say, Who will shew us *any* good? LORD, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us.

“countenance” = face

I think David is speaking of people who realize along with him that you cannot depend upon man for right treatment. Their only hope for good (the Hebrew denotes the *best* things) is through the mercy of YHWH. For YHWH to lift up his countenance upon them is understood as being in a position of blessing as stated in Numbers:

Num. 6:23-26 Speak unto Aaron and unto his sons, saying, On this wise ye shall bless the children of Israel, saying unto them, The LORD bless thee, and keep thee: *The LORD make his face shine upon thee*, and be gracious unto thee: *The LORD lift up his countenance upon thee*, and give thee peace.

Psa. 4:7 Thou hast put gladness in my heart, more than in the time *that* their corn and their wine increased.

David’s expression becomes personal praise for the Lord at this point. He credits the Lord for the extreme joy/gladness/pleasure that he is experiencing in his heart—a joy that exceeds the kind of joy produced in those, even his enemies, who experienced great harvests (which was a source of great joy in the lives of the people of that time).

Psa. 4:8 I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for thou, LORD, only makest me dwell in safety.

David is so secure in his faith in the Lord that he is confident of a peaceful night’s sleep. His heart is right with God, so he isn’t plagued by guilt or unrest. He isn’t worried about possible evil; he knows that his security is dependent upon YHWH.