

Psalm 4

How to Get Relief from Adverse Circumstances, Psalm 4:1-8

Psalm 4:1-8 (NKJV)

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.

1. (Psalm 4:1) Call upon the God of righteousness.

Psalm 4:1 (NKJV)

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.

David called upon the Lord to act righteously on his behalf. **Righteousness (tsedeq)** means that which is morally and ethically just.

The troubled king appealed to God on the basis of His holy character. Because God is righteous, David was confident that the Lord would keep His covenant with him and execute justice in his situation. He had faith that God would act to bring about that which was right against those who falsely accused him.

The Scripture commands us to do exactly as David did, to never seek personal vengeance but to commit the carrying out of justice to the Lord. We should never take vengeance against those who wrong us nor are we to personally enforce retribution against them.

In cases where crimes have been committed, we may call upon civil authorities, but we are to leave the settling of all personal injustices in the Lord’s hands, He can be trusted to defend and vindicate us, and He will render justice in His due time (**Romans 12:19; Hebrews 10:30**).

Romans 12:19 NKJV

¹⁹ Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but *rather* give place to wrath; for it is written, “Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,” says the Lord.

Romans 12:19 (NASB)

¹⁹ “Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath *of God*, for it is written, “VENGEANCE IS MINE, I WILL REPAY,” says the Lord.”

Romans 12:19 AMP

¹⁹ Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave the way open for God's wrath [and His judicial righteousness]; for it is written [in Scripture], "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord.

Hebrews 10:30 NKJV

³⁰ For we know Him who said, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord. And again, "The Lord will judge His people."

Hebrews 10:30 (NASB)

³⁰ "For we know Him who said, "VENGEANCE IS MINE, I WILL REPAY." And again, "THE LORD WILL JUDGE HIS PEOPLE."

Hebrews 10:30 AMP

³⁰ For we know Him who said, "Vengeance is Mine [retribution and the deliverance of justice rest with Me], I will repay [the wrongdoer]." And again, "The Lord will judge His people."

Theological Introduction

Psalms 4 is a psalm of David written in the tension between **distress and confidence**. It reveals a deeply theological truth: **the believer's relationship with God is not based on circumstances, but on covenant faithfulness**. David does not begin with his problem—he begins with **God's character**: "*O God of my righteousness.*"

This establishes a foundational doctrine:

- God is both **the source of righteousness** and **the sustainer of His people**.
- Prayer is not an act of desperation alone—it is an act of **covenant confidence**.
- Past deliverance becomes the **fuel for present faith**.

The Hebrew imagery of **distress (*tsar*)**—a narrow place—and **relief (*rakhab*)**—a broad place—reveals the **redemptive pattern of God**:

He brings His people **out of constriction into freedom**, **out of pressure into peace**, and ultimately, through Christ, **out of sin into salvation**.

Modern-Day Introduction

In today's world, people are living in **"tight places"**:

- Emotional pressure (anxiety, depression, burnout)
- Financial strain
- Relational conflict
- Spiritual dryness

Many believers feel like they are suffocating under the weight of life—but **Psalms 4** reminds us: **God specializes in bringing His people out of tight places into wide places**.

The modern Christian must learn what David knew:

- You don't wait until life opens up—you **call on God in the pressure**
- You don't rely on feelings—you **rely on God's past faithfulness**
- You don't beg as a stranger—you **pray as a child in covenant**

a. For relief from distress (v. 1).

Psalm 4:1 (NKJV)

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.

Theological Insight

David's confidence is rooted in **God's past action**. He is not guessing—he is remembering.

Faith looks **backward** before it looks **forward**.

Illustrations

1. Biblical Illustration – Israel at the Red Sea (Exodus 14)

Israel stood trapped—Pharaoh behind, the sea before. A literal “**tight place**.” Yet God opened a path where there was none.

Application:

God does not remove pressure immediately—He often **reveals His power within it**.

2. Biblical Illustration – Paul in Prison (Acts 16:25–26)

Acts 16:25-26 NKJV

The Philippian Jailer Saved

²⁵ But at midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them.

²⁶ Suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened and everyone's chains were loosed.

Paul and Silas were **confined**, **beaten**, and **locked**—but at midnight they prayed. God shook the prison—not just physically, but spiritually.

Application:

Your tight place may become the **platform for God's greatest display of power**.

3. Modern-Day Illustration – Overwhelmed Believer

A believer burdened by **debt**, **health issues**, and **family strain** feels suffocated. But over time, as they pray and trust, God provides—**sometimes gradually**, **sometimes suddenly**.

Application:

What feels like suffocation today may be the **setup for divine expansion tomorrow**.

The Lord's previous deliverance gave David confidence that God would surely rise up for him again. **Distress (tsar)** literally means a narrow or tight place. **Enlarged (KJV)** or **relieved (rakhab)** means to broaden or set at large, to bring into an open place.

We all know what it is to feel smothered or constricted, even short of breath, when in deep distress. David implored the Lord to loosen the painful cords that strangled his spirit, to set him free from the anxiety and anguish that were choking the life out of him. He cried out to God for relief.