

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. Call upon the God of righteousness (v. 1).

2. Call upon the godly to repent (vv. 2-5).

3. Call upon God to be good—to let the light of His face shine upon you (vv. 6-8).

d. Turn to the Lord (v. 5)

Psalm 4:5 NKJV

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

I. Offer the Sacrifices of Righteousness

Psalm 4:5a (NKJV)

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

True worship is not outward performance, but inward surrender expressed through obedience, holiness, and faith.

Old Testament Illustrations

1. Cain’s False Worship

Genesis 4:3-7 NKJV

³ **And in the process of time it came to pass that Cain brought an offering of the fruit of the ground to the Lord.**

⁴ **Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat. And the Lord respected Abel and his offering,**

⁵ **but He did not respect Cain and his offering. And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell.**

⁶ **So the Lord said to Cain, “Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen?**

⁷ **If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. And its desire is for you, but you should rule over it.”**

Cain offered a sacrifice externally, but his heart was not right before God. God rejected both Cain and his offering **because worship without righteousness is unacceptable.**

Principle of Application

God examines the heart before He accepts the offering. **Religious activity** without **repentance** and **obedience** is **empty.**

2. Saul’s Disobedient Sacrifice

1 Samuel 15:22-23 NKJV

²² **So Samuel said: “Has 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 heed than the fat of rams.**

²³ **For rebellion *is as* the sin of witchcraft, And stubbornness *is as* iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the Lord, He also has rejected you from *being* king.”**

Saul attempted to justify rebellion through religious sacrifice after disobeying God’s command.

Principle of Application

Partial obedience is still rebellion. God desires obedience more than outward religious performance.

3. David’s Broken Spirit

Psalms 51:16-17 NKJV

¹⁶ **For You do not desire sacrifice, or else I would give *it*; You do not delight in burnt offering.**

**¹⁷ The sacrifices of God *are* a broken spirit,
A broken and a contrite heart— These, O God, You will not despise.**

After his sin with Bathsheba, David realized that God desired a **broken** and **contrite** heart above ceremonial sacrifice.

Principle of Application

True repentance is more valuable to God than outward appearances of spirituality.

4. Isaiah's Rebuke Against Empty Religion

Isaiah 1:11-17 NKJV

**¹¹ “To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices to Me?” Says the Lord.
“I have had enough of burnt offerings of rams And the fat of fed cattle. I do not delight in the blood of bulls, Or of lambs or goats.**

¹² “When you come to appear before Me, Who has required this from your hand, To trample My courts?

¹³ Bring no more futile sacrifices; Incense is an abomination to Me. The New Moons, the Sabbaths, and the calling of assemblies— I cannot endure iniquity and the sacred meeting.

¹⁴ Your New Moons and your appointed feasts My soul hates; They are a trouble to Me, I am weary of bearing *them*.

¹⁵ When you spread out your hands, I will hide My eyes from you; Even though you make many prayers, I will not hear. Your hands are full of blood.

¹⁶ “Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean; Put away the evil of your doings from before My eyes. Cease to do evil,

¹⁷ Learn to do good; Seek justice, Rebuke the oppressor; Defend the fatherless, Plead for the widow.

Israel maintained religious ceremonies while living in injustice and sin. God rejected their worship.

Principle of Application

God despises hypocrisy. Worship must be accompanied by righteousness and justice.

5. Elijah on Mount Carmel

1 Kings 18:30-39 NKJV

³⁰ Then Elijah said to all the people, “Come near to me.” So all the people came near to him. And he repaired the altar of the Lord *that was* broken down.

³¹ And Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, to whom the word of the Lord had come, saying, “Israel shall be your name.”

³² Then with the stones he built an altar in the name of the Lord; and he made a trench around the altar large enough to hold two seahs of seed.

³³ And he put the wood in order, cut the bull in pieces, and laid *it* on the wood, and said, “Fill four waterpots with water, and pour *it* on the burnt sacrifice and on the wood.”

³⁴ Then he said, “Do *it* a second time,” and they did *it* a second time; and he said, “Do *it* a third time,” and they did *it* a third time.

³⁵ So the water ran all around the altar; and he also filled the trench with water.

³⁶ And it came to pass, at *the time of* the offering of the *evening* sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near and said, “Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, let it be known this day that You *are* God in Israel and I *am* Your servant, and *that* I have done all these things at Your word.

³⁷ Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may know that You *are* the Lord God, and *that* You have turned their hearts back to You again.”

³⁸ Then the fire of the Lord fell and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood and the stones and the dust, and it licked up the water that *was* in the trench.

³⁹ Now when all the people saw *it*, they fell on their faces; and they said, “The Lord, He is God! The Lord, He is God!”

Elijah restored the altar of the Lord and called Israel back to true worship instead of divided loyalty.

Principle of Application

God calls His people to wholehearted devotion, not spiritual compromise.

New Testament Illustrations

1. The Pharisees’ Hypocrisy

Matthew 23:27-28 NKJV

²⁷ “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead *men’s* bones and all uncleanness.

²⁸ Even so you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.

Jesus rebuked the Pharisees for outward righteousness while inwardly being corrupt.

Principle of Application

External religion cannot substitute for inward transformation.

2. The Widow's Offering

Mark 12:41-44 NKJV

The Widow's Two Mites

⁴¹ Now Jesus sat opposite the treasury and saw how the people put money into the treasury. And many *who were* rich put in much.

⁴² Then one poor widow came and threw in two mites, which make a quadrans.

⁴³ So He called His disciples to *Himself* and said to them, "Assuredly, I say to you that this poor widow has put in more than all those who have given to the treasury;

⁴⁴ for they all put in out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty put in all that she had, her whole livelihood."

The widow's small offering was accepted because it flowed from sincere faith and sacrifice.

Principle of Application

God values sincere worship more than impressive outward displays.

3. Ananias and Sapphira

Acts 5:1-11 NKJV

Lying to the Holy Spirit

¹ But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession.

² And he kept back *part* of the proceeds, his wife also being aware *of it*, and brought a certain part and laid *it* at the apostles' feet.

³ But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and keep back *part* of the price of the land for yourself?

⁴ While it remained, was it not your own? And after it was sold, was it not in your own control? Why have you conceived this thing in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God."

⁵ Then Ananias, hearing these words, fell down and breathed his last. So great fear came upon all those who heard these things.

⁶ And the young men arose and wrapped him up, carried *him* out, and buried *him*.

⁷ Now it was about three hours later when his wife came in, not knowing what had happened.

**⁸ And Peter answered her, “Tell me whether you sold the land for so much?”
She said, “Yes, for so much.”**

⁹ Then Peter said to her, “How is it that you have agreed together to test the Spirit of the Lord? Look, the feet of those who have buried your husband *are* at the door, and they will carry you out.”

¹⁰ Then immediately she fell down at his feet and breathed her last. And the young men came in and found her dead, and carrying *her* out, buried *her* by her husband.

¹¹ So great fear came upon all the church and upon all who heard these things.

They attempted to appear spiritually devoted while secretly lying to God.

Principle of Application

God judges’ deception within the church seriously.

4. Present Your Bodies as Living Sacrifices

Romans 12:1-2 NKJV

Living Sacrifices to God

¹ I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, *which is your reasonable service.*

² And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what *is* that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

Paul teaches believers to offer their entire lives to God as holy sacrifices.

Principle of Application

True worship involves daily surrender and transformed living.

5. Worship in Spirit and Truth

John 4:23-24 NKJV

²³ But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him.

²⁴ God *is* Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”

Jesus taught that genuine worshippers worship God sincerely and truthfully.

Principle of Application

Authentic worship comes from hearts transformed by truth and empowered by the Spirit.

Theological Introduction “Trusting the Sovereign God”

Psalm 4:5 NKJV

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

Trust is one of the central themes of Scripture. From **Genesis** to **Revelation**, God continually calls His people to place their confidence **not in what they can see**, but in **who He is**. Faith is not merely believing that God exists; it is relying upon Him when circumstances seem **impossible, confusing, painful, or threatening**.

When David wrote **Psalm 4**, he was surrounded by opposition. **False accusations, rebellious people, and uncertain circumstances** pressed against him. Yet David's solution **was not revenge, political maneuvering, or self-defense**. Instead, he pointed God's people toward trust: **“Offer the sacrifices of righteousness, And put your trust in the Lord.” (Psalm 4:5 NKJV)**

Biblical trust is more than optimism. It is a settled confidence in **God's wisdom** when we do not understand His plan, in **God's power** when we feel weak, and in **God's goodness** when life appears unfair.

Throughout Scripture, God's people repeatedly faced situations where trusting God was their only option:

- Abraham trusted God on Mount Moriah.
- Israel trusted God at the Red Sea.
- Jehoshaphat trusted God against overwhelming armies.
- Daniel trusted God in the lion's den.
- Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego trusted God in the fiery furnace.

In every case, trust was not merely a feeling; **it was a decision to rest in God's character and promises**. Ultimately, every Old Testament example points us to Jesus Christ. At the cross, when darkness covered the land and suffering reached its climax, Christ Himself entrusted His spirit into the Father's hands (**Luke 23:46**). Through His death and resurrection, He demonstrated that God is always worthy of our trust, even when we cannot immediately see the outcome.

Therefore, **Psalm 4:5** is not merely a command; it is an invitation to know the God who has proven Himself faithful throughout redemptive history.

Modern-Day Introduction

“Who or What Are You Trusting?”

We live in a world obsessed with security. People **trust bank accounts, retirement plans, insurance policies, political leaders, technology, medical advancements, careers, and personal abilities**. Yet all of these things can change overnight.

A stock market can crash.

A diagnosis can alter a family's future.

A job can disappear.

A relationship can fail.

A government can disappoint.
A strong body can become weak.

Many people spend their entire lives building foundations **that cannot withstand life's storms**. When trouble comes, our natural tendency is to **panic, control, manipulate, or rely upon ourselves**. We search the internet for answers, call everyone we know, and devise our own solutions. Yet often God allows us to reach the end of our own strength so that we will discover His sufficiency.

Perhaps today some are standing at their own Red Sea:

- A health crisis.
- A family conflict.
- Financial uncertainty.
- A broken relationship.
- A ministry challenge.
- A burden that seems too heavy to carry.

The question is not whether you will trust something. Everyone trusts something. The real question is: **What is the object of your trust?**

David's answer is clear: **"Put your trust in the Lord."**

Not in circumstances.

Not in feelings.

Not in appearances.

Not in human strength.

Trust the God **who controls** circumstances, **governs history**, **fulfills His promises**, and works all things together for His glory and the good of His people.

The same God who provided for Abraham, parted the Red Sea, defended Jehoshaphat, protected Daniel, and walked with His servants in the fire is the same God who reigns today. He remains worthy of our trust because His character has never changed.

Big Idea:

Faith rests not in the certainty of our circumstances, but in the certainty of God's character. (Psalm 4:5; Proverbs 3:5-6; Romans 8:28)

Psalm 4:5 NKJV

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

Proverbs 3:5-6 NKJV

⁵ Trust in the Lord with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding;

⁶ In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths.

Romans 8:28 NKJV

²⁸ And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to *His* purpose.