

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).

II. Put Your Trust in the Lord

Psalm 4:5b (NKJV)

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

Theological Introduction

Psalm 4 is a psalm of confident faith in the midst of conflict. David is not writing from the comfort of a palace but from the pressure of **betrayal**, **slander**, and **rebellion**. Many scholars associate this psalm with the rebellion of Absalom (**2 Samuel 15–18**), when David’s own son attempted to seize the throne. **Friends** deserted him, **counselors** betrayed him, and the **nation** was divided. Humanly speaking, David had every reason to defend himself by **political maneuvering**, **personal revenge**, or **manipulation**. Instead, David repeatedly directs his eyes toward God.

Psalm 4:5 stands at the very heart of this response:

“Offer the sacrifices of righteousness, And put your trust in the Lord.” (Psalm 4:5 NKJV)

These two commands belong together. **True worship and genuine trust can never be separated.** Throughout Scripture, God has never been satisfied with external religion while the heart remained filled with unbelief. The sacrifices God desired under the Old Covenant were to be expressions of faith, repentance, obedience, and wholehearted dependence upon Him (**1 Samuel 15:22; Psalm 51:16–17; Hosea 6:6**).

1 Samuel 15:22 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.

Psalm 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.

Hosea 6:6 NKJV

⁶ For I desire mercy and not sacrifice, And the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings.

Under the New Covenant, believers no longer bring animal sacrifices, for Christ has offered Himself once for all (**Hebrews 10:10–14**).

Hebrews 10:10-14 NKJV

¹⁰ By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once *for all*.

Christ’s Death Perfects the Sanctified

¹¹ And every priest stands ministering daily and offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins.

¹² But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God,

¹³ from that time waiting till His enemies are made His footstool.

¹⁴ For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified.

Instead, Christians now offer **spiritual sacrifices**—their bodies (**Romans 12:1**),

Romans 12:1 NKJV

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*.

praise (**Hebrews 13:15**),

Hebrews 13:15 NKJV

¹⁵ **Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of *our* lips, giving thanks to His name.**

good works (**Hebrews 13:16**),

Hebrews 13:16 NKJV

¹⁶ **But do not forget to do good and to share, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.**

generous giving (**Philippians 4:18**), and lives surrendered to God's will.

Philippians 4:18 NKJV

¹⁸ **Indeed I have all and abound. I am full, having received from Epaphroditus the things *sent* from you, a sweet-smelling aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well pleasing to God.**

David therefore calls God's people to abandon every counterfeit source of security. They were not to trust military strength, public opinion, political alliances, emotional reactions, personal revenge, or religious appearance. Their confidence was to rest entirely in the covenant Lord who rules over all history with perfect wisdom, justice, and goodness. This command ultimately points us to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Jesus perfectly fulfilled **Psalm 4:5**. Throughout His earthly ministry He continually entrusted Himself to His Father. **Peter later writes of Christ:**

1 Peter 2:23 NKJV

²³ **Who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed *Himself* to Him who judges righteously.**

Nowhere is this trust more clearly displayed than in the Garden of Gethsemane. Facing the full wrath of God against sin, **Jesus prayed,**

Matthew 26:39 NKJV

³⁹ **He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, "O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will."**

The cross itself became the supreme demonstration that trusting the Father never ends in defeat. What appeared to be humanity's greatest victory over Christ became God's greatest victory over sin, death, and Satan. The resurrection forever

proves that those who trust the sovereign purposes of God will never be put to shame.

For believers today, **Psalm 4:5** is therefore not merely good advice—it is a gospel invitation. Because Christ trusted the Father perfectly on our behalf and secured our redemption through His death and resurrection, believers are now able, through the indwelling Holy Spirit, to trust God in every circumstance. Faith is not wishful thinking; it is confident dependence upon the unchanging character of God revealed in Jesus Christ.

Modern-Day Introduction

We live in an age where trust has become one of the rarest commodities in society. Confidence in **government, education, media, financial institutions, corporations**, and even **religious organizations** continues to decline. Every day people are surrounded by **misinformation, competing opinions, political polarization, social media outrage**, and endless voices demanding their allegiance.

As a result, many people place their confidence in unstable foundations. Some trust money, believing financial security can remove every fear. **Others trust careers, relationships, education, personalities, or technology.** Still others trust their emotions, assuming that feelings determine truth. Even within churches, believers can be tempted to trust **influential personalities, church traditions, majority opinions, emotional experiences, or human strategies** rather than the clear teaching of God's Word.

When conflict arises within a family, a church, or a nation, the natural tendency is to manipulate circumstances, defend ourselves, retaliate against critics, gather supporters, spread our version of the story, or force an outcome through human wisdom. These responses often arise from fear rather than faith.

David presents a radically different response.

He does not encourage panic.

He does not encourage revenge.

He does not encourage manipulation.

He simply says:

“Put your trust in the Lord.”

That command remains just as relevant today as when David first wrote these words.

Trusting God does not mean ignoring reality. David knew the danger was real. Jesus knew the cross was real. Paul knew prison was real. Stephen knew the stones were real. The Thessalonian believers knew persecution was real. Biblical trust is not the denial of painful circumstances; it is confidence that God's sovereign purposes are greater than our present circumstances.

This truth is desperately needed in today's church. Congregations are often threatened by **gossip, division, criticism, pride, personal agendas, emotional decision-making, and worldly methods** of resolving conflict. God's solution has never changed. His people are called to respond with **repentance instead of rebellion, worship instead of resentment, discernment instead of deception, obedience instead of compromise, and unwavering trust instead of fear.**

When believers place their confidence in God's sovereign rule, they discover that **peace replaces anxiety, courage overcomes fear, worship triumphs over complaining, unity overcomes division, and hope rises above uncertainty.**

Psalm 4:5 reminds every generation that the safest place in the world is not where circumstances are easiest—it is where God's people trust Him completely. As the examples of Jesus, Peter, Paul and Silas, Stephen, and the Thessalonian believers demonstrate, the Lord has always honored those who place their confidence in Him.

Their circumstances varied greatly, but their testimony was the same:
God is worthy of our trust because He is always faithful.

II. Put Your Trust in the Lord

Psalm 4:5b (NKJV)

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

David calls the people to stop trusting appearances, rebellion, manipulation, and human schemes and instead trust the sovereign justice of God.

1. Jesus in Gethsemane

Matthew 26:36-39 NKJV

The Prayer in the Garden

³⁶ **Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and said to the disciples, "Sit here while I go and pray over there."**

³⁷ **And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and He began to be sorrowful and deeply distressed.**

³⁸ Then He said to them, “My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch with Me.”

³⁹ He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, “O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will.”

Jesus entrusted Himself fully to the Father’s will before the cross.

Principle of Application

Trusting God means surrendering our will to His perfect purposes.

2. Peter Walking on Water

Matthew 14:28-31 NKJV

²⁸ And Peter answered Him and said, “Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water.”

²⁹ So He said, “Come.” And when Peter had come down out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Jesus.

³⁰ But when he saw that the wind *was* boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink he cried out, saying, “Lord, save me!”

³¹ And immediately Jesus stretched out *His* hand and caught him, and said to him, “O you of little faith, why did you doubt?”

Peter walked by faith until he focused on the storm.

Principle of Application

Fear grows when our eyes leave Christ.

3. Paul and Silas in Prison

Acts 16:22-34 NKJV

²² Then the multitude rose up together against them; and the magistrates tore off their clothes and commanded *them* to be beaten with rods.

²³ And when they had laid many stripes on them, they threw *them* into prison, commanding the jailer to keep them securely.

²⁴ Having received such a charge, he put them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks.

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.

²⁷ And the keeper of the prison, awaking from sleep and seeing the prison doors open, supposing the prisoners had fled, drew his sword and was about to kill himself.

²⁸ But Paul called with a loud voice, saying, “Do yourself no harm, for we are all here.”

²⁹ Then he called for a light, ran in, and fell down trembling before Paul and Silas.

³⁰ And he brought them out and said, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?”

³¹ So they said, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household.”

³² Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house.

³³ And he took them the same hour of the night and washed *their* stripes. And immediately he and all his *family* were baptized.

³⁴ Now when he had brought them into his house, he set food before them; and he rejoiced, having believed in God with all his household.

They trusted God through suffering and worshipped in prison.

Principle of Application

Faith worships God even in adversity.

4. Stephen’s Martyrdom

Acts 7:54-60 NKJV

Stephen the Martyr

⁵⁴ When they heard these things they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed at him with *their* teeth.

⁵⁵ But he, being full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God,

⁵⁶ and said, “Look! I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!”

⁵⁷ Then they cried out with a loud voice, stopped their ears, and ran at him with one accord;

⁵⁸ and they cast *him* out of the city and stoned *him*. And the witnesses laid down their clothes at the feet of a young man named Saul.

⁵⁹ And they stoned Stephen as he was calling on *God* and saying, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.”

⁶⁰ Then he knelt down and cried out with a loud voice, “Lord, do not charge them with this sin.” And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

Stephen trusted Christ even while being stoned to death.

Principle of Application

Believers can trust Christ even in suffering and persecution.

5. The Thessalonian Church

1 Thessalonians 1:6-8 NKJV

⁶ And you became followers of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Spirit,

⁷ so that you became examples to all in Macedonia and Achaia who believe.

⁸ For from you the word of the Lord has sounded forth, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place. Your faith toward God has gone out, so that we do not need to say anything.

The believers remained faithful despite affliction and persecution.

Principle of Application

Genuine faith perseveres through trials because trust rests in God, not circumstances.

Concluding Exhortation

Psalm 4:5 calls believers to two essential responses:

1. Offer genuine worship flowing from righteousness.
2. Trust God completely in the midst of conflict and uncertainty.

David understood that **rebellion**, **deception**, **division**, and **false spirituality** can spread rapidly among God's people.

Yet the answer was not **revenge**, **panic**, or **carnality**.

The answer was **repentance**, **righteous worship**, **discernment**, and **trust in the sovereign Lord**.

The church today desperately needs believers who refuse to be swept away by **gossip**, **division**, **manipulation**, and **emotionalism**.

God calls His people to **holiness**, **discernment**, **biblical order**, **gracious correction**, and **unwavering trust in Him**.

“He who has ears to hear, let him hear.”