

# Psalm 4

**Introduction** – “*To the Chief Musician, with stringed instruments*” – David gives this to the Chief Musician so that his personal experiences can be used by the congregation in song to become and relate to their own experiences. We are still commanded to sing these psalms and so to do the same. And if this is given for the public worship of God, we will see that this has great implications on what we are to be doing in worship.

**Hear My Cry** (v1) – Do we pray enough? Do we give up too easily? Do we know how to persist with confidence? Would singing the psalms for a couple generations change that?

**My Righteousness** – As we cry out to God, it is not on the basis of our own innocence as conceived in our own hearts and minds. It is ultimately on the basis of Another’s righteousness. And yet, this righteousness has become ours for He is THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. Imputed righteousness was not a new thing in the New Testament; it is the way everyone in the old and new covenant are justified. Salvation has always been by grace through faith and it has always been based upon the righteousness of Jesus Christ.

**Past Relief** – If He has helped us multiple times in the past, there is no reason to doubt His help will come in this instance, and this is how David pleads. “*The manna shall fall every morning until we cross the Jordan*” – Spurgeon. His past goodness to us is both an encouragement for us in the present trial as well as a good plea to make before God in prayer.

**Appeal for Mercy** – In this verse, David cries out twice, “Hear me!” He does not give up (Luke 18:1-8). And David appeals for mercy – as deserving as we might think we are, God’s answers to our prayers are always, in the final analysis, mercy from first to last. But the good news is: He delights in mercy.

**Appeals To the Scoffers** (vv2-5) – David turns in His prayer to God (and so, in the corporate worship of God’s people) and addresses the unbelievers and scoffers of God’s people.

**How Long?** (v2) – It has been going on for some time; they have been mocking the place of David’s glory and turning it to shame, just as they do with God’s glory (Rom 1:23). They seek falsehood, that is, they look to deny the very truth before them, for their desire is to rebel and to destroy – God and God’s people. They love worthlessness: worthless words and worthless deeds. They are envious of David’s position, and ultimately, of God’s place of authority and glory. In the end, their open abominations show forth their idiocy – think of Jeremiah’s cry to Israel in Jer 13:27. They know better. *Selah* for a moment...

**God Knows** (v3) – Like Jesus, you will be persecuted because of your godliness. You will be mocked for not participating in their tomfoolery and sin (1 Pet 4:4). But God knew what He was doing as Jesus suffered, and He knows whom He has chosen as you suffer like Christ.

**Tremble/Be Angry** (v4) – The Hebrew word can mean both and David may have both in mind (Paul will use only the second in a separate admonition to believers in Eph 4:26). To the envious, it is a warning to see who God is, and not fall into greater sin. To all is the warning to learn to meditate upon God’s revelation deep within your hearts – “*talk with your hearts; you have a great deal to say to them; they may be spoken with at any time; let it not be unsaid*” – Henry.

**Offer and Trust** – As God did with Cain (Gen 4), the envious are warned to turn to their only hope for salvation and offer up the sacrifices of righteousness, trusting in the Lord, not in their vain works or self-righteous drivel.

**Appeals To the Lord** (vv6-8) – In the Lord, David seeks blessing and goodness, gladness of heart, and peace for his soul.

**Who Will Show Us Good?** (v6) – Like Pilate, they stand before God and wonder where Truth or Goodness can really be found or judged. Their autonomy blinds them from the Absolute standing before them. As Augustine said, we first believe so that we might understand. And so David seeks the benediction of the Lord, His light and His name upon him.

**Gladness** (v7) – Everyone seeks it. And if we seek it outside of Christ, we will always find it empty and meaningless in the end (Ecclesiastes). But the Lord gives it – it is His grace. And we are to seek it, for the fruit of the Spirit is joy; joy that is for now and for eternity.

**Peace** (v8) – The more we meditate on who we are in Christ and who Christ is in God, and who God our Father is, the more we find the greatest security – a security the unbelieving world can never understand.

**Selaha on Psalm 4** – and on psalm-singing/praying -

**Praying “in Jesus’ Name” and Giving our “Amen”** – God instructs us to worship Him corporately, to come to Him only in the name of our Righteousness, the Lord Jesus Christ, and to make the psalms and prayers of others ours as well, and so we encourage our hearty Amens.

**Corporate Worship/The Word of The Lord** – It is here in our service of worship, that the Lord teaches us to speak to one another in His name (through psalms, for instance) and to the world as His vice-regents. We have been gathered in heaven to bring down the judgment as well as proclaim the mercy of the Lord upon this earth. It is here that you may pray/sing/declare what you may find impossible to declare to your neighbor or to the nations what God has to say about their falsehoods, their relativism, and their worthless actions. And it is here that God hears our prayer (our singing); and He does something with that prayer – He answers it.

**We Won’t Sing Psalm 4** – What a joy that we are learning to sing the psalms (like Psalm 42 with so many similar themes). On the one hand, do not be discouraged that we cannot sing them all yet. On the other hand reflect upon the power of music, the ‘stringed instruments’, and singing, to unite and bind people to a cause, to a way of thinking, to a god of their own making or to the Lord Jesus Christ, the Giver of Righteousness, of Blessing, of Gladness, and of everlasting Peace. 76 million people joined together to sing, “*Baby, you can drive my car....nah, nah, nah, nah, Hey Jude.*” Was it really as innocent and impotent as we think? What if...