

Psalm 4 in Four Modern Translations

New English Bible (1972)

- 1 Answer me when I call, O God, maintainer of my right,
I was hard pressed, and thou didst set me at large;
be gracious to me now and hear my prayer.
- 2 Mortal men, how long will you pay me not honour but
dishonour,
or set your heart on trifles and run after lies?
- 3 Know that the LORD has shown me (*Prob. rdg.; Heb. him.*)
his marvellous love;
the LORD hears when I call to him.
- 4 However angry your hearts, do not do wrong;
though you lie abed resentful, (*lie abed resentful: prob. rdg.;
Heb. say on your beds.*) do not break silence:
- 5 pay your due of sacrifice, and trust in the LORD.
- 6 There are many who say, 'If only we might be prosperous
again!
But the light of thy presence has fled from us, O LORD.'
- 7 Yet in my heart thou hast put more happiness
than they enjoyed when there was corn and wine in
plenty.
- 8 Now I will lie down in peace, and sleep;
for thou alone, O LORD, makest me live unafraid.

New International Version (1978)

4

For the director of music. With stringed instruments.
A psalm of David.

- 1 Answer me when I call to you,
O my righteous God.
Give me relief from my distress;
be merciful to me and hear my prayer.
- 2 How long, O men, will you turn my glory into shame?^a
How long will you love delusions and seek false gods?^b *Selah*
- 3 Know that the LORD has set apart the godly for himself;
the LORD will hear when I call to him.
- 4 In your anger do not sin;
when you are on your beds,
search your hearts and be silent. *Selah*
- 5 Offer right sacrifices
and trust in the LORD.
- 6 Many are asking, "Who can show us any good?"
Let the light of your face shine upon us, O LORD.
- 7 You have filled my heart with greater joy
than when their grain and new wine abound.
- 8 I will lie down and sleep in peace,
for you alone, O LORD,
make me dwell in safety.

^a2 Or *you dishonor my Glorious One*

^b2 Hebrew *seek lies*

Tanakh (Jewish Publication Society, 1985)

4

^a-For the leader; with instrumental music.-^a A psalm of David.

²Answer me when I call,
O God, my vindicator!
You freed me from distress;
have mercy on me and hear my prayer.

³You men, how long will my glory be mocked,
will you love illusions,
have recourse to frauds?

Selah.

⁴Know that the LORD singles out the faithful for Himself;
the LORD hears when I call to Him.

⁵So tremble, and sin no more;
ponder it on your bed, and sigh.^b

⁶Offer sacrifices in righteousness
and trust in the lord.

⁷Many say, "O for good days!"

^c-Bestow Your favor on us,-^c O LORD.

⁸You put joy into my heart
when their grain and wine show increase.

⁹Safe and sound, I lie down and sleep,
^d-for You alone, O LORD, keep me secure.-^d

^a-^a *Meaning of Heb. uncertain.*

^b *Others "be still."*

^c-^c *Lit. "Lift up the light of Your countenance upon us"; cf. Num. 6.25
f.*

^d-^d Or "*for You, O LORD, keep me alone and secure.*"

New Jerusalem Bible (1985)

Evening prayer^d

For the choirmaster For strings Psalm Of David

- 1 When I call, answer me, God, upholder of my right.
In my distress you have set me at large;
take pity on me and hear my prayer!
- 2 Children of men, how long will you be heavy of heart,^b
why love what is vain and chase after illusions? *Pause*
- 3 Realise that Yahweh performs wonders for his faithful,
Yahweh listens when I call to him.
- 4 Be careful not to sin,
speak in your hearts, and on your beds keep silence.^c *Pause*
- 5 Loyal offer sacrifices, and trust in Yahweh. 51:19
- 6 Many keep saying, 'Who will put happiness before our eyes?'
Let the light of your face shine on us.^d Nb 6:25; Pr 16:15; Dn 9:17
- 7 Yahweh, to my heart you are a richer joy
than all their corn and new wine.
- 8 In peace I lie down and at once fall asleep, 3:5
for it is you and none other, Yahweh, who make me rest secure.

4 a. Trust and thanks: God is the one source of happiness. vv. 4 and 8 show that it is an evening prayer.

b. 'will you be heavy of heart' Gk; 'will my glory be dishonoured' Hebr. with faulty division of words.

c. An obscure and no doubt corrupt text, which has not been satisfactorily emended. The general sense is that we should shrink from offending God and pray to him in the calm silence of adoration.

d. Biblical phrase, common in the Psalter, for royal or divine favour. The 'face' is the visible aspect of something. 104:30; Gn 2:6 ('surface'), or of a person, whose thoughts and emotions it makes visible, Gn 4:5; 31:2. Hence it can stand for the personality ('of my face' = my, 42:6.11; 43:5) and presence, especially in the case of human beings meeting God. As it is impossible for human beings to see God, Ex 33:20i; 34:29-35. God can 'let his face shine' on them, see Ps 31:16; 44:3; 80:3, only in a restricted sense. In the same way must passages be understood in which a human being seeks God, 24:6; 27:8b; Jb 33:26; Am 5:4c, or beholds him. Ps 11:7e; 42:2.