Hebrew Whiteboard

Biblical Hebrew and the Psalms

Psalm 4

Objectives

1. Identify verse structure by means of major disjunctive accents.
2. Display verse structure by means of logical line diagramming.
3. Interpret verse structure.
4. Identify grammatical elements and poetic devices.
5. Interpret poetic device function(s).
6. Identify the psalm's structure.

Psalm 4:1

Identify major disjunctive accents and divide into poetic lines.

disjunctive *rebi'a*

silluq = end of v. 1

10 לַמְנַצֵּ֥חַ בִּנְגִינֹ֗ות

1 מִזְמֹ֥ור לְדָוִֽד׃

Psalm 4:1

Adjust to display grammatical and parallel relationships.

Psalm 3 musical subscription; see Ps 3:10 slide.

10 לַמְנַצֵּחַ בִּנְגִינֹות

Psalm 4 superscription: literary identification + authorship; see Ps 3:1 slide.

1 מִזְמֹור לְדָוִד:

Psalm 4:2

2

בְּקָרְאִ֡י

Preposition + Qal inf const + 1cs pron suff = adverbial temporal clause modifying following imperative + 1cs pron suff

עֲנֵ֤נִי ׀

אֱלֹ֘הֵ֤י צִדְקִ֗י

Vocative of address

בַּ֭צָּר

Adverbial prepositional phrase—locative

הִרְחַ֣בְתָּ

Qal perfect 2ms following imperative = imperative; followed by adverbial prepositional phrase—dative of benefit

לִּ֑י

חָ֝נֵּ֗נִי

וּשְׁמַ֥ע תְּפִלָּתִֽי׃

Qal imperative ms + 1cs pron suff; Qal imperative ms + direct object

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Psalm 4:1–2 — Translation

10 **For the music leader on stringed instruments.**

Belongs with Ps 3.

1 **A psalm by David.**

2 **When I call,**

Answer me, God of my righteousness—

In my distress give me relief;

Be gracious to me

And hear my prayer.

Psalm 4:1–2 — Translation

For the music leader on stringed instruments.

1 A psalm by David.

a¹ 2 When I call,
Answer me,

b God of my righteousness—

a² In my distress
give me relief;

a² Be gracious to me

a¹ And hear my prayer.

Belongs with Ps 3.

Vocative = central elided (b) element in the inverted second half; dual focus on God and result of prayer.

Psalm 4:1–2 — Observations

- **Verse 1 contains psalm inscriptions—see slides on Psalm 3:1, 10.**
- **Verse 1b identifies David as the author of Psalm 4.**
- **Verse 2 commences the psalm proper.**
- **The psalm opens with a temporal clause that adverbially modifies the main verb, an imperative.**
- **The infinitive construct with *beth*-preposition forms the temporal clause and the 1cs pronominal suffix is the subject.**

Psalm 4:1–2 — Observations

- **By placing the temporal clause first, David emphasizes the time element.**
- **David addresses his prayer to God—thus the masculine singular imperative.**
- **"God of my righteousness" is the vocative of address that specifies the recipient of David's prayer.**
- **"God" in the construct state can express a genitive of source—God is the source of David's righteousness; or an attributive genitive—"my righteous God."**

Psalm 4:1–2 — Observations

- **If the phrase is genitive of source, "righteousness" + 1cs pron. suff. identifies David as possessor of righteousness (genitive of possession).**
- **"God of my righteousness" stands out as the extra element of the otherwise grammatically balanced parallel lines:**

בְּקָרְאִי	עֲנֵ	נִי	אֱלֹהֵי צִדְקִי
בַּצָּר	הִרְחַבְתָּ	לִּי	

Psalm 4:1–2 — Observations

- Therefore, "God of my righteousness" is a focus of v. 2—the psalm begins with a theocentric focus.
- The final two poetic lines of v. 2 display a similar grammatical balance with the extra element being "prayer":

נֵּ֫נִי   חָ
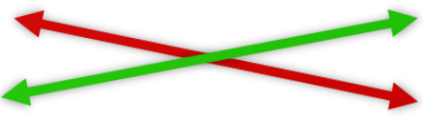
תִי   תְּפִלָּ   וּשְׁמַע

Psalm 4:1–2 — Observations

- **Therefore, the result of prayer is the second focal element of v. 2.**
- **In each of the two halves of v. 2 the first line may state an action and the second line may state a result of the action:**
  - **"answer"   >   "give relief"**
  - **"be gracious" >   "hear"**
- **"Give relief" (רחב) literally means "make wide" or "make space"—the polar opposite to "distress" (צָר = "narrow," "constricted").**

Psalm 4:1–2

- **"Give relief" is a Hiphil perfect 2ms; it behaves as an imperative, since it follows an imperative ("answer")—compare Deut 6:4–5 ("Hear, O Israel, . . . Love YHWH your God . . .").**
- **The last two lines could be a conceptual inversion of equivalents to correlate with the first two lines of the verse:**

"answer"   **"give relief"**
"be gracious"   **"hear"**

Psalm 4:4

Adjust to display grammatical and parallel relationships.

Imperative masculine plural (ידע).

4 וּדְע֗וּ

Object clause with Hiphil perfect 3ms and "YHWH" as subject.

כִּי־הִפְלָ֣ה יְהוָ֖ה

חָסִ֣יד

Subject; emphatic word order.

Direct object of previous verb.

ל֑וֹ

Adverbial prepositional phrase; dative of interest.

יְהוָ֥ה יִשְׁמַ֗ע

Adverbial temporal infinitive construct + 1cs pron. suff.

בְּקָרְאִ֥י

אֵלָֽיו׃

Qal imperfect 3ms.

Indirect object.

Psalm 4:3–4 — Translation

Italics for implied words/concepts.

3 O humans, how long will my glory *be made* an insult?

How long will you love futility?

How long will you seek falsehood?

Italics for transliterated Hebrew.

Selah.

4 But know that YHWH sets apart a faithful *person* for Himself.

YHWH *Himself* hears when I call upon Him.

Psalm 4:3–4 — Translation

3 O humans, how long will my glory *be made* an **insult**?
How long will you love **futility**;
How long will you seek **falsehood**.

Selah.

4 But know that YHWH sets apart a **faithful** *person* for Himself;
YHWH *Himself* hears when I call upon Him.

Psalm 4:3–4 — Observations

- **Verse 3 opens with a vocative of address; literally "sons/children of man" = "humans."**
- **The first two nouns are in construct relation expressing the genitive of genus or kind—second noun identifies the class or genus to which the first belongs.**
- **Possibly a reference to leaders, nobles.**
- **The compound interrogative (עַד־מֶה) = "until what/when?" or "how long?"**

Psalm 4:3–4 — Observations

- "My glory" (or, "honor") can refer to David's reputation and/or his authority as king over Israel.
- Normally a non-verbal clause like כְבוֹדִי לִכְלִמָּה implies a form of "be," but the preposition לְ on the second noun appears to indicate the result or product of an action implying "*make*"—in this context passive, "*be made*."

Psalm 4:3–4 — Observations

- "Insult" carries the idea of shame (humiliation, disgrace, or scorn).
- The next two verbal clauses are governed by the earlier compound interrogative "how long?" David gapped (elided) the interrogative compound to provide three 2-word clauses for emphasis.
- Each of those three clauses include an object that identifies a negative concept.

Psalm 4:3–4 — Observations

- **The first of those three clauses uses an understood verb; the final two clauses use imperfect verbs expressing continuing characteristic actions.**
- **The second object, "futility" (רִיק), expresses emptiness of purpose or something being in vain.**
- **The third object, "falsehood" (כָזָב), might also be translated "a lie."**

Psalm 4:3–4 — Observations

- **Verse 3 concludes with *"Selah,"* which causes the readers and hearers to pause to think about David's statement about his enemies—adding to the emphatic nature of this verse.**
- **The adversative *waw* beginning v. 4 contrasts the desire of David's enemies (v. 3) with the reality of David's position before God.**
- **David's use of the plural imperative sounds almost like a royal command—he at least speaks authoritatively.**

Psalm 4:3–4 — Observations

- **What must David's enemies know?—that YHWH "sets apart a faithful *person*" (or, "treats a faithful *person* with favor").**
- **The verb פלה occurs only 5 times in the Hebrew Bible (1x in Niphal, 4x in Hiphil), so the Hiphil acts as a simple active rather than a passive.**
- **Being a perfect verb it expresses the simple fact of the action as well as as a characteristic present action.**

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Psalm 4:3–4 — Observations

- **The noun חָסִיד refers to someone loyal, steadfast, faithful—the same word occurs in "Hasidic" (= "loyal").**
- **The prepositional phrase (לוֹ) presents either a dative of possession ("belonging to Himself") or here a preferred dative of interest ("for Himself").**
- **In v. 4b "YHWH" precedes the verb for emphasis; therefore, "YHWH *Himself*."**

Psalm 4:3–4 — Observations

- "Hears," as an imperfect verb shows a repetitive action—confirmed by the temporal clause, "whenever I call" (*beth*-preposition + Qal infinitive construct with 1cs pronominal suffix).
- A pronominal suffix on an infinitive construct normally behaves as the subject of the verb presented by the infinitive.
- The preposition אֶל + 3ms pronominal suffix presents the indirect object of "call"—antecedent of pronoun is YHWH.

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Psalm 4:5

Identify major disjunctive accents and divide into poetic lines.

5 רִגְז֗וּ

disjunctive *rebi'a*

וְאַל־תֶּ֫חֱטָ֥אוּ

'oleh-weyored, major disjunctive in this verse

אִמְר֣וּ בִלְבַבְכֶ֗ם

עַל־מִשְׁכַּבְכֶ֗ם

secondary disjunctive *tipcha*

disjunctive *rebi'a*

וְדֹ֣מּוּ סֶֽלָה׃

silluq = end of v. 5

Psalm 4:5 — Translation

Tremble and do not sin;
Speak in your heart on your bed and wail.
Selah.

Psalm 4:5 — Translation

A **Tremble**
   B   **And** do not sin;
   B'   Speak in your heart
          on your bed
A' And wail.   *Selah.*

Psalm 4:5 — Observations

- **Three imperatives ("Tremble," "Speak," and "wail") produce a forceful tone.**
- **The negative jussive ("do not sin") follows normal grammar for a negative imperative.**
- **Each AB set is connected by a *waw*-conjunction.**
- **The outer imperatives ("Tremble" and "wail") form an inclusio bracketing the verse.**

Psalm 4:5 — Observations

- **The imperatives and jussive seem to follow a chiastic pattern, but the focus is not on the middle elements.**
  - **Both B elements are not synonymous.**
  - **Both B elements are mismatched in length.**
  - **Both A elements are emotive.**
- **A = "Tremble *with emotion*" and A' = "wail; lament" (II דמם).**

Psalm 4:5 — Observations

- **The plural of the imperatives and jussives (like וּדְעוּ, "and know"; v. 4) take "humans" ("sons of men"; v. 3) as their antecedent.**
- **"Speak in your heart" = "Say to yourself" or "Think."**
- **"upon your bed" = "at night" or "at home"; cp. Ps 36:4, "He contemplates/ plans wickedness upon his bed."**

Psalm 4:5 — Observations

- **At least two ways to understand v. 5:**
  1. **Repentance (VanGemeren, Calvin)**
  2. **Submission—even if feigned (Briggs)**
- **"Speak in your heart" = "Say to yourself" or "Think" (only here in Psalms).**
- **"upon your bed" = "at night" or "at home"; cp. Ps 36:4, "He contemplates/ plans wickedness upon his bed."**

Psalm 4:5 — Greek OT

- "Tremble" = "Be angry" (ὀργίζεσθε) and "wail" = "be pierced [with feelings of anxiety or remorse]" (κατανύγητε).
- The rest is virtually the same as the Hebrew text.
- "Tremble" in Hebrew can connote "with anger," so the Greek translation of the Old Testament here is a fairly literal translation.

Psalm 4:5 — NT

- **Ephesians 4:26 quotes some version of the Old Greek for the first half of the verse.**
- **Paul uses it because he wants to speak against carnal anger (Leupold, 69).**
  - **The Greek translation of the Old Testament was familiar to his readers.**
  - **That Greek translation suited his purpose.**
- **The second half of the verse is interpretive or a paraphrase, not a translation of the Old Greek.**

Psalm 4:5 — NT

- **"Do not let the sun go down upon your anger" might offer Paul's explanation as to how to be able to "Speak to your heart upon your bed" = "Think rightly at night."**

Psalm 4:5 — Observations

- **The use of "Selah":**
  - **At end of v. 3 it ends David's question to his enemies concerning their wickedness.**
  - **Verse 4 parallels v. 2 with the focus being on David's prayer.**
  - **Verse 5, like v. 3, speaks to the wickedness of David's enemies.**
  - **Both uses of "Selah" highlight the enemies' wickedness in order to set the stage for the imperatives in v. 6.**

Psalm 4:6

Adjust to display grammatical and parallel relationships.

Plural construct relation = attributive genitive.

6 זִבְחוּ זִבְחֵי־צֶדֶק

Imperatives masc. pl.

וּבִטְחוּ

Adverbial prepositional phrase of location.

אֶל־יְהוָה׃

Psalm 4:6–7 — Translation

6 **Offer righteous sacrifices**
And trust in YHWH.
7 **Many are saying, "Who will show us**
good?"
(O YHWH, be favorable to us.)

Literally, "Lift up the light of
Your face upon us."

Psalm 4:6–7 — Translation

6 **Offer** righteous sacrifices

And **trust** in **YHWH**.

7 Many are saying,

"Who will show us good?"

(O **YHWH**,

be favorable to us.)

Psalm 4:6–7 — Observations

- **Verse 6 begins with the 6th imperative (v. 4 has the 1st; v. 5 has 2nd-5th). These are simple commands addressed to the "humans" of v. 3.**
- **"Offer sacrifices" uses an accusative formed from the same root as the verb (זבח; a cognate accusative, or accusative of the internal object).**
  - **Cognate accusatives often indicate a strengthening of the verbal idea; cf. GKC, 366–67 (§117.p-q).**

Psalm 4:6–7 — Observations

- **The noun צֶדֶק as an attributive genitive: "sacrifices of righteousness" or "righteous/right sacrifices" = appropriate sacrifices.**
- **Alternative views:**
  - **genitive of source = "out of righteousness" = with a right/pure spirit**
  - **genitive of result = "*that bring about righteousness*" = vindication or right living (cp. v. 2, "God of my righteousness")**

Psalm 4:6–7 — Observations

- "Trust" comprises the 7th final imperative and the climax of the string of imperatives.
- Verse 7a changes from the 2nd person plural of the previous imperatives to the 3rd person plural: "Many are saying."
- "Many" leaves the *who* general and non-specific (allowing David to focus on *what* they were saying).

Psalm 4:6–7 — Observations

- **The interrogative pronoun "Who?" indirectly addresses YHWH; the speakers doubt that evidence exists of divine favor upon them and Israel.**
- **The verb (Hiphil imperf. 3ms < ראה) has causative force ("make one see") = "show"; the future tense arises out of the fact that no one, in their thinking, has yet shown them.**
- **"Good" is the direct object and refers to anything resulting from divine favor.**

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Psalm 4:6–7 — Observations

- **Verse 7b consists of David's immediate and extemporaneous prayer.**
- **"Lift up" = Qal imperative ms (< נשׂא) + paragogic ה indicating (J-M, 1:143 [§48d]**
  - **nothing more than a simple imperative,**
  - **or a sense of urgency,**
  - **or a softening of the imperative in addressing God (honorific).**

Psalm 4:6–7 — Observations

- "Lift up upon us the light of Your face" is an idiom = "be favorable to us."
- The idiom alludes to the Aaronic blessing in Num 6:22–26.
- Although David's enemies doubted God's favor, he did not—he prayed for God to show Himself favorable to prove his enemies wrong.
- By answering, God would vindicate David's faith (see v. 2).

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Psalm 4:8

Chiastic structure

8 נָתַ֖תָּה **A**

שִׂמְחָ֣ה **B**

C בְלִבִּ֑י

C' מֵעֵ֗ת

B' דְּגָנָ֖ם וְתִירוֹשָׁ֣ם

A' רָֽבּוּ׃

Psalm 4:8–9 — Translation

8 **Put joy in my heart**
  More than the time their grain
    and their sweet wine abound.
9 **Completely in peace I lie down and**
    sleep,
  Because You Yourself, O YHWH,
    make me reside safely.

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Psalm 4:8–9 — Translation

A 8 **Place**

    B joy

        C

        C'

Emphatic elements in red.

in my heart
More than the time

    B' their grain and their sweet wine

A' abound.

9 **Completely** in peace I will lie down and sleep,

Because **You Yourself**, O YHWH,

    make me reside **safely.**

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Psalm 4:8–9 — Observations

- **The perfect verb (נָתַתָּה, v. 8a) expresses the action ("You have given") as a simple fact looking at the action as a whole, or as a precative (optative).**
- **David looks for joy from God ("Put") that is internal, emotional, and personal ("in my heart").**
- **The comparative מִן ("more than") introduces v. 8b.**

Psalm 4:8–9 — Observations

- **The comparative preposition governs the noun עֵת (v. 8b), referring by context to the time of harvest.**
- **The 3mp pronominal suffixes ("their") take the humans of v. 3 as the antecedent.**
- **The perfect verb (רָבּוּ) stands last in the verse, forming a parallel with the perfect verb opening the verse, but is indicative rather than precative (optative).**

Psalm 4:8–9 — Observations

- **That parallel causes the reader to look carefully at the full structure of the verse, which is chiastic taking the two central elements as the focus.**
  - **"in my heart" = internal and personal**
  - **"more than the time" = comparison to express the kind or manner of joy (greater than the joy of celebrating harvest)**

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Psalm 4:8–9 — Observations

- **Verse 9 closes the psalm with a *bet-*preposition adverbial phrase (בְּשָׁלוֹם, "in peace")—just as it began in v. 2 (בְּקָרְאִי, "when I call").**
- **David began "in stress/trouble" (בַּצָּר, v. 2) and concludes "in peace" (בְּשָׁלוֹם, v.9).**
- **The adverb יַחְדָּו with the adverbial phrase of manner ("in peace") conveys the meaning "completely in peace."**

Psalm 4:8–9 — Observations

- **The verb** אֶשְׁכְּבָה **("I lie down") comes last in the clause, making the adverbial phrase before it emphatic.**
- **The verb** אֶשְׁכְּבָה **is cohortative in form and acts as cohortative of determination: "I will . . ."**
- **The two imperfects form a parallel verbal hendiadys expressing "complementary aspects of a single event" (*HBI*, §2.3.1).**

Psalm 4:8–9 — Observations

- **The imperfect verbs perform modally (the cohortative mood) and also allow the focus to be upon the adverbial modifying phrase preceding the verbs.**
- **The כִּי introduces the adverbial causal clause explaining why David can sleep "completely in peace."**
- **Word order in כִּי-clauses does not determine emphasis.**

Psalm 4:8–9 — Observations

- **The 2ms personal pronoun אַתָּה acts emphatically, supplementing the 2ms Hiphil imperfect verb at the end of the causal clause.**
- **The pronoun is followed by the vocative of address, "YHWH."**
- **The *munach* under יְהוָה ties it closely with the following word, לְבָדָד with the *'atnach* separating v. 9bα from v. 9bβ.**

Psalm 4:8–9 — Observations

- **A *lamed*-preposition + noun (לְבָדָד, "alone") literally means "separately."**
  - **This form occurs only here, Num 23:9, and Mic 7:14 and without the preposition only in Lev 13:46; Deut 32:12; 33:28; Isa 27:10; Jer 15:17; 49:31; Lam 1:1; and, 3:28.**
  - **Nine occurrences involve the verbs שׁכן or ישׁב—both referring to dwelling.**

Psalm 4:8–9 — Observations

- Only Deut 32:12 and Isa 27:10 occur without either שׁכן or ישׁב—the first with the verb "lead" (נחה) and the second without a verb (שׁכן or ישׁי could be implied).
- Verse 9bβ begins with the adverbial prepositional phrase placed before the verb it modifies for emphasis.
- The verb is Hiphil imperfect 2ms + 1cs pronominal suffix (object) expressing causation (Hiphil) and continuation (imperfect): "You make me reside safely."

Psalm 4:10 — Translation

10 To the music director,
    For the flutes.

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Psalm 4:10 — Observations

- **These two prepositional phrases form the musical subscription to Psalm 4 and have been misplaced to the start of Psalm 5.**
- **No verb accompanies these adverbial phrases—it (they) is (are) understood.**
- **The first phrase is the indirect object and presupposes the verb "given" or "appointed" or "sent."**

Psalm 4:10 — Observations

- **The second phrase either modifies the same implied verb as the former phrase, or a second verb such as "played."**
- **If a second verb is implied (like "to be played"), the translation might be altered to "on/with the flutes."**

Psalm 4 — Structure

- **"Selah" (vv. 3, 5) contributes to this poem's structure only in a minor fashion—it occurs in the same section (vv. 3–6) and is emphatic in function.**
- **V. 1b: literary superscription**
- **V. 2: David addresses God.**
- **Vv. 3–6: David addresses mankind.**
- **V. 7a: David describes mankind.**
- **Vv. 7b–9: David addresses God.**

Psalm 4 — Structure

A David's Prayer (v. 2)

B David's Address (vv. 3–6)

B' David's Summary (v. 7a)

A' David's Prayer (vv. 7b–9)

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Psalm 4 — Structure

- **Chiasm marks the structure overall with emphasis on David's opponents.**
- **Chiasm opens the psalm with emphasis upon divine grace:**
  - **v. 2:**

Answer

       Give relief

       Be gracious

Hear

Psalm 4 — Structure

- **A chiasm appears central in the psalm with emphasis on the outer emotional imperatives (see Observations on v. 5):**
  - **v. 5:**

    Tremble

    And do not sin;
    Speak in your heart
    on your bed
    And wail.

Psalm 4 — Structure

- **Chiasm closes the psalm with emphasis on the nature of David's joy from God:**
  - **v. 8:**

  Put

  joy

  in my heart
  More than the time

  their grain and their sweet
  wine

  abound.

Psalm 4 — Structure

- **See Summary on vv. 7 – 8 below for a larger chiasm in those verses.**
- **Inclusio with *bet*-prepositional phrases marks off the psalm:**
  - **v. 2: "when I call . . . in distress"**
  - **v. 9: "in peace"**
- **Distress at the start; joy and peace at the end.**

Psalm 4 — Summary

v. 1b [Eng. heading]: The psalm superscription identifies the author as David—no indication of setting.

v. 2 [Eng. 1]: David opens his psalm with reference to past prayer (v. 2a) and the voicing of a present prayer (v. 2b).

v. 2 [Eng. 1]: Past answers to prayer in times of distress form the basis of praying now in David's current difficulty.

Psalm 4 — Summary

v. 3 [Eng. 2]: After his brief prayer, David immediately addresses his opponents with two rhetorical questions.

v. 3 [Eng. 2]: Those whom David addresses may be leaders inside his own government who despise his glory and seek to undermine him.

v. 3 [Eng. 2]: "Selah" marks a pause to think about this sorry state of affairs, the vain deceit those people pursue.

Psalm 4 — Summary

v. 4 [Eng. 3]: The adversative *waw* and the series of seven imperatives (vv. 4–6) contrasts the behavior of David's opponents with what is godly.
v. 4 [Eng. 3]: First, David himself is righteous in his behavior as evidenced by God answering his past prayers—note the repetition of the opening *bet-*prepositional phrase (בְּקָרְאִי, "when I call").

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Psalm 4 — Summary

vv. 5–6 [Eng. 4–5]: Second, the ungodly need to repent—thus the imperatives addressed to them by David.

vv. 5–6 [Eng. 4–5]: David's imperatives may be issued as the commands of a king, but they move on to what God Himself demands: true repentance, not just sorrow, shame, and regret.

vv. 5–6 [Eng. 4–5]: Emotional realities must give way to spiritual realities expressed through sacrifices.

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Psalm 4 — Summary

v. 5 [Eng. 4]: **The imperatives and negative jussive (the way biblical Hebrew expresses a negative imperative) focus on contemplating the terrible consequences of divine judgment and ceasing from sin.**
v. 5 [Eng. 4]: **The "Selah" signals the need to pause and think about these significant matters.**
v. 6 [Eng. 5]: **Having contemplated, the time for true repentance and its fruits arrives.**

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Psalm 4 — Summary

v. 6 [Eng. 5]: Right sacrifices require a right heart and mind—repentance and faith.

v. 6 [Eng. 5]: Obedience in sacrifice and trusting faith mark the repentant person—sacrifice apart from full trust in YHWH counts for nothing.

v. 6 [Eng. 5]: The command, "sacrifice" (זִבְחוּ), occurs only in Exod 8:21[Eng. 25] (Pharoah to Moses) and here (David to his opponents).

Psalm 4 — Summary

v. 6 [Eng. 5]: "Right sacrifices" (זִבְחֵי־צֶדֶק) occurs only 3x: Deut 33:19; Pss 4:6 [Eng. 4:5], and 51:21 [Eng. 19]—the last indicates that YHWH "delights" in such sacrifices.

v. 7a [Eng. 6a]: David does not indicate the identity of "many," but the context seems to indicate that they are the opponents addressed in vv. 3–6 [Eng. 2–5].

Psalm 4 — Summary

v. 7a [Eng. 6a]: The participle "saying" points to something going on, not just something in the past.

v. 7a [Eng. 6a]: "Many" were skeptical of witnessing any "good" (= covenant blessing) from God—they doubted His promises.

v. 7b [Eng. 6b]: David prays the priestly blessing of Num 6:24–26, affirming that God fulfills His promise.

Psalm 4 — Summary

v. 8 [Eng. 7]: David continues the prayer he began in v. 7, ending v. 8 with a verb related to the noun with which he had begun v. 7 (רַבִּים/רָבּוּ), implying that God will counter abundant skepticism with abundant blessing.

v. 8 [Eng. 7]: The "grain and sweet wine" in v. 8 parallels the "good" in v. 7, implying that the background could be a time of famine.

Psalm 4 — Summary

vv. 7–8 [Eng. 6–7]: Note the potential for a larger chiastic arrangement:

A **Many** are saying

  B 'Who will cause us to see **good**?'

    C Lift up **the light of Your presence** over us,

      D **O YHWH**.

    C' Put **joy in my heart**

  B' more than the time their **grain and sweet wine**

A' **abound**.

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Psalm 4 — Summary

vv. 7–8 [Eng. 6–7]: That greater chiasm focuses on YHWH—a theocentric emphasis taking the focus off of men, including David.

v. 9 [Eng. 8]: The final contrast ("in peace" rather than "in distress," v. 2) brings the psalm to a close by describing the personal experience of covenant blessing for the godly/faithful (v. 4) person.

Psalm 4 — Summary

v. 9 [Eng. 8]: The God-given peace is complete, perfect.

v. 9 [Eng. 8]: David's reason for sleeping peacefully at night resides with YHWH, and YHWH "alone"—the repetition of the theocentric focus in vv. 7–8.

v. 9 [Eng. 8]: The One who answers David (v. 2) is the One who causes him to "reside safely/securely" (v. 9).

Psalm 4 — Summary

v. 9 [Eng. 8]: "Safely" (or, "securely"; לְבֶטַח) echoes the seventh and final imperative back in v. 6 (וּבִטְחוּ אֶל־יְהוָה, "and trust in YHWH").

v. 9 [Eng. 8]: Just as the first two words of v. 2 ended with 1cs pronominal suffixes, so also the final word of Ps 4 ends with a 1cs pronominal suffix—emphasizing the personal nature of this psalm for David.

Psalm 4 — Preaching

- **When faced with distressing circumstances we must learn to pray and trust God.**
- **God requires His people to trust Him— it is not optional.**
- **For the ungodly, the path to trusting God begins with sincere repentance and results in personal security.**