

Psalm 4 “For thou, Lord, only makest me dwell in safety.”

General Stonewall Jackson once said “Captain, my religious belief teaches me to feel as safe in battle as in bed.”. Oddly this was one of the last things that he is recorded to have said as he would later be accidentally shot by his men and consequently died due to complications from that wound. That old soldier was nicknamed “Stonewall” as he, and the brigade named after him had a habit of not flinching when fired at. While many would duck or wiggle about He held still on his horse unmoving. He survived what had to be the firing of thousands of bullets and shells in his direction. None of them hit him until God was ready for him to be done, then it wasn’t even the enemy on the battle field that got him.

Fear will not protect you or your loved ones from danger. Fear is what keeps adrenaline flowing and your awareness of danger up, but it can’t protect you. In fact prolonged fear will weaken your body, mind and faith. God on the other hand, enlarges us in our danger. God gave David victories, He made him king, The Lord gave land, spoils and so much more to him even when he was on the run or at his weakest. When he shouldn’t have been able to win there was God, doing what he couldn’t.

There were people who sought to shame and hurt David, in this song he makes it clear that God sets the Godly apart from the rest of the world. He blesses and watches over them. A world that seeks the hurt of God’s children will have to answer to Him for it. I don’t envy those that seek to afflict us, God may be love, but He is also judgement (Psalm 75:7).

The advice given next is that we should offer sacrifices and put our trust in the Lord. The years of animal sacrifice are in the past and the sacrifice of Christ, whom all of the other sacrifices pointed to, has already been made. Yet in there we can still conclude that we ought to give to God what is necessary. For the Old Testament Jews it was the sacrifices, for us it is service and obedience. **Service and obedience isn’t going to save anyone, but it is what Christ deserves from us and should be given as a part of our love and devotion to Him** (John 14:15). Christ handled your salvation and sacrifice isn’t needed, but you are commanded to offer yourself to Him as a living sacrifice. David says here to trust in the Lord. Trust the Lord for your provision, your protection and as one who presides over you.

In turn this results in gladness. David spells out how much gladness. He says that the gladness God puts in His heart was more than the lost when their corn and their wine flourishes. Many hope that achievement and wealth will bring them gladness. Some will hope for it in switching marital partners or jobs. Others go into debt to collect useless toys and plastic in hopes that their little trinkets will bring them happiness, only to find that nothing can provide lasting happiness but God. Success and victory is of course very exciting and if you are hungry or thirsty, corn and wine can be useful, but they don’t buy lasting gladness of heart.

Conclusion: You can test your love, trust and devotion to God by how safe you feel on a regular basis. Do you believe that God is watching out for you? Do you acknowledge Him as your source for everything that you need? If you are saved then the answer to those questions should be a resounding “YES”. If not it is time to re-examine your relationship with Him. Make sure your salvation is sure, trust Him with your life and trust Him in death, make sure your obedience is where it should be. Nothing can happen to you that doesn’t require His permission. He loves you, is all knowing and is the source of wisdom. He should always have your trust.