

Spiritual Solutions to Temporal Problems
From Psalm 4
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From Psalm 4. SPIRITUAL SOLUTIONS TO TEMPORAL PROBLEMS

PART 1: ALL SOLUTIONS BEGIN WITH GOD

V. 1 (b)

#1. "Answer me when I call, O God of my righteousness!" The psalmist believes that all solutions begin with God. He seeks relief from temporal distress. David depended on *a causal movement running from the spiritual and the invisible --> to the temporal and the visible*. "Be gracious to me and hear my prayer."

#2. David believed that time is an open dimension. The universe of things is open to the power of God and unable to resist it. And of equal importance, the eternal reality is open to human petition.

#3. This necessarily means that *real solutions* are not systemic nor methodological from the biblical point of view. "Hear my prayer" is to grant its interest and focus.

#4. The generalization is clear from the text and perhaps shocking: Prayer is divesting one's self of confidence in personal causation. Man cannot really solve the human dilemma.

#5. This psalm is a call for *solution by induction*. That is to say, God puts the solution, or that He induces the solution, into the human circumstance. This was David's belief on causation. And that is how he prayed.

#6. Temporal problems are subject to supernatural induction. Which means that causation runs from greater --> to lesser. It runs from God --> to our experience of His causation.

#7. We are all confronted by a range of the uncontrollable. Our need is for something that bypasses the methodological, time constraints and even our expectations.

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PART 2: ALL SOLUTIONS BEGIN WITH GOD

v.1 (b).

#1. All causation is on a single continuum running from the Lord and supernatural causation --> to natural causation. *This is the law of causation*.

#2. Human reason, on its own, takes causation off this continuum. It's considered to be just a force of nature ($E=mc^2$).

#3. Once one believes that causation is a pure and inherent force of nature, then one will not pray; there is no reason to pray; no reason to involve the power of God.

#4. However, David believed that his circumstances obeyed the law of causation: "Answer me when I call, O God." Question: Do our prayers put our circumstances on this continuum of causation and thus they become subject to the law of causation?

#5. Modern believers tend to prefer *a highly rationalized version of causation*. Many, perhaps most, believers today hold no hope in, nor expectation of the law of causation.

#6. The issue of greatest importance: Human reason will never allow faith to transcend its approval. This fact forces a categorization of thought. There are *rational ideas* generated strictly by unaided human reason; founded upon human experience. There are *irrational ideas* which fully contradict rational thought. And there is something else. There are *non-rational ideas*. These are ideas are generated, not by the human mind, but by the mind of God.

#7. Indeed, Scripture is the revealed composite of non-natural reasoning. Logically, the mind of God, the thoughts of God, cannot be subject in any way to the human mind.

#8. Therefore, "be gracious to me and hear my prayer."

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PART #3: THE LORD'S CALL TO HIGHER ORDER REALITY

v.2. (a).

#1. "O sons of men, how long will my honor become a reproach"? The invisible, the spiritual, the eternal had been repudiated. Why? Because it obstructed all the things that men want.

#2. Here, there is *a clash of minds*. The Lord calls people to a higher order of behavior, of understanding, loyalty; He calls us to a higher order language manifold.

#3. But many in Israel held other interests. Their passions ("love") overruled any revealed higher order. Led by their passions, they pursued ("aim") that which was "worthless." *The meaning of such terms is fixed by Scripture and not by human experience.*

#4. To pursue what God calls "worthless" is to coincidentally pursue "deception." Such pursuits appear to be axial, necessary, important, promissory and practical; but not deceptive. Any predominate *temporal focus* is the construct of deception. Therefore, a primary human concern is to not be deceived.

#5. David contends that to be effectively without the Word of God is to be deceived. Deception is not rooted in the central nervous system. Rather it is grounded in the denial of, rejection of, repudiation of, and disinterest in, revelation.

#6. Such a polarization between revelation and the human mind induces one to seek the pragmatic, the "practical" and to, thereby, "reproach" - the "honor" of the Almighty.

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PART 4: THE LORD'S CALL TO HIGHER ORDER REALITY

v.2. (b).

#1. There is a differential between revealed wisdom and human wisdom. These two cannot be bridged nor unified. Every human attempt at unification takes the Word of God out of its authoritative position over man and man's temporal circumstance.

#2. Scripture is so read as to make it non-determinant in human affairs. Deception is the necessary by-product of breaking the relation between revelation and time, the human mind and language.

#3. Unquestioned trust in science, dependence upon technology and reliance on the social sciences overrules any real gravitation toward the Bible. Such a gravitation toward the spiritual and biblical is, today, labelled *radical*.

#4. Some refer to "being on the right side of history" or to "following the direction of the future." But that is all deception, because man is not a one-dimensional creature. Every man and woman must deal with God; He is the central issue.

#5. The core of the deception is to believe that the Lord is not the source of all causation. So, He does not matter; being relegated to an historical anomaly.

#6. There is no fear of God. The Almighty and all higher spiritual magnitudes of order are considered irrelevant.

#7. This is a one-way street to brick wall. Time limits have been set by God on His patience with human ideologies. A reckoning is coming. "O sons of men, how long will my honor become a reproach? How long will you love what is worthless (*ontology*) and aim at deception"? Yet many still cling to rationalism above scripture.

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PART 5: SPECIAL CASE PROXIMITY v.3.

#1. The one Lord tell us that "the godly man" is part of a subset of the human race. And further He stipulates that everyone in that subset has been "set apart" by and for the Lord "Himself."

#2. This is a spiritual subset whose parameters and identification are grounded upon their belief in and obedience to the word of God.

#3. We may think of this as *special case proximity*. It should be respected and sought after as a privileged position, effective in time, situation and circumstance. Proof: "The Lord hears when I call to Him."

#4. Question: Why would any right-thinking person ever want to step beyond that special case proximity? Why violate the frontier between that subset and the world?

#5. One way of stepping outside of the subset with its proximity to God involves trust in God and trust in the Word of God about their position on causation. Scriptural statements and claims about causation in time are of supreme importance. It largely governs one's temporal behavior.

#6. David himself learned that revealed truth about causation was not to be ignored, contested nor controverted. "The godly man" shows no inclination toward the controversion (or turning in the opposite direction) of revealed truth.

#7. But the world of unbelief and the people in it have rejected the mere possibility of revelation, not to mention the idea of spiritual solutions to temporal problems. Churches have a history of doing this too. Doing so they have displaced biblical teaching and in its place put *every method of controversion*. Revealed assertions are unacceptable to them. That is the human mind as agent of controversion.

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PART 6: SPIRITUALIZED REASONING v.4, 5.

#1. The pyramid of spiritualized reasoning makes an appearance. And it stands in abject contradiction to dependence upon human reasoning. At the base of the pyramid is:

- (1) The Word of God, revelation. This is the only place to start.
- (2) Then the next step up is the fear of God in general. Going up further,
- (3) There is the applied fear of God founded upon what one learns about God through His revelation. One "trembles" at the reality of God.
- (4) Controlled behavior becomes an important particle of spiritualized thought: "and do not sin."
- (5) Climbing further, one discovers the need for controlled thought: "Meditate in your heart"; "offer sacrifices of righteousness."

- (6) At the top of the pyramid, faith and spiritualized reasoning appear to be identical: "trust in the Lord."

#2. This means that spiritualized reasoning is not a process; rather it is *an achievement*. Every believer is expected to climb this pyramid.

#3. So, the condition of mind conduces to the condition of reasoning. What so pointedly changes in all of this is the evaluation of time and experience. Life becomes about the pursuit of righteousness.

#4. One meaning here for the believer and the church is this: We cannot pursue the spiritual mind and pursue social relevance at the same time. Rationalism does not and cannot consent to the pursuit of righteous thought and behavior.

#5. Each of us is conceded a certain number of days, in which, to elevate the best part of us beyond the stranglehold of this world. Imagine the outcome of this alone, on marriage, children, family, church and society. All we have to do is scale that pyramid of the Spirit.

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PART 7: THE SPIRITUAL CONTEXT FOR ALL TEMPORAL CIRCUMSTANCE

v. 6, 7 (a).

#1. Belief in this psalm requires the understanding that the true and actual context of our particular circumstances is "the light of Your countenance upon us." The countenance of God is the source of "any good" to us. Remarkable.

#2. The countenance of God upon one indicates the Lord's profound awareness of and interest in our temporal circumstances. We are being observed. His countenance is as factual as any of the material and sociological constituents of the situation.

#3. David believed that the countenance of the Almighty was the determinant element in human events. Here we have the invisible spiritual reality executing a non-natural conditioning of experience. "You have put gladness in my heart, more than when their grain and new wine abound." *This means that this kind gladness transcends material conditions.* Incredible. And that necessarily reopens the meaning of "possibilities" in any human circumstance. Possibilities are directly associated with the countenance of God and not dependent upon "historical development." Socialism, communism and authoritarianism got it wrong, again.

#4. This psalm stipulates that having the countenance of God upon us changes our circumstance. Having it, seeking it and trusting in it is *the preferred state of affairs*. No one deserves it. It comes by grace.

#5. The countenance, as context, holds consequences. "Gladness" was put there by the Lord-- a non-natural induction. This is an ambient, a state of affairs, a non-natural response to circumstance.

#6. Biblical responses to circumstances are not from this world. Think of it! Our condition of mind is invited to rest upon the induced supernatural context!

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PART 8: THE SPIRITUAL CONTEXT FOR ALL TEMPORAL CIRCUMSTANCE
v.6, 7 (b).

#1. Why do many people disincline to trust in the Word of God? Even read it? The answer: Because human beings have an almost overpowering inclination to measure themselves and circumstances against *the social setting and the material setting*. And that is an abrogation of Christian faith.

#2. David had a kind of "gladness" that transcended his personal situation. It was "more than when their grain and new wine abound."

#3. This state of mind was not crippled by the presence of hardship, nor shocking materializations. This kind of gladness is not relative to circumstance, situation, events nor states of being.

#4. Rather, it is uniquely relative to eternal reality and absolute revealed truth. Happiness we most often associate with material and social conditions. It is ephemeral.

#5. The pursuit of God and His Word in any, all and every human circumstance constitutes the protection of the mind.

#6. We must become *alert* by biblical standards. It is quite easy to underestimate the weight of spiritualized reasoning and overestimate rationalism. Rationalism does not respect special case proximity. And it will not guarantee the pursuit of biblical righteousness.

#7. Spiritualized reasoning does not trust in *historical development*; like dominos, one falling after the other. Biblical reasoning is induced in us by the Lord and His Word. Therefore, we are called to think about temporal reality, all of it, in terms of *redemption by induction*. The Almighty puts or induces the solution into events and temporal conditions. This is then, the precise way by which we deal with time, the world, situation and circumstance as they come.

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PART 9: OPPOSING FORCES
v.8.

#1. Every believer endures pressure from the world; sometimes of a crushing magnitude. However, the psalm holds a transcendent perspective on this undeniable and equally unavoidable fact of life.

#2. "In peace I will both lie down and sleep.".. Peace accompanied by unmolested rest. This is an *induced capacity*. God Himself is the author of this induction. The capacity, then, owes nothing to the shape and character of immediate personal circumstance.

#3. Such a believer is in the receipt of non-natural knowledge. That is, knowledge not of this world, not a product of the human mind, nor generalizable from human lived experience.

#4. David did not seek solutions to temporal problems constructed by the rational human mind. But that is the normative approach, among men, to the particulars of circumstance (Genesis 3; Numbers 13, 14).

#5. What did David learn, know and believe? "For You alone, O Lord, make me to dwell in safety." Generalization: It is not how dangerous, violent and overpowering the situation is. Rather the issue is how grand, present, imposing and powerful is the Lord.

#6. David had come to accept the revealed truth, taught everywhere in the Bible. Only the Almighty can make us dwell in safety. The invisible King commands situation and circumstance; being unconstrained by them.

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PART 10: THE APODEICTIC LEVEL. (APO-DYKE-TIC).

#1. Apodeictic is a term expressing a condition of meaning. It means that the issue is *necessarily so*, that it *can be no other way*. Psalm 4 offers a language manifold that has fixed meaning. Its range of meaning is not subject to variable interpretations.

#2. Only God can protect us. That is necessarily so; it can be no other way. Rationalism never finds apodeictic knowledge and will not admit that it exists.

#3. Why does one beat back situation-related depression? Answer: In part, because of just such apodeictic knowledge. Belief, therefore, must be unswervingly founded upon apodeictic knowing.

#4. Why pursue the "worthless" and "deception" v.2? Because revealed truth is not held as apodeictic language.

#5. Many in the Christian religion do not believe in, nor accept such categorical knowledge from scripture. Quite the reverse. Rationalism has overruled this category of knowing and call it subjectivism.

#6. Thus for them, biblical meaning depends upon the reader; not upon the eternal Author. In contrast, there is a believer who lies down to sleep with full conviction that God has control of events.

#7. So, his/her belief is at rest in revealed propositions. Such a mind refuses to think about the possibilities of what *could* happen. He/she believes the Lord sees all and will be preventative. His excellency constrains all possibilities. Faith has risen to the apodeictic level.