

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION
Psalms: Living By Faith In God
IV. Handling Prolonged Livelihood Oppression
(Psalm 4:1-8)

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

Today, we face prolonged livelihood oppression due to extensive government induced inflation of our money:

(1) Government induced pandemic shutdowns have played a big role in this inflation: "Some of the world's biggest companies . . . plan to continue raising prices or pushing customers to buy more expensive products into 2022 to offset fast-growing costs amid a global supply-chain crisis" that was caused by government shutdowns. (Sharon Terlep, "Companies Betting Shoppers Shrug Off Inflation," The Wall Street Journal, October 25, 2021, p. A1)

(2) Also, massive government spending in recent years has contributed to our recent inflation (U. S. Congress Joint Economic Committee, "The Economics of Inflation and the Risks of Ballooning Government Spending," October 6, 2021; jec.senate.gov), so David Harsanyi, a senior writer at National Review in his column, "High price of inflation games" (Republican-American, October 18, 2021, p. 8A) claimed that President Biden's "welfare-state bill" had no "justification . . . for unprecedented spending when inflation is accelerating." However, "the . . . president contends that his . . . welfare-state expansion bill costs 'zero'" and that "more spending" -- in his own words -- "would 'reduce inflation, reduce inflation, reduce inflation.'" (Ibid.)

However, "(w)e are now in our sixth month of historic spikes" that cause "immediate increases in the cost of living. Consumer prices, led by energy and food prices, have increased 5.4% overall since last year . . . Social Security benefits will rise nearly 6% for retirees in 2022 because of a cost-of-living adjustment -- the biggest surge in decades . . . Gasoline is up 42% over last year as well -- the cost is embedded in nearly everything" and "households" may "see their heating bills jump as much as 54% compared with last winter." (Ibid.)

(3) Marxism and globalism are behind it: Economist "John Maynard Keynes," a "Socialist" who has greatly affected progressives, "believed wealth could -- and should -- be redistributed through many means," with one means being "a continuous process of inflation to steal the majority of people's wealth." (Brannon S. Howse, Marxianity, 2018, p. 159; Brannon Howse, The Coming Religious Reich, 2015, p. 79) Keynes wrote that this "'process engages all of the hidden forces of economic law on the side of destruction, and it does it in a manner that not one man in a million can diagnose,'" John Maynard Keynes, Economic Consequences of the Peace, 1920, cited in Howse, Loc. cit.

Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels' 1848 work, The Communist Manifesto, p. 85-86, called for "the middle-class owner of property" to "be swept out of the way, and made impossible" to exist. (learn-usa.com, "Goals, 'Communist Manifesto'") Government induced inflation thus aligns with the Marxist goal financially to eliminate the middle class.

Need: So, we ask, "How can we handle prolonged livelihood oppression through government induced inflation?!"

I. David faced prolonged oppression from his pursuing enemies, Psalm 4:1-2:

- A. Psalm 4 is similar to Psalm 3 in "expression and structure," leading many to believe that David wrote Psalm 4 the day after he composed Psalm 3 and had spent the night in danger. (Bible Know. Com., O. T., p. 793-794)
- B. Thus, following his Psalm 4:1 prayer the next day for deliverance from Absalom's pursuing insurrectionists (Psalm 3), David addressed his foes, asking them "how *long*" would they seek his destruction, Psalm 4:2 ESV.

II. He then handled his relentless oppressors by relying on the Lord for deliverance, Psalm 4:3-5:

- A. David explained that God had set him apart as a godly man for Himself [through God's Davidic Covenant promise to help David, 2 Samuel 7:14-15], that God would hear when he called unto Him for help, Psalm 4:3.
- B. Thus, David told his foes to revere God, not to sin, to ponder the gravity of their current actions as they lay down to sleep, to be silent before God, to offer right sacrifices and to trust in God for blessing, Psalm 4:4-5.

III. David faced prolonged livelihood oppression due to the prolonged oppression by his foes, Psalm 4:6a:

- A. He claimed that many of his followers **kept on "saying"** (*'omrim*, Qal act. **participle** of *'amar*, "say," Kittel, Bib. Heb., 978; The Analyt. Heb. and Chald. Lex. (Zon.), 1972, p. 34; B. D. B., A Heb. and Eng. Lex. of the O. T., p. 55-56) "Who will show us any 'good'?" with "good" translating *tob*, "good things." (Ibid., p. 375).
- B. To explain, David's people had to flee Jerusalem without time to collect needed livelihood provisions, only to make a long, weary trek into the Transjordan wilderness ill-equipped to fight Absalom's pursuing followers!

IV. Thus, David handled this livelihood provision lack by relying on the Lord for His help, Psalm 4:6b-8:

- A. David alluded to the High Priest's Numbers 6:24-26 blessing on Israel's people, asking God figuratively to lift up the light of His face on David and his men, a request for favor, Ryrie St. Bib., KJV, 1978, fn. to Psalm 4:6.

- B. The Lord responded by settling David's heart, giving him more joy than harvesters typically expressed when their material provisions of grain and wine abounded, Psalm 4:7. David experienced God's inner peace in his soul though he and his followers still lacked greatly-needed material provisions.
 - C. For this reason, David claimed that he would both lie down and sleep once again (cf. Psalm 3:5a), for the Lord alone had made him to dwell in *betah*, the Hebrew word for "security," Ibid., B. D. B., p. 105.; Psalm 4:8.
- V. **God then supplied the guidance and material goods David and his men needed, 2 Sam. 17:15-22, 27-29:**
- A. The Lord provided practical guidance for the safety of David and his followers, 2 Samuel 17:15-22:
 - 1. When Hushai, David's informer in Absalom's court, learned that Absalom had been advised to pursue David quickly and overtake his company before they crossed the Jordan, Hushai sent word by two youths to warn David not to spend the night west of the Jordan, but to cross it immediately, 2 Samuel 17:15-17.
 - 2. Yet, these youths were noticed by an informer to Absalom, so Absalom's men tried to capture them, v. 18.
 - 3. A woman who secretly supported David hid the youths in a dry well, placing a cover over it with parched grain spread over the cover, and after Absalom's men left the area, the youths came out of the well and hurried to David, warning him to cross the Jordan so that David and his men escaped, 2 Samuel 17:19-22.
 - B. When David and his men reached the town of Mahanaim in the Transjordan area, three wealthy men each travelling over 25 miles from their respective homes brought many livelihood provisions for David's followers. (2 Samuel 17:27-29a ESV; The Carta Bible Atlas, 2002, Map 108, "The Rebellion of Absalom")
 - C. These wealthy men said that "(t)he people are hungry and weary and thirsty in the wilderness," 2 Samuel 17:29b ESV. They realized the plight David and his men faced in fleeing without adequate provisions only later to have to fight Absalom's army, so they did their part to contribute to the welfare of David and his men.

Lesson: *David trusted the Lord's Davidic Covenant promise to sustain him even in his flight from Absalom to entrust himself and his followers to God's care to encourage them spiritually and replenish them materially. God accordingly richly supplied David with much-needed information and spiritual and material provisions.*

Application: *(1) May we trust in Christ Who died as our Atoning Sacrifice for sin that we might receive God's gift of eternal life, John 3:16; 1 Cor. 15:1-11. (2) If facing prolonged livelihood oppression, may we rely on the Lord to address both our spiritual needs of encouragement and our material needs in accord with His purposes for us.*

Conclusion: (To illustrate the message . . .)

We apply this sermon to the prolonged livelihood oppression we face due to government induced inflation:

(1) Just as David relied on God's Davidic Covenant promises to sustain him even during Absalom's insurrection, we need to rely on God's promises to us in our era to sustain us, and we have some promises as follows:

(a) Philippians 4:19 with the context of Philippians 4:15-18 claim God promises to meet our material needs when we are involved in supporting His missionaries such as Paul.

(b) Also, if we promote God's kingdom and righteousness in our lives, God will meet our livelihood needs according to Matthew 6:33. As applied to inflationary pressures in particular, Haggai 1:5-11 describes how the people of Israel faced depleted agricultural harvests and buying power shortages with the money they earned due to their failure to fulfill God's calling to rebuild His temple. However, when they addressed that rebuilding work, Haggai 2:15-19 shows God promising to bless them materially.

(2) However, like David needed Hushai's protective information, we need protective information on handling government induced inflation! To that end, we note that experts routinely claim that an effective hedge against inflation is owning hard assets like a diversified group of stocks, stock mutual funds, real estate, valuable collectibles like art, jewelry, stamps, etc. that rise in value along with inflation since such assets obtain rising business incomes or are in steady demand. We **do** need sufficient cash reserves for emergencies, but **hard** assets guard against **inflation**.

We have Biblical support for this advice, too: in Genesis 31:4-13, Jacob called his wives Leah and Rachel out to the field where he kept his livestock to ask them to join him in leaving their father Laban due to Laban's souring attitude toward him. Jacob told his wives that Laban had cheated him in changing his wages ten times (Genesis 31:7 NIV), but that God had overcome Laban's cheating by giving Jacob the hard assets of certain marked livestock, what Laban could not manipulate so as to cheat Jacob (Genesis 31:10-13). So, if God upheld Jacob's buying power in having him paid by the hard asset of livestock instead of money from Laban lest Laban manipulate that money so as to cheat Jacob, we can invest in hard assets to offset being cheated by government induced inflation of our cash!

May we trust in Christ Who died as our Atoning Sacrifice for sin that we might receive God's gift of eternal life. May we then rely on the Lord to address spiritual and material needs in accord with His purpose.