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 devotionals by Beth Ann Phifer

Psalm 4 records David's journey into freedom.  
 Four little words will guide us as we make the same journey:  
**Cry, Why, Rely, Fly**

Legend of Colors: black-NASB version, orange - other versions,  
 olive green - KJV, blue italics - original Hebrew words

## Psalm 4 Retreat – The Journey from Confined to Spacious **Personal Journal Sheets**

written June 18, 2013

Part 1				
<b>Cry</b>	Help!	<sup>1</sup> Answer me when I call, O God of my righteousness! <i>God who vindicates me</i>  You have relieved ( <i>rāhab</i> ) me in my distress ( <i>sar</i> ); <i>freed /enlarged</i> <i>affliction</i>  Be gracious to me and hear my prayer.	Confined Place  ↓	What is your cry? _____ _____ _____
		<b>Why</b> What I don know	<sup>2</sup> O sons of men, how long will my honor become a reproach? <i>will I be insulted?</i>  How long will you love what is worthless and aim at deception? Selah.	
Part 2				
<b>Rely</b>	What I know in the pause	<b>Remember</b> <sup>3</sup> But know that the Lord has set apart the godly <i>faithful</i> for Himself; The Lord hears when I call to Him.	The Journey	What do you know? _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____
		<div style="border: 1px solid red; padding: 5px;"> <b>Wait</b> <i>The Peering Pause: be still, pour out, wait, peer, rest</i>  <sup>4</sup> Tremble (<i>rāgaz</i>) <i>be angry stand in awe</i>, and do not sin;            Meditate <i>reflect commune</i> (<i>āmar</i>) in your heart upon your bed, and be still. Selah.         </div>		
		<b>Trust</b> <sup>5</sup> Offer the sacrifices of righteousness, and trust ( <i>bātah</i> ) in the LORD.		
		<b>Receive</b> <sup>6</sup> Many are saying, "Who will show us any good?" Lift up the light of Your countenance ( <i>pānîm</i> ) upon us, O Lord!		
Part 3				
<b>Fly</b>	Result of Trust	<b>In Abundance</b> <sup>7</sup> You have put <i>gladness</i> in my heart, More than when their grain and new wine abound.	↓  Spacious Place	How does it feel to fly? (John 15:11) _____ _____ _____
		<b>In Peace</b> <sup>8</sup> In peace I will both lie down and sleep, For You alone, O Lord, make me to dwell in safety.		
<b>Talk</b>				
thinking, writing, sharing, praying, discussing				<b>Walk</b> IHTML - <b>I</b> Have <b>T</b> his in <b>M</b> y <b>L</b> ife





Please read Psalm 4:1-2 again and answer the following questions.

What was David's **cry**? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

David had big questions. What were his **whys**?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Do you have heart cries that rise to the surface of your heart?

- If you don't have cries or whys right now, that's o.k. Please pray for others.
- Try not to labor over these questions. What does God bring to your mind?
- Be honest with God as much as you are able as you pour out your heart to Him.

My **cries**  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

My **whys** (questions for God)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

10:30 – 10:45    Break  
10:45 – 11:00    Sharing  
11:00 – 11:30    Part 2

## Part 2: Rely

David teaches us to **Rely** on God in the confined place by:

**Remembering, Waiting, Trusting** and **Receiving**

Verse 3 – But know that the Lord has set apart the godly for Himself; The Lord hears when I call to Him.

Verse 3 – **Relying** is **Remembering**

What does David **remember** about God in Verse 3?

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What do you **remember** about God? What do you know about Him from Scripture or personal experience?

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Verse 4 – **Relying** is **Waiting**

**Tremble**, and do not sin; **Meditate** in your heart upon your bed, and be still.

The Hebrew word for **tremble** is *rāgaz* – meaning to *stand in awe, quake, rage, shake, or disturb*. It suggests an *agitation from deeply-rooted emotion. It expresses intense emotion.*

The Hebrew word for **meditate** is *āmar* – meaning to *commune, reflect, utter, speak, direct conversation, see, or make visible.*

**In other words**, David instructs, **Be in great intense agitation in your soul. Be deeply shaken and disturbed, but come to God and look at Him until you see Him. Focus on God as long as it takes for you to understand, for you to see your situation from His perspective.**

**How do I wait before God in His presence? – The Peering Pause** from Psalm 4:4:

- I will **Be still** before God in His presence.
- I will **Pour out** my heart honestly to Him in the stillness.
- I will **Wait** for Him to speak truth in my confusion and pain.
- I will **Peer** until I see truth in His timing, the truth that will settle my heart.
- I will **Rest** in His love.

11:30 - 12:30      Lunch  
12:30 – 12:45      Praise  
12:45 – 1:00      Prayer, Recap or Q&A

1:00 – 1:30 Part 2 continued

Seeing **The Peering Pause** in a poem by Amy Carmichael, missionary to India.

Thou art the Lord Who slept upon the pillow.  
Thou art the Lord Who soothed the furious sea.  
What matter beating wind and tossing billow,  
If only we are in the boat with Thee.

**Hold us in quiet through the age-long minute,  
While Thou art silent and the wind is shrill.**

Can the boat sink while Thou, dear Lord, art in it?  
Can the heart faint that waiteth on Thy will?

After **Waiting in the Peering Pause, Trust and Receiving will come.**

Verse 5 – **Relying is Trusting**

Offer the sacrifices of righteousness, and trust in the Lord.

The Hebrew word for **trust** is *bātah*. This word is different from faith. It means to *rely on, feel safe, be confident, be free of care, feel secure, hope in, expectant; the sense of well-being and security that comes from having someone to place confidence in.*

In the quiet waiting, David's trust is enlarged. He feels safe. His rage and fear are diffused as he hears God's voice and basks in the beauty of His presence.

Verse 6 – **Relying is Receiving**

Many are saying, "Who will show us any good?" Lift up the light of Your countenance upon us, O Lord!

The Hebrew word for **countenance** is *pānîm* and means *face*. In Hebrew, the face is the reflection of the heart and emotions. In David's quiet waiting, he received the reflection of the Lord's heart on his own face. David lifted his voice in a prayer of praise – **Let me reflect You as I come through this trial!**

Paul writes in 2 Corinthians 3:16-18:

"... whenever a person turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. So then with unveiled faces, we behold the glory of the Lord as in a mirror, and we are being transformed into the same image with increasing glory; this is from the Lord Who is the Spirit."

1:30 - 2:00 Break for quiet refreshment

2:00 - 3:00 Ministry time

3:00 - 3:20

**Part 3: Fly**

Verse 7 – **Flying in Abundance**

Verse 8 – **Flying in Peace**

## Why did this happen? – Right and wrong ways to think about my suffering

This chart is an excerpt from the paper entitled *Freedom from Depression and Anxiety* by Beth Ann Phifer found at [ShaleFragments.com](http://ShaleFragments.com)

Why had my life suddenly been catapulted into such tormenting suffering? As I cried out to God for answers, I began to make a list of possible causes. I learned that the cause didn't fall neatly into any one of these categories. The Psalmists moved from one cause to another in their search for answers in their pain.

This chart shows a list of my personal questions. The enemy's lies are in **brown**, and the truth of Scripture is in **green**. As I denounced the lies and received the truth, God freed me from harmful thoughts and brought healing to my spirit, mind and body.

<b><i>Was my suffering caused by...?</i></b>	<b><i>Wrong thinking (enemy's lies)</i></b>	<b><i>Right thinking (God's truth)</i></b>
<b><i>My sin?</i></b> I opened the door to evil. I allowed people to control me.	<b><i>lie</i></b> - I am a horrible sinner. How can God forgive me? I must not be His if this is happening to me.	<b><i>truth</i></b> - I made wrong choices. Thank You, God, for taking care of my sin at the cross. I receive Your forgiveness.
<b><i>Other's sin against me?</i></b> I had been oppressed by a series of manipulative relationships.	<b><i>lie</i></b> - My present state is completely the fault of others. I wish they had never come into my path.	<b><i>truth</i></b> - By God's grace, I choose to forgive. If necessary, I am willing to confront the perpetrator in love. God, give me discernment.
<b><i>The devil?</i></b> The enemy used my weakness to accuse, pounce and devour.	<b><i>lie</i></b> - I must be very bad if this is happening. The devil must have taken over. I might even be possessed.	<b><i>truth</i></b> - I remember when You gave me new life! Nothing is more powerful than Your love for me. I belong to You! You will always heal me.
<b><i>Heredity?</i></b> I was told after this crisis that there were a few women in my family that had suffered in this way.	<b><i>lie</i></b> - Well then... what did anyone expect? There was no way I could have avoided this crisis. I was destined to suffer this way.	<b><i>truth</i></b> - Lord, You have the power to cut across lines of heredity. Thank You for giving me compassion for others who suffer in this way.
<b><i>Environment?</i></b> Incidents in my life were depressing and fearful. Did I learn this behavior?	<b><i>lie</i></b> - Well then... what did anyone expect? There was no way I could have avoided this crisis.	<b><i>truth</i></b> - Holy Spirit, I thank You for the redemption and healing you bring into all the broken places of our lives.
<b><i>Personality?</i></b> My response of depression to life situations was due to a melancholy, meditative, artist personality.	<b><i>lie</i></b> - I am just a little leaf in a powerful stream. I can only give in to what I cannot control. God made me this way.	<b><i>truth</i></b> - Thank You for giving me a sensitive personality that sees Your beauty and feels deeply. Take me into the freedom of self-forgetfulness.
<b><i>Hormones?</i></b> Many people told me I might be going through physical changes, since I was in my 40s.	<b><i>lie</i></b> - I am just a little leaf in a powerful stream. I can only succumb to what I cannot control. God made me this way.	<b><i>truth</i></b> - No hormonal problems were detected after blood tests, however, my body would no longer allow for the fear and oppression.
<b><i>God's sovereign hand?</i></b> – He knew what was necessary to form me into the image of His Son and draw me closer to Himself.	<b><i>lie</i></b> - What kind of God are You that You would allow this pain? Why are You cruel? I thought You were love.	<b><i>truth</i></b> - God, You see the big picture. Everything You allow is covered in Your love. I am thankful for the beauty you brought into my life as a result of this great pain.