

## Daily devotional, February 24, 2021 Resting in God's Presence

*"In peace I will lie down and sleep, for You alone, Lord, make me dwell in safety." Psalm 4:8 (NIV)*

Have you ever had a night when you tossed and turned in bed for what seemed like hours? Perhaps you found yourself glancing repeatedly at the clock, wondering why you could not seem to doze off. Countless factors can interfere with a good night's sleep—from pressure in our work and family responsibilities to unexpected challenges such as layoffs, relationship issues, or illnesses. Nowadays, the dangers of the Corona virus have infiltrated our consciousness to the point of sleep deprivation. It's no wonder that quality sleep is sometimes elusive. If we are troubled, anxious, or encumbered with cares, how can we truly rest?

Sleep plays an important role in our physical wellbeing. Studies have revealed that the human body typically needs seven to nine hours of sleep per night. If our bodies do not get enough rest, our metabolisms slow down and our appetites increase. Brain functions are also hindered: focus, physical energy, and mood all take a hit. Our days are much more difficult when our nights are restless! God made our bodies to require recharging, and that occurs during a night of sound sleep. While proper nutrition, exercise, and other factors also influence the health of our bodies, nothing can take the place of proper rest.

In Psalm 4, David stated that he could lie down in peace and sleep because the Lord gave him security. When David wrote this psalm, he was experiencing trouble. Perhaps it was composed while he was suffering from the rebellion of his son Absalom, who was determined to destroy his own father and usurp David's authority in the kingdom. Or it may have been written during a time of distress due to crop failures, or from the threat of invading armies. Whatever the case, David proved that the godly can find peace in the Lord even when outward circumstances are perilous. The psalmist knew that he could trust God and this assurance allowed him to state, "In peace I will lie down and sleep: for You alone, Lord, make me dwell in safety."

Although we might not be able to control all of the factors that could interfere with our rest, we can adopt one habit that is sure to encourage better sleep. Like David, we can rejoice in God's care for us. We can propose to release our problems to God and choose not to dwell upon the troubles and "what ifs" of life. The Psalms are full of assurances of God's presence, and what a basis that provides for restful sleep! As we center our thoughts on Him, He can provide us with the security we need to sleep peacefully and well.

To enjoy the blessings and benefits of quality sleep, we need to be sure that we have handed over our cares to God and are resting securely in Him.

***Prayer: Almighty God, bless my night, and bless the coming day. I'm so tired and anxious, burdened by the cares of the day. Lay your hand upon me and quiet my restless soul. Cradle me in your protective arms, dear Lord. Give me rest that tomorrow will be a most productive day. I cast my cares upon You. Amen.***