

Psalms 4:6

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

There be many that say, Who will shew us any good? LORD,
lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us.

Analysis

David quotes the skeptics who doubt God's goodness and power to bless. Yet he turns their question into a prayer: 'LORD, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us.' This echoes the Aaronic blessing (Numbers 6:24-26), where God's face shining on His people signifies favor and blessing. The contrast is stark - many seek satisfaction in creation ('any good'), but David seeks the Creator's face. God's 'countenance' (Hebrew 'panim' - face) represents His presence, approval, and blessing - infinitely more valuable than any earthly good.

Historical Context

In ancient Israel, seeing the king's face was a privilege indicating favor. David transfers this imagery to God, recognizing that His favorable presence is the highest blessing. This prayer anticipates the incarnation, when God's face literally shone upon humanity in Christ (2 Corinthians 4:6).

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. Do you seek God's face primarily, or are you content with lesser blessings?
2. How have you experienced the joy of God's favorable presence in your life?

Interlinear Text

רַב־יָם	אֹמְרִים	מִי	יִרְאֶה נֹו	טוֹב	נִסָּה	עֲלֵינוּ
There be many	that say	H4310	Who will shew	us any good	lift thou up	H5921
H7227	H559		H7200	H2896	H5375	
אֶל־אֹר	פָּנֶיךָ	יְהוָה:				
the light	of thy countenance	LORD				
H216	H6440	H3068				

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 80:19 (References Lord): Turn us again, O LORD God of hosts, cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved.

Numbers 6:26 (References Lord): The LORD lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.

Psalms 80:7 (Parallel theme): Turn us again, O God of hosts, and cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved.

Psalms 119:135 (Parallel theme): Make thy face to shine upon thy servant; and teach me thy statutes.

Psalms 89:15 (Light): Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O LORD, in the light of thy countenance.

Psalms 67:1 (Parallel theme): God be merciful unto us, and bless us; and cause his face to shine upon us; Selah.