

# Psalms 6:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Return, O LORD, deliver my soul: oh save me for thy mercies' sake.

## Analysis

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David pleads for God to 'return' - implying God seems absent or withdrawn. 'Deliver my soul' requests rescue from death or destruction. The appeal to God's 'mercies' (Hebrew 'chesed' - covenant love) grounds the request in God's character and promises, not David's merit. This demonstrates Reformed theology: we appeal to God's mercy, not our worthiness. The prayer for salvation is ultimately answered in Christ, whose name 'Yeshua' comes from the same Hebrew root as 'save' used here.

## Historical Context

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The sense of God's absence was a common lament theme in psalms, not indicating actual divine abandonment but the feeling thereof during trial. David's appeal to covenant mercy shows he understood salvation as based on God's faithful character. This anticipates the gospel, where God saves for His name's sake (Ezekiel 36:22).

## Related Passages

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**John 3:16** — God's love and salvation

**Ephesians 2:8** — Salvation by grace through faith

**Romans 1:17** — The righteous shall live by faith

## Study Questions

1. When God seems absent, what truths about His character anchor your prayers?
2. How does appealing to God's mercy rather than your merit change how you pray?

## Interlinear Text

חֲסִדֶּיךָ:      לִמַּעַן    ה' וְשִׁיעַ נִי    בְּפֶשֶׁי    חִלָּצָה    ה' ! הִזָּה    שׁוּבָה ה'

**Return**      **O LORD**      **deliver**      **my soul**      **oh save**      H4616      **me for thy mercies**

H7725      H3068      H2502      H5315      H3467           H2617

## Additional Cross-References

**Daniel 9:18** (Parallel theme): O my God, incline thine ear, and hear; open thine eyes, and behold our desolations, and the city which is called by thy name: for we do not present our supplications before thee for our righteousnesses, but for thy great mercies.

**Psalms 17:13** (References Lord): Arise, O LORD, disappoint him, cast him down:  
deliver my soul from the wicked, which is thy sword:

**Psalms 80:14** (Parallel theme): Return, we beseech thee, O God of hosts: look down from heaven, and behold, and visit this vine;

**Psalms 22:20** (Parallel theme): Deliver my soul from the sword; my darling from the power of the dog.

**Psalms 116:4** (References Lord): Then called I upon the name of the LORD; O LORD, I beseech thee, deliver my soul.

**Psalms 121:7** (References Lord): The LORD shall preserve thee from all evil: he shall preserve thy soul.

**Psalms 90:13** (References Lord): Return, O LORD, how long? and let it repent thee concerning thy servants.

**Malachi 3:7** (References Lord): Even from the days of your fathers ye are gone away from mine ordinances, and have not kept them. Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith the LORD of hosts. But ye said, Wherein shall we return?

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