

SAFE LODGING

THE LESSON: PSALM 4

*Jesus said, “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.
 I give them eternal life, and they will never perish,
 and no one will snatch them out of my hand” (John 10:27-28).*

We live in a world that is anything but safe. Throughout life we will experience sorrow, suffering and grief, not to mention “dangers, toils, and snares” (John Newton, *Amazing Grace*). But God can use these challenges to teach and to shape “his sheep” – believers.

As his sheep, we want to know our Shepherd more, and be known by him. We want to recognize his voice, and follow him. As his sheep, we have his promise that he will never leave us nor forsake us. As his sheep, we know that “the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us” (Romans 8:18). Our Shepherd’s plan stretches beyond the dangers of this life, into a glorious eternity, where we will always be home with him.

In the meantime, we hold fast to the words of scripture: words that tell us that our Lord knows us and loves us, and that our future is in his hands. We find our peace in the knowledge that we *belong* to this Good Shepherd. We can sleep at night and face each new day with confidence because we are now, and forever will be in those hands – the safest place of all.

AT-HOME CHALLENGE

Each morning and evening, follow your own rule of prayer.

(IF YOU DON’T HAVE ONE, TRY SAYING THE MORNING AND EVENING PRAYERS FROM THE “FORMS OF PRAYER TO BE USED IN FAMILIES”, WHICH BEGINS ON PAGE 728 OF THE BCP. IF YOU DON’T HAVE A COPY, YOU CAN LOOK IT UP HERE: [HTTP://PRAYERBOOK.CA/RESOURCES/BCPONLINE/FAMILY-PRAYER.](http://prayerbook.ca/resources/bcponline/family-prayer))

The following prayer for eventide is found in both the Prayers & Thanksgivings and the “At Sea” sections of the Prayer Book. It speaks not only of the daily challenges we face, but also of the life-long ones. It asks of God not only rest and safety at the end of each day, but also eternal safety when our lives come to a close. Spend some time this week praying with and reflecting upon the words of this prayer:

O Lord, support us all the day long of this troublous life, until the shadows lengthen and the evening comes, the busy world is hushed, the fever of life is over, and our work is done. Then, Lord, in thy mercy, grant us safe lodging, a holy rest, and peace at the last; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

(PRAYER FOR EVENTIDE FROM PRAYERS & THANKSGIVINGS, BCP P. 58, AND AT SEA, BCP P. 634)

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PSALM 4: **WHERE SAFETY IS FOUND**

¹Answer me when I call, O God of my righteousness! You have given me relief when I was in distress.

Be gracious to me and hear my prayer!

²O men, how long shall my honour be turned into shame?

How long will you love vain words and seek after lies? *[Selah]*

³But know that the Lord has set apart the godly for himself; the Lord hears when I call to him.

⁴Be angry, and do not sin; ponder in your own hearts on your beds, and be silent. *[Selah]*

⁵Offer right sacrifices, and put your trust in the Lord.

⁶There are many who say, “Who will show us some good? Lift up the light of your face upon us, O Lord!”

⁷You have put more joy in my heart than they have when their grain and wine abound.

⁸In peace I will both lie down and sleep; for you alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety.