

CH 4 – Be Angry and Sin Not

- Psa 4:1 Answer me when I call, O Elohim of my righteousness!
You have given me relief when I was in distress.
Be gracious to me and hear my prayer!
- Psa 4:2 O men, how long shall my honor be turned into shame?
How long will you love vain words and seek after lies? *Selah*
- Psa 4:3 But know that YHWH has set apart the godly for himself;
YHWH hears when I call to him.
- Psa 4:4 Be angry, and do not sin;
ponder in your own hearts on your beds, and be silent. *Selah*
- Psa 4:5 Offer right sacrifices, and put your trust in YHWH.
- Psa 4:6 There are many who say, "Who will show us some good?
Lift up the light of your face upon us, O LORD!"
- Psa 4:7 You have put more joy in my heart
than they have when their grain and wine abound.
- Psa 4:8 In peace I will both lie down and sleep;
for You alone, O YHWH, make me dwell in safety.



This short psalm is wonderfully complex! One of my favorite phrases in Scripture is "the manifold wisdom of YHWH." Manifold. Many folds. Imagine the words and letters you are reading unfolding as you read, revealing deeper and deeper meaning. Psalm 4 is a great introduction to the Manifold Wisdom of YHWH! Get comfortable, get a pencil, and get ready to dig in!

Structural Analysis

- A Answer me when I call, O Elohim of my righteousness! You have given me relief when I was in distress. Be gracious to me and hear my prayer! (1)
- B O men, how long shall my honor be turned into shame?
- C How long will you love vain words and seek after lies? *Selah* (2)
- D But know that YHWH has set apart the righteous for himself;
YHWH hears when I call to him. (3)
- * **Be angry, and do not sin;**
ponder in your own hearts on your beds and be silent. *Selah* (4)
- D Offer right sacrifices, and put your trust in the YHWH. (5)
- C There are many who say, "Who will show us some good? Lift up the light of your face upon us, O YHWH!" (6)
- B You have put more joy in my heart than they have when their grain and wine abound. (7)
- A In peace I will both lie down and sleep; for you alone, O YHWH, make me dwell in safety. (8)

A I was in distress
I am safe

Contrasting parallel – distress vs. safety

Notice the heavy emphasis on YHWH's actions in verse 1: answer me, give me relief, be gracious, hear me. These actions are contrasted with David's actions in verse 8: lie down and sleep. This is definitely a call back to Psalm 3 – we cannot save ourselves.

B I was ashamed
I have joy

Contrasting parallel – shame vs. joy

Again, notice the details. In verse 2 men turn honor into shame. This is only true on the surface and is used as a poetic device to demonstrate the power of Elohim. Other people can say or do things that make us question our worth and allow us to believe we are worthless or worth less. However, it is important to remember our worth is determined by our Father, not man. YHWH Elohim calls us friend, child, priest, loved (Rom 8:16-17, Jn 15:15-16, 1Pet 2:9, Gal 2:20, Jn 1:12, Rom 12:2, Gal 3:26).

With that said, men turning honor into shame is contrasted with YHWH's ability to give us joy beyond all the wine and grain man can provide. In this sense, men take away and make life unpleasant. YHWH gives us blessings, making life better.

C Seeking after lies
Asking of (seeking after) YHWH

Contrasting parallel – seeking lies vs. seeking YHWH

This parallel shows another point in identifying parallels. Earlier, we saw more than one verse can represent a single thought in a parallel. In this case, one verse (vs. 2) is split into 2 thoughts.

Psa 4:2 O men, how long shall my honor be turned into shame? (Thought B)
How long will you love vain words and seek after lies? *Selah* (Thought C)

The details in this parallel offer a much deeper contrast which will be explored in the Interpretative Analysis.

D What YHWH sets apart to Himself
What man sets apart to YHWH

But know that YHWH has set apart the righteous for himself. YHWH has set apart a holy nation. He teaches us what it means to be set apart, by asking us to set part of ourselves for Him. We make sacrifices. We set apart the first born of our flocks, the first of our harvest. We set apart one day a week for rest.

"Set apart" is a theme that runs very deep through Scripture. We will examine what it means to be set apart in the Complex Analysis.

***4: Be angry and do not sin; ponder in your own hearts, on your beds, and be silent**

What an interesting center! This is going to require some complex analysis to fully understand. Get your mental shovels ready as we dig in!

Be angry and do not sin. A reasonable conclusion is to link this passage to Eph 4:26

Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger,

Yep, looks good. Paul even mentions the sun going down, similar to the phrase "on your beds." After all, we go to bed after the sun goes down. But before we move on, ask yourself, "Is this understanding supported by the parallels surrounding this center?"

In Psalm 4 the word for angry is [H7264 רגז ragatz](#). The definition is "to tremble with any strong emotion" such as anger, fear, or awe. What emotions are described in the surrounding parallels? Desperation, despair, shame, exasperation, hope. Not anger.

Perhaps "anger" is not the best translation here. The KJV says, "Stand in awe" but again that is only one emotion.

A possible translation could be, "Tremble with emotion and do not sin." What sin can come from being emotional? Look at the verse as a parallel:

Be angry (emotional) AND do not sin;
ponder in your own hearts, (on your beds), AND be silent.

Be emotional AND be silent.
Although you tremble with strong emotion, be still and wait.

Rest. Rest in peace at the end of the day because YHWH will hear your cries and answer you. Rest in peace at the end of your life because YHWH alone makes us to dwell in safety. The sin is losing faith in the promises of our Elohim – He is our deliverance!

However, let's reexamine Eph 4:26. The book of Ephesians is a letter to new believers. (See Outline of Ephesians) In chapter 4, Paul is encouraging new believers to "walk worthily of the calling with which you are called" (4:1) and to "no longer walk as the nations walk" (4:17).

Paul lists very practical examples of applying Torah (instruction) to a new life in Messiah. One of these suggestions is 4:26 - [Be angry and sin not. Do not let the sun go down on your wrath](#). In this verse, Paul quotes Ps 4:4 but uses words specifically for anger and wrath. One practical way to become set apart is to deal with our anger appropriately and quickly.

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Complex Analysis

What YHWH has [set apart](#) to Himself
What man sets apart to YHWH (sacrifices)

The Hebrew word for set apart here is [H6395 פלה palah](#). This is a different word than the word that is sometimes translated as "holy" or "sanctified." Palah is most often translated "severed."

When studying words, it is important to find the first time a word (the original Hebrew word) is used in Scripture. The context of the first use will give us a clue to the intended theme. The first time H6395 is used is in Exodus during the plagues.

Exo 8:22 But on that day I will set apart the land of Goshen, where my people dwell, so that no swarms of flies shall be there, that you may know that I am YHWH in the midst of the earth.

In fact, besides twice in Psalms, this word is ONLY used in Exodus. The first three verses (8:22, 9:4, 11:7) refer to YHWH separating Egypt and the Israel; Israel would experience none of the plagues of Egypt so that they may know He is Elohim. This word is intentionally used to remind us of the Exodus. With a mighty right hand YHWH brought **US** out of the land of Egypt. This is the moment that defines us as a people. YHWH has separated **US** as a people from all the earth. We are His.

The next reference is Ex 33:16.

Exo 33:16 For how shall it be known that I have found favor in your sight, I and Your people? Is it not in Your going with us, so that we are distinct, I and Your people, from every other people on the face of the earth?"

In this verse, Moses reminds YHWH that His presence lets the whole earth know they are a distinct people. Again, using the same word from the plagues, reminding YHWH that HE separated a people unto Himself and that they should be recognized as separate.

So, we are a separated people. As such, we are expected to behave differently from the nations. We make sacrifices. At one point, we sacrificed bulls and goats. But now we sacrifice ourselves.

This fits perfectly with the connection to Ephesians. As a new creation in Messiah, we behave differently. When we are shaking with fear, we lie down and sleep. When we are trembling with anger, we wait. When we are in awe, we rest.

Although your emotions are so strong you tremble, do not sin. How do we not sin? By being still.

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Interpretive Analysis

Parallel C deserves a much closer look.

C Seeking after lies

Asking of (seeking after) YHWH

The first part of the first parallel asks, "How long will you love vain words?" That word vain is the Hebrew word H7385 ריק from Psalm 2. Remember, in Psalm 2, meditating on emptiness (or vanity) leads to death and destruction (the earthen vessels).

This is contrasted with people asking for a blessing and this is not just any blessing. This language links us to The Aaronic Blessing:

Num 6:22 YHWH spoke to Moses, saying,

Num 6:23 "Speak to Aaron and his sons, saying, Thus you shall bless the people of Israel:
you shall say to them,

Num 6:24 YHWH bless you and keep you;

Num 6:25 YHWH make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you;

Num 6:26 YHWH lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace.

Num 6:27 "So shall they put my name upon the people of Israel, and I will bless them."

This is THE blessing of YHWH upon His people through His High Priest. In addition, YHWH will put His name on His people. Where else does this happen?

Rev 3:12 The one who conquers, I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God. Never shall he go out of it, and I will write on him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which comes down from my God out of heaven, and my own new name.

Rev 14:1 Then I looked, and behold, on Mount Zion stood the Lamb, and with him 144,000 who had his name and his Father's name written on their foreheads.

So we have those seeking after YHWH in Psalms becoming the overcomers in Revelation. The overcomers will be forever in the temple of YHWH!

Manifold Wisdom. Beautiful.

In Conclusion

We are a **palah** people. Separate. Different. Although we roil with emotion, our trust is in YHWH and so we wait. We wait for Him to shine His face on us. We wait for Him to write His name on our foreheads. This is how the nations know He is our God, and we are His people.

I pray that you wait on YHWH and allow Him to shine His face on you. I pray that you hear the voice of YHWH calling you to His plan, His purpose, His kingdom.

Shalom

