



Finding Peace In Times Of Trouble

Psalm 4

- 1. The Cries of Anguish (verses 1-2)**
- 2. The Conduct of the Godly (verses 3-6)**
- 3. The Comfort of the LORD (verses 7-8)**

I invite you to open your Bible to Psalm 4.

Psalm 4

For the choir director; on stringed instruments. A Psalm of David.

Answer me when I call, O God of my righteousness!
You have relieved me in my distress;
Be gracious to me and hear my prayer.
O sons of men, how long will my honor become a reproach?
How long will you love what is worthless and aim at deception? Selah.

But know that the LORD has set apart the godly man for Himself;
The LORD hears when I call to Him.
Tremble, and do not sin;
Meditate in your heart upon your bed, and be still.
Selah.

Offer the sacrifices of righteousness,
And trust in the Lord.
Many are saying, "Who will show us any good?"
Lift up the light of Your countenance upon us, O LORD!
You have put gladness in my heart,
More than when their grain and new wine abound.
In peace I will both lie down and sleep,
For You alone, O LORD, make me to dwell in safety.

I remember hearing the fictional story about a man who was candidating to be a pastor a church. He preached a marvelous sermon that everyone in the church loved. As a result, he was voted in to be their new pastor. To the surprise of everyone, in his first Sunday as their pastor, he preached the same sermon. Those in the congregation were even more surprised when he preached the same sermon for a third time.

After the service, the leaders of the church met with him to find out why he had preached the same sermon three times. He said, "When you start living out this sermon, I'll go on to my next one."

Well, this morning, I feel a bit like that preacher. I feel like this morning, I'm preaching the same sermon as I did last week. I'm preaching the "Life-is-difficult-and-things-are-hard-now,-but-I'm-going-to-find-my-comfort-in-the-LORD" sermon again. This was the message of Psalm 3 last week. This is the message of Psalm 4 this week.

It's my message because Psalm 4 is much like Psalm 3. Both Psalms were written by David. Both Psalms were written in a time of trouble and distress. Both Psalms detail the antagonism of others toward David. Both Psalms speak of the peace and security that David found in the LORD.

This has led many to believe that Psalm 3 and Psalm 4 were written on the same occasion, when David was fleeing from Absalom. Now, this may be the case. But, it may not be as well. We have no way of telling. Unlike Psalm 3, Psalm 4 doesn't have a superscription describing the events surrounding the writing of this Psalm. Rather, it simply tells us about the Psalm. Look at it. The superscription of Psalm 4 says this: "For the choir director; on stringed instruments. A Psalm of David."

These words tell us that this Psalm is appropriate for public worship. It is written "for the choir director." It is appropriate for the congregation to sing. It is appropriate for a choir to sing.

The superscription also tells us the mood of the Psalm. It is to be played, "on stringed instruments." It isn't to be played on trumpets with tambourines. These instruments would be more appropriate for festive occasions. But, the tone of this Psalm is more like a lament, a cry to God, and the instrumentation should be appropriate for the message.

The superscription also tells us who wrote it. David wrote it. But, the superscription gives us no details about the circumstances surrounding the writing of the Psalm. It doesn't tell us whether or not it was written during the same time that Psalm 3 was written.

If you work a little bit, you can place the events of this Psalm into several distressing situations of David's life. You might place it sometime during his years of facing persecution at the hands of Saul. On several occasions, David had to flee for his life into the wilderness (i.e. 1 Samuel 24, 26). During these days, he was in distress and on the run. Psalm 4 fits perfectly into this setting. Verse 2 says, "How long will you love what is worthless and aim at deception?"

Or, you might place it during the time when the Amalakites came and destroyed the city of Ziklag. Those who survived were so embittered against David, that they threatened to stone him (1 Samuel 30:6). This, again, would fit into the trouble that David describes in Psalm 4. Verse 2 further says, "O sons of men, how long will my honor become a reproach?"

Or, you might place Psalm 4 during the revolt of Sheba, when Sheba tried to become king in David's place and many followed him (2 Samuel 20). The events of Sheba were so similar to Absalom's revolt that one man said to David, "Sheba the son of Bichri will do us more harm than Absalom" (2 Samuel 20:6). This would fit into the circumstances surrounding Psalm 4. Verse 2 says, "Many are saying, 'Who will show us any good?'"

The bottom line is this: we don't know the circumstances surrounding David's writing of Psalm 4. And that's OK, because it doesn't tie us to one application. Since we don't know the circumstances of his life, we can apply this Psalm anywhere that it fits our lives.

Now, we know that the message of Psalm 3 and Psalm 4 is the same. Though trouble is all around you, even troubles of the worst kind, you can find your safety and security and peace and rest in God. And I have no apologies for preaching the same message two weeks in a row, because, quite frankly, we all need to hear this.

If you are going through some sort of major trial at the moment, this Psalm should be a balm for your soul right now, this morning. If you don't have any major trial in your life right now, this Psalm is very important for you to learn as well. Because, a major trial in your life is coming. In fact, the time to learn these things

is now, before the trial strikes. Because, as Tim Keller says, "Once you are in a crisis, there is no time to sit down to give substantive study and attention to parts of the Bible. As a working pastor for nearly four decades, I have often sat beside people who were going through terrible troubles and silently wished they had taken the time to learn more about their faith before the tidal wave of trouble had engulfed them." [\[1\]](#)

D. A. Carson echoes the same thing. He writes, "It is important to try to establish Christian structures of thought that are already 'givens' *before* pain and bereavement strike. ... Part of what I teach to congregations [is] with the aim that more Christians will be better prepared for suffering when it comes." [\[2\]](#)

See, there are two types of people in this world. Those who have experienced a major trial in their life. And those who will. And so, you would do well to pay attention to Psalm 4. Let's dig into the Psalm. My first point is, ...

1. The Cries of Anguish (verses 1-2)

Psalm 4:1-2

Answer me when I call, O God of my righteousness!

You have relieved me in my distress;

Be gracious to me and hear my prayer.

O sons of men, how long will my honor become a reproach?

How long will you love what is worthless and aim at deception? Selah.

We see two cries in these verses. The first is in verse 1 and is addressed to God. The second is in verse 2 and is addressed to men, to those who are troubling David.

I trust that you can feel the passion of David in these words. Verse 1 is a plea to God for help. "Answer me! Be gracious to me! Hear my prayer!" Verse 2 is an expression of exasperation. "How long? How long?"

If these verses show anything, they show the depth of the trouble that David is experiencing. Light trouble calls for light cries. Heavy trouble calls for heavy cries. And these cries were heavy. These are the cries of a desperate man. They even border on being demanding of God.

Psalm 4:1

Answer me when I call, O God of my righteousness!

You have relieved me in my distress;

Be gracious to me and hear my prayer.

Yet, when the trouble is this big, such a prayer is only right. David had nowhere else to turn, and so, he turned to God. And pleaded that God would come and rescue him from his trouble.

Have you ever been at this place before? When you have nowhere else to turn, but to the LORD? It's a difficult place to be. But, it's a good place to be. When you have come to the end of yourself, and when the problems of life are too large for you, it's good to cry out to the LORD for help.

Notice here in verse 1 that David says nothing about the particulars of his situation. Only that he needs the LORD's help. And he needs it desperately. He's calling to the LORD. He's praying to God.

Now, in the midst of his prayer, I love how David reflects upon God's goodness to him in the past. Notice the middle phrase in verse 1, "You have relieved me in my distress." I don't know why the NIV translates this, "Give me relief from my distress," making it another request. In the Hebrew, it's not an imperative, like the other verbs, and so, it should be translated differently. It should be translated like most English translations do, "You have relieved me in my distress."

He's looking back to the times when the LORD heard his cry, and helped him before. It gives him hope for the future. Perhaps God will come and act again. Like he did when facing Goliath. Like he did the multiple times that Saul tried to pin him to the wall with a spear. Like the times when he was running from Saul. Like the times when the city of Ziklag was angry with him. Like the times when Absalom revolted. Like the times when Sheba revolted.

It would be good for you to do this in your distress. When you are crying out to the LORD, reflect upon the ways that God has delivered you in the past. And trust that He will do it again. Notice how David isn't claiming his own merit. He's simply pleading that God would be "gracious" to him. "God, you have been gracious to me in the past; I'm asking that you would be gracious to me again."

There's the "cry to God." But, the cry in this Psalm isn't only to the LORD. He has a "cry to men" as well in verse 2.

Psalm 4:2

O sons of men, how long will my honor become a reproach?

How long will you love what is worthless and aim at deception? Selah.

You see how it's addressed to men? Verse 2 says, "O sons of men." This is probably a reference to leaders, those in authority, such as kings or governors. This sounds a bit like Psalm 2:1, "Why are the nations in an uproar And the peoples devising a vain thing?" Indeed, there are some verbal parallels between these verses. But, Psalm 2:1 is a rhetorical question, about those who would attempt to scheme against the LORD, such scheming is useless. But, here in Psalm 4:2, we see David asking questions about those who would attempt to slander David, and the slander was hurting him!

David was the king, deserving honor, just as we are to honor those in authority over us. 1 Peter 2:17 instructs to, "Honor all people, love the brotherhood, fear God, honor the king." But, David's honor was being turned into shame, "How long will my honor become a reproach?"

The parallel thought comes in the second half of verse 2, How long will you love what is worthless and aim at deception? People are pursuing worthless and deceptive things, all meant to take David down. And David was feeling the pain and anguish. This cry of his is a cry that it would all stop!

See, the questions of verse 2 aren't really questions as much as they are prayers. They are prayers that the slander might stop. Yes, these words are addressed to the sons of men, but really they are addressed to God. It's really a cry saying, "How long?"

The Psalms are filled with such cries. Psalm 10:1, "Why do You stand afar off, O LORD? Why do You hid Yourself in times of trouble?" Psalm 13:1, "How long, O LORD? Will You forget me forever? How long will You hide Your face from me?"

Such is the cry of anguish here: "God, how long will my glory be turned to shame?" "God, how long will others love the worthless and aim at deception?"

"How long will the slander and rebellion against me continue?" And in your pain and trouble, God may seem to stand afar off (Psalm 10:1). It may seem like your trials will never end.

But, as is the message of many of the Psalms, God has it under control. He is worthy of being trusted. That's the point of verses 3 and 4. We go from "The Cries of Anguish" (verses 1-2) to the ...

2. The Conduct of the Godly (verses 3-6)

Psalm 4:3-4

But know that the LORD has set apart the godly man for Himself;

The LORD hears when I call to Him.

Tremble, and do not sin;

Meditate in your heart upon your bed, and be still.

Selah.

Again, we see that verse 3 is addressed to somebody. In the context of the Psalm it's the "sons of men" (verse 2). But, as much as David is addressing them, he's also addressing us. And, as much as David is addressing us, he's also reminding himself of the basic realities of God and the trials that come our way. He's reminding himself that "the LORD has set apart the godly man for Himself." In other words, the one who loves God and seeks His ways, and lives faithful to the covenant is under the watchful care of God. And though trials and troubles of all sorts may come into our lives, God fully realizes when the righteous are suffering.

Jesus said that a sparrow doesn't fall to the ground without God taking notice. How much more does He notice when the godly are enduring trials! I think that we all know this. But, David says that we really need to know this. "Know that the LORD has set apart the godly man for Himself." Be firmly convinced that your soul is safe in God.

So the obvious question is this, "Has the LORD indeed set you apart?" In other words, are you the godly one of verse 3? Is your hope and trust in the LORD? Have you come to faith in Jesus, the only way to God? Have you entrusted your soul to Him? Have you pleaded mercy at the cross?

Then, are you trusting Him in the day of your trial? This is David's point. "Yes, I'm in anguish! Yes, great trials are in my life! But, I know that these things haven't escaped the notice of my God. I know that I'm one of his. I'll trust Him through these difficult times."

That's the point of the second half of verse 3, "The LORD hears when I call to Him."

See, there's a difference between the prayer of the righteous and the prayer of the unrighteous. God hears the prayer of the righteous. But, He refuses the prayer of the unrighteous. Psalm 66:18 says, "If I regard wickedness in my heart, The Lord will not hear." And Psalm 18 speaks of those who don't know the LORD. "They cried for help, but there was none to save, Even to the LORD, but He did not answer them" (Psalm 18:41). That's because, God will not listen to those who will not listen to His word. "He who turns away his ear from listening to the law, Even his prayer is an abomination" (Proverbs 28:9).

But, David says something different. He says, "The LORD hears when I call to Him."

Now, God's answer may be slow. And, He may not be doing to me as you want Him to do. But, listen church family. If you indeed are one of His children; if you have come to faith in Jesus Christ, He hears your cries. So, trust Him with His answer. And it may not be exactly what you want. But who are you, to dictate the ways of God! Yes, by all means, pour out your heart to the LORD. Come boldly before Him. Let your requests be clearly known to God. Seek an answer from Him with all your heart! Verse 1, "Answer me when I call, O God of my righteousness." But, in the end, trust in His ways. That's what the godly one does.

Do you remember Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane? He prayed that prayer, "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; yet not as I will, but as You will" (Matthew 26:39). Jesus prayed this prayer with passion. Luke tells us, "Being in agony He was praying very fervently; and His sweat became like drops of blood, falling down upon the ground" (Luke 22:44). The writer to the Hebrews says that, "In the days of His flesh, He offered up both prayers and supplications with loud crying and tears to the One able to save Him from death, and He was heard because of His piety" (Hebrews 5:7).

God heard His prayer, "because of His piety." And God's will brought Jesus to the cross. It wasn't easy, but Jesus willingly followed the LORD, even in the dark night of His soul. In the midst of The Cries of Anguish (verses 1-2), The Conduct of the Godly (verses 3-6) will follow the ways of God, even when they are difficult and mysterious.

God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform;
He plants His footsteps in the sea
And rides upon the storm.

Deep in unfathomable mines
Of never failing skill
He treasures up His bright designs
And works His sovereign will.

Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take;
The clouds ye so much dread
Are big with mercy and shall break
In blessings on your head.

Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,
But trust Him for His grace;
Behind a frowning providence
He hides a smiling face.

His purposes will ripen fast,
Unfolding every hour;
The bud may have a bitter taste,
But sweet will be the flower.

Blind unbelief is sure to err
And scan His work in vain;
God is His own interpreter,
And He will make it plain. [\[3\]](#)

I believe that is the idea of verse 4.

Psalm 4:4

Tremble, and do not sin;

Meditate in your heart upon your bed, and be still.

Selah.

The word translated here, "tremble" comes from a Hebrew word that describes being agitated or stirred up or shaken. It may mean "shaking with fear." It may mean "shaking with anger" (as the ESV has it, and as the LXX translators translated it, and as Paul seemingly picked up in Ephesians 4:26). Both are legitimate translations. [\[4\]](#)

Clearly, however, the first makes the most sense from the context here in Psalm 4. Trembling with fear of the troubles surrounding David, not receiving quick release from his trials. But, still, not sinning. "Tremble, and do not sin." Fear of your circumstances? Yes. Doubting the ways of the LORD? Absolutely not. Understanding the ways of the LORD? No. Trusting in the ways of the LORD? Yes. Going to sleep at night like a baby, thinking on the mysterious ways of God, trusting in God's plan for your life, even when it doesn't match up with everything that you wanted.

Certainly, David wanted to be in the palace, ruling and reigning as king, receiving the honor that he deserved as king. He wanted loyal subjects who would submit to his rule. But, that wasn't what David was experiencing. He was on the run, with enemies in the kingdom who were seeking to take away his honor. I'm sure that David followed his own counsel, "Meditate in your heart upon your bed, and be still" (verse 4).

In verse 8, we will see him talking about his own sleep. "In peace I will both lie down and sleep, for You alone, O LORD, make me to dwell in safety." He describes his sleep in verse 4, "Meditate in your heart upon your bed, and be still. Selah."

So, let's be still a moment.

Selah.

Take a moment and think of your troubles.

Think of your God.

Be still.

In the busyness of life, perhaps the only time to really think about life is upon your bed. And certainly, I encourage you to do that tonight as you retire for the evening. But, let's do that now. Let's be still. Let's meditate upon the LORD and His ways.

You may be here this morning facing your own Cries of Anguish (verses 1-2). Your problems seemingly go on and on. God may appear to be distant. Heaven may seem to be silent. But, remember The Conduct of the Godly (verses 3-6). If you have trusted in Christ, God knows the circumstances surrounding your life. He hears your prayers. He calls you to trust Him.

David may not have liked his circumstances. He may not have understood his circumstances. But, through it all, David was trusting in the LORD. That's where David is headed in verse 5, ...

Psalm 4:5

Offer the sacrifices of righteousness,
And trust in the Lord.

As opposed to the sacrifices of wickedness. As opposed to doubting the ways of God. Now, unlike David, we live after the time of Christ. We live after Jesus became our perfect sacrifice. So, this counsel to us must be filtered through the cross. We have no need to go to the temple, butcher a lamb, sprinkle it's blood upon the sides of the altar, and burn it's flesh before the LORD. But, we can offer "right sacrifices" metaphorically today. The writer to the Hebrews says, ...

Hebrews 13:15-16

Through [Jesus], let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name. And do not neglect doing good and sharing, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.

The worship of God. The service of others. These are modern-day sacrifices. These are sacrifices that we can make today in which God is well-pleased. As we worship the LORD with clean hands and pure hearts, sanctified through the blood of His son, and as we love our neighbor as ourselves.

This is "The Conduct of the Godly" (verses 3-6). We see the contrast of the godly and the ungodly in verse 6, ...

Psalm 4:6

Many are saying, "Who will show us any good?"

Lift up the light of Your countenance upon us, O LORD!

There were many doubters in David's day. There were many who weren't trusting in the LORD. They were saying, "Who will show us any good?" These are like the mockers of Psalm 3:2, "Many are saying of my soul, 'There is no deliverance for him in Go.'"

Perhaps these are those on the run with David. Perhaps these are those who are causing David's troubles in the first place. We don't know. But, we do know that these are those who have lost faith. These are those who have no patience when, in the kindness of God, He waits to answer prayer.

There are two ways to take the second half of verse 6.

First, it may be a continuation of the quote of these people (as the ESV takes it), in effect, continuing the mocking. Though you are praying "Lift up the light of Your countenance upon us, O LORD!," nothing is happening David! Your troubles are still here! Where is your God now? (Psalm 3:2).

Or, second, it may be David's genuine prayer. "Lift up the light of Your countenance upon us, O LORD!" (As the NASB and NKJV take it).

Either way, it is a prayer that the godly pray. We pray for God's countenance to shine upon us. We pray for God's favor to come to us. We pray like the priests of old would bless the people of God, "The Lord bless you, and keep you; The Lord make His face shine on you, And be gracious to you; The Lord lift up His countenance on you, And give you peace" (Numbers 6:24-26).

That's the heart of the godly -- desiring the blessing of God, desiring the grace of God (verse 1), desiring the peace of God, desiring the comfort of God. And this takes us to our third (and final point this morning). We have seen "The Cries of Anguish" (verses 1-2); "The Conduct of the Godly" (verses 3-6); and now we come to ...

3. The Comfort of the LORD (verses 7-8)

This is where the entire Psalm is headed. The Psalm is about trouble. The Psalm is about finding peace in the trouble. In fact, that's the title of my message this morning, "Finding Peace in Times of Trouble." David here gives a testimony of the peace that he has found. Listen to verses 7-8.

Psalm 4:7-8

You have put gladness in my heart,
More than when their grain and new wine abound.
In peace I will both lie down and sleep,
For You alone, O LORD, make me to dwell in safety.

Verse 7 begins with a comparison. It's comparing David (who has found peace in God) with his enemies (who have not found peace in God). David pictures the days of harvest. When the grain has come in, and all are enjoying the fruit of their labor; when the new wine freely flows, and everyone is enjoying it, his testimony is this: God has given me greater joy than they have.

Now, you have to think about the days of harvest in the time of David. For us, we can have fresh fruit every day of the year. Through the global economy, we can have strawberries and oranges and bananas and apples and watermelon and pineapple any time of the year that we want. We simply go to the local grocery store and purchase the produce that has been shipped here from other parts of our country where these things can easily grow. Not so for David and those in his day. For them, they could eat their fresh fruit only in its season. Only at the harvest time.

To me, the best meal in the world is chicken on the grill with fresh corn and fresh fruit. We can enjoy such a meal whenever we want. A meal that they could enjoy only for a window of about a month in the fall, when the harvest had come in. At all other times, they ate preserved food that had been dried or salted. You want to have that meal in the winter? Try having beef jerky and fruit roll ups. That was the best that they could do.

So, think about how wonderful the time of year was when they could gorge themselves on fresh fruit and fresh grain and new wine. It doesn't get any better than this. And David says, "I have more gladness than they have." Picture David. He's in distress! (verse 1). His enemies are slandering Him (verse 2). His enemies are mocking Him (verse 6). And David says, "It matters not, because I have the

fountain of joy that's not dependent upon circumstances, but upon God who gives me joy. And He gives me joy, even in the bad times!" I don't need the pleasures of the harvest to have joy. I don't need to go to the parties to have joy. I don't need everything to go well with me to have joy. I just need God, who gives me the joy and gladness in my heart.

And for those of us who know Jesus, such ought to be the experience of our lives as well. This is exactly Peter's message in 1 Peter 1. He wrote, ...

1 Peter 1:3-9

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, so that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ; and though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, obtaining as the outcome of your faith the salvation of your souls.

After describing the greatness of our salvation -- which comes by God's mercy through Jesus Christ (verse 3), which gives an imperishable, undefiled and unfading inheritance that we look forward to (verse 4) -- he then says, we greatly rejoice in our salvation (verse 6), even when experiencing great trials (verse 6). Because, our joy in trials demonstrates our faith to be real and our hope to be secure (verse 7).

I say this church family: "A grumpy Christian is an oxymoron." It doesn't fit. When you come to embrace Christ, and come to know the blessings that are found in Him. The joy is so overwhelming that you can find gladness in all circumstances of life, no matter how bad. "The Lord gives. The Lord takes away. Blessed be the name of the Lord" (Job 1:21).

We aren't talking stoicism. We aren't talking Polyanna, playing the glad game. We are talking genuine, heart-felt, deep-down joy given to us by the Lord of the

universe, defying all logical explanation. The world understands joy when the fortunes turn good for you. But, the world cannot understand David on the run, slandered and opposed, finding more joy than those enjoying the harvest, even when God is not answering his prayers.

The key comes in verse 7, "You have put gladness in my heart, More than when their grain and new wine abound." The source comes from the LORD. This isn't a manufactured joy. This isn't a joy through mental techniques of thought. This is God-given joy. Do you have it? Do you want it? Trust the LORD. Trust the LORD in the midst of troubling times, and it is yours.

And in verse 8, we see another God-given blessing: sleep.

Psalm 4:8

In peace I will both lie down and sleep,
For You alone, O LORD, make me to dwell in safety.

This is the punch-line of the Psalm. This is the point. "Finding Peace in Times of Trouble." You find it through trusting the Lord. Despite all of his trouble, David finds his rest in God. His security is in God.

These verses hint at danger. Again, we don't know the circumstances of the psalm, but David seems to point to danger that could come at night. Yet, he trusts that his security lies in God. John Calvin said, "David enjoys as much security and quiet as if he had been defended by all the garrisons on earth." ^[5] Such is the rest that can be found in God.

There is a popular children's prayer that goes like this:

Now I lay me down to sleep,
I pray the Lord my soul to keep,
If I shall die before I wake,
I pray the Lord my soul to take. Amen.

David was able to pray this sort of prayer. Can you?

This sermon was delivered to Rock Valley Bible Church on July 6, 2014 by Steve Brandon.

For more information see www.rvbc.cc.

[1] Tim Keller, *Walking with God through Pain and Suffering*, p. 196.

[2] D.A. Carson, *How Long, O Lord*, p. 110, *emphasis his*.

[3] William Cowper, "God Moves In A Mysterious Way."

[4] The usage of Psalm 4:4 in Ephesians 4:26 is difficult to understand. The meaning of the Hebrew in Psalm 4:4 can either describe "trembling in fear" or "trembling in anger." The first option, "trembling in fear" makes the most sense in the context of Psalm 4. But, the meaning of the Greek in Ephesians 4:26 can only be "trembling in anger."

So, how are we to understand this? Importing the meaning of "trembling in fear" of the context of Psalm 4 into Ephesians 4:26 seems problematic, as the Greek cannot mean this. However, it is equally problematic to take Paul's take of "trembling in anger" and push it back into Psalm 4, as this makes little sense in the context of the Psalm.

Perhaps the best solution is to separate the two passages from each other. Yes, the language is the same, but nowhere in Ephesians 4:26 (or surrounding context) does Paul indicate that he is quoting from Scripture. Perhaps he's merely using a phrase that is similar to Psalm 4, without referring to the Psalm 4 at all.

[5] See John Calvin's *Commentary on the Psalms*.