

“Tremble and do not sin; when you are on your beds, search your hearts and be silent.” - *Psalm 4:4 (NIV)*

#### Introduction

Psalm 4:4 presents a profound instruction: “*Tremble and do not sin.*” At first glance, this may seem like a strange combination—why tremble? What kind of trembling leads to righteousness rather than fear or despair? This verse invites us to explore the biblical concept of the fear of God, a theme that runs deeply throughout Scripture.

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#### What Kind of Fear is This?

The Hebrew word translated “*tremble*” (*ragaz*) can also mean “*to stand in awe,*” “*to quake,*” or “*to be deeply moved.*” It conveys a strong emotional reaction, not of terror, but of reverent fear—the kind of response one has in the presence of God’s holiness and justice.

This is not a fear of people (Proverbs 29:25), nor is it fear of evil

or the devil. It is a fear rooted in awe, reverence, and moral responsibility before a holy God.

The same theme appears throughout Scripture:

“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.” - *Proverbs 9:10* (NIV)

This fear keeps us grounded, humble, and obedient—it is not paralyzing, but empowering. It’s a healthy fear that leads to godly living.

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The Call to Self-Examination

The second part of Psalm 4:4 says:

“When you are on your beds, search your hearts and be silent.”

This encourages reflection—quiet, personal examination of our inner lives in God’s presence. The Psalms often tie this to the practice of repentance, as seen also in:

“Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts.” - *Psalm 139:23 (NIV)*

When we fear God rightly, we are moved to examine ourselves, repent from sin, and walk in holiness.

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Faith and Obedience Go Together

Psalm 4:5 follows with:

“Offer the sacrifices of the righteous and trust in the Lord.” - *Psalm 4:5 (NIV)*

In Old Testament times, righteous sacrifices involved not just ritual, but the heart behind them—obedience, humility, and trust

(see 1 Samuel 15:22). Today, believers are called to offer spiritual sacrifices:

“Offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship.” - *Romans 12:1*  
(NIV)

This shows that fear of God is not passive—it leads to active faith, worship, and righteous living.

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Biblical Examples: Where There Was No Fear of God

Abraham gives us a real-world example in Genesis 20 when he says:

“I said to myself, ‘There is surely no fear of God in this place, and they will kill me because of my wife.’” - *Genesis 20:11*  
(NIV)

Here, Abraham links the absence of the fear of God with moral lawlessness. When people don't fear God, they're capable of anything—even murder. The same moral collapse is seen in:

“There is no fear of God before their eyes.” - *Romans 3:18*  
(NIV)

This verse is part of Paul's argument that all humanity is under sin—Jew and Gentile alike—without God's intervention through Christ.

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Today's Relevance

In today's world, much like in Gerar, Sodom, or Gomorrah, the fear of God has been widely abandoned. Many live as if God does not see or care. But Scripture warns us:

“Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows.” - *Galatians 6:7* (NIV)

The command to “tremble and do not sin” is a timeless call to cultivate a reverent heart—one that is grieved by sin and driven toward repentance and righteousness.

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Personal Reflection

Do you fear God?

This is not about being afraid of punishment, but about having a heart that honors God deeply enough to turn away from sin. If the fear of God is in you:

- You will turn away from drunkenness.
- You will resist corruption and bribery.
- You will flee from sexual immorality.
- You will forgive, even when it’s hard.
- You will seek to please God above all.

“Since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe, for our ‘God is a consuming fire.’” – *Hebrews 12:28-29 (NIV)*

Conclusion

Psalm 4:4 is not just a poetic phrase—it’s a spiritual command: Tremble before God, and let that holy fear keep you from sin. In a world that has forgotten God, let us be those who remember Him, revere Him, and live for Him.

May the Lord help us to walk in His fear and holiness.

Maranatha — The Lord is coming!

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