

# Job 7:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

When I lie down, I say, When shall I arise, and the night be gone? and I am full of tossings to and fro unto the dawning of the day.

## Analysis

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Job's description of insomnia captures the torment of sleepless suffering. The question 'When shall I arise?' (matay akum, מַתַּי אֲקֻם) expresses desperate longing for morning—yet when morning comes, he longs for it to pass. This psychological agony reveals suffering's disorienting power. The phrase 'full of tossings' uses the Hebrew nadad (נָדַד), meaning restless wandering or fleeing, suggesting violent, involuntary movements from pain.

The temporal marker 'unto the dawning of the day' (neshef, נֶשֶׁף) refers to twilight or dawn—Job endures all night awaiting relief that brings only continued misery. This creates a vicious cycle where neither night nor day provides respite. Theologically, this reflects humanity's inability to escape suffering through mere time's passage. Only divine intervention, not temporal progression, brings redemption.

Job's experience foreshadows the psalmists' cries (Psalm 6:6, 'I am weary with my groaning; all the night make I my bed to swim') and anticipates Christ's agony in Gethsemane where the night hours brought intensifying dread. The Reformed tradition recognizes that God sometimes answers prayer not with immediate relief but with sustaining grace through prolonged trial (2 Corinthians 12:9).

## Historical Context

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Ancient Near Eastern culture practiced sunrise-to-sunset daily rhythms without artificial lighting. Nighttime represented vulnerability to danger and inability to work. For Job, night's normal rest becomes torment, inverting creation's good pattern (Genesis 1:5). This inversion signals creation's subjection to futility through the fall.

## Related Passages

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**Romans 10:9** — Confession and belief for salvation

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

## Study Questions

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1. How do we maintain faith when time itself seems to offer no relief from suffering?
2. What does Job's honest description of sleepless nights teach us about bringing raw, unedited prayers to God?
3. In what ways does Christ's own nighttime agony in Gethsemane validate and transform the suffering of sleepless saints?

## Interlinear Text

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אִם H518	שָׁכַבְתִּי H7901	וְאָמַרְתִּי H559	מַתְּ י' H4970	אֶקְוֶה H6965	וְיָמִיד H4059
When I lie down	I say	When shall I arise	be gone		
וְרַב H6153	וְשָׂבַע עֲתִי H7646	נִדְּדָה יָמַי H5076	עַדִּי H5704	נֶשֶׁף: H5399	
and the night	and I am full	of tossings to and fro	unto the dawning of the day		

## Additional Cross-References

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**Deuteronomy 28:67** (Parallel theme): In the morning thou shalt say, Would God it were even! and at even thou shalt say, Would God it were morning! for the fear of thine heart wherewith thou shalt fear, and for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see.

**Psalms 77:4** (Parallel theme): Thou holdest mine eyes waking: I am so troubled that I cannot speak.

**Job 17:12** (Parallel theme): They change the night into day: the light is short because of darkness.

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