

# Psalms 77:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Thou holdest mine eyes waking: I am so troubled that I cannot speak.

## Analysis

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**Thou holdest mine eyes waking** (אָחַז אֶת שְׁמֻרוֹת עֵינַי)—achaz (אָחַז) means to seize, grasp, or hold fast. God Himself keeps the psalmist's eyes open through the night watches (shemurot, vigil periods). This is not insomnia by human anxiety but divine wrestling, recalling Jacob's all-night struggle at Jabbok (Genesis 32:24-30). God prevents sleep to force spiritual confrontation.

**I am so troubled that I cannot speak** (וְנִפְעַמְתִּי וְלֹא אֶדְבָּר). Pa'am (פַּעַם) means to be disturbed, dismayed, or agitated beyond words. The psalmist has reached aphasia—grief so profound that articulate prayer becomes impossible. Romans 8:26 addresses this: "the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." When words fail, God understands the inarticulate heart.

## Historical Context

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The night watches (שְׁמֻרוֹת) divided the night into periods for military guard duty and also marked times for prayer and meditation (Psalms 63:6, 119:148). That God "holds" the eyes open suggests purposeful divine intention—not abandonment but engaged pursuit. The silence born of overwhelming trouble appears in Job (2:13) and anticipates Christ's silence before accusers (Isaiah 53:7, Matthew 27:12-14).

## Related Passages

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**Genesis 1:1** — Creation of heavens and earth

**Colossians 1:16** — All things created through Christ

## Study Questions

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1. Have you experienced seasons when God seemed to prevent rest in order to work something deeper in your soul?
2. What comfort does Romans 8:26 offer when you are 'too troubled to speak' coherent prayers?
3. How does God-imposed insomnia differ from anxiety-driven sleeplessness?

## Interlinear Text

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אָ חֲזַדְתָּ	שָׁמַר וְאֵת	עֵינַי י	נִכְפַּע מִמֶּנִּי	וְלֹא אֶ	אֶדְבֹּר:
<b>Thou holdest</b>	<b>waking</b>	<b>mine eyes</b>	<b>I am so troubled</b>	H3808	<b>that I cannot speak</b>
H270	H8109	H5869	H6470		H1696

## Additional Cross-References

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**Psalms 6:6** (Parallel theme): I am weary with my groaning; all the night make I my bed to swim; I water my couch with my tears.

**Job 2:13** (Parallel theme): So they sat down with him upon the ground seven days and seven nights, and none spake a word unto him: for they saw that his grief was very great.

**Esther 6:1** (Kingdom): On that night could not the king sleep, and he commanded to bring the book of records of the chronicles; and they were read before the king.