

Be Still

*“Stand in awe, and sin not: commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be **still**. Selah.”*
Psalm 4:4

The word for **still** here is the gal active imperative of *damam*, which tells us that right of the bat we have a command here from God to do something, which in this case, is to do nothing. In fact it means to be **quiet**.

The basic meaning of *damam* is to close the mouth, to not speak, to be silent, to be still, to be quiet. It basically has the idea of being quiet, of refraining from speaking. Its usage in a passage determines its meaning, but it does have the idea of silence in it. It has the idea of a quiet expectation that a change of good things is coming.

The believer has been impressed either by *Yahweh* speaking to him in the Old Testament, or by having the full assurance of faith, that something is going to happen; that things are going to change. **It does mean to believe, it means to trust, to wait on Yahweh, only now one does it in quietness, both of speech and heart.** He is able to do so because he has been strongly impressed in his heart or spirit that a change is coming, that something good is going to happen, and he knows that God is the one that is going to be doing it.

It's a way of looking at faith from the perspective that one is going to get through the trial that he is presently in, (or life), because God is going to do something. You don't know **when** he is going to do it. You don't know **how** he is going to do it, but you are comforted by your faith that God **is** going to do something, and that things are going to change for the better. **So you have quieted yourself. Inside you are relaxed about the whole thing; your soul has quieted down; it's still, no more worrying and wondering, and “what ifs”; or, “what can I do about it”; or, “something's got to be done”; no more running around and telling everybody about your problem, (probably not interested anyway); and no more going back over and over to God in prayer regarding it.** Why? Because you have finally resolved the matter in your heart with faith and you know that God is going to handle the matter. You are now fully assured in your faith that God is going to work it all out now, so you're quiet, calm, still and relaxed on the inside.

We go to **David** again in Psalm 37, where he is talking about the problem that doctrinal believers have living in a society where wicked men and women (*rasha*) are on the increase spreading their wickedness wherever they go. This presents two problems for the doctrinal believer. **1)** The activity of the wicked believer does have a profound and negative impact on the society; for it affects a nation, politically, religiously, economically and socially. And if not curbed, it will drag a nation down into destruction. Which, to some degree, affects believers as well for they live in it also. **2)** It affects the doctrinal believer's mental attitude. They get angry, often very angry, bitter; they fret, they stew and worry about things. And they too can get under the operation of their own old sin natures and go down hill too. Not to mention how both of these things affect their families. Often their wives and children are caught up in the evil of the society and this certainly is distressing to their families.

Now David deals with their mental attitude problems by telling them to refrain from anger, turn from wrath, do not fret, etc., so that they're not reacting emotionally and negatively out of their flesh natures because of the wicked in their society. And he also tells them to be **still** about the whole situation, for *Yahweh* is going to handle it, *“Be **still** before Yahweh and wait patiently for him, do not fret when men succeed in their ways, when they carry out their wicked schemes.”* Psalm 37:7.

Here David uses the word *damam* concerning the mental attitude that the believer is to have in his faith toward God, as God handles the matter. In fact, he commands them to “*be still*”, imperative mood of command, which tells us that the believer is to handle the matter by faith; fully believing that God, somehow, is going to turn the whole evil thing around and take care of the wicked in the land. He’s going to take care of the wicked, and he’s going to take care of the doctrinal believer, and so the believer is now able to be calm, relaxed and peaceful in his soul. **This type, or characteristic of faith, calms the soul; it quiets the soul giving it the rest that it needs.**

We have an example of this with Job, when he was going through his trial. The word *damam* is not used, but the idea of **being silent in a trial** is found in it. Job felt that he had been wronged. He was living his life before the Lord as he was supposed to, but all these terrible adversities still had befallen him. So he wanted to argue his case before the Lord. “*But I desire to speak to the Almighty and to argue my case with God.*” Job 3:13 “*Now that I have prepared my case, I know I will be vindicated.*” Job 13:18 “*I would state my case before him and fill my mouth with arguments.*” Job 23:4

But then Elihu said something very doctrinal to him. In effect he was saying, ‘Job you feel that you have been wronged and you have presented your case before the Lord, well then the matter is in the Lord's hands, so keep quiet and wait upon him!’ “*How much less, then, will he listen when you say that you do not see him, that your case is before him and you must wait for him,*” Job 35:14

Sometimes when we are going through so many things in our life, we can get to the place where we’re totally overwhelmed by it all and just want to give up. Sometimes we can’t muster enough faith or prayer to even utter a word to the Lord, other than, “Help!” Sometimes we have so much faith and confidence we know the Lord is going to answer our prayers. And sometimes we have spent so much time in prayer on the matter before the Lord, we walk away knowing the Lord is going to answer our prayers. But all these have one thing in common and that is **silence**.

Remember, *damam* had the idea of a quiet expectation that a change of good things is coming. The believer is not speaking about the matter any more, not to himself, others, or even God, because he has been strongly impressed in his heart or spirit that a change is coming, (or maybe he’s just tired of talking about it and dealing with it), that something good is going to come out of this, and he knows that God is the one that is going to be doing it. “*And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.*” Romans 8:28

I know that we all want to have lives without problems and that we want our lives to turn out a certain way, so when bad things start to happen we become afraid. We run to God in prayer, which is good, but we keep on worrying, fretting and stewing about things. **What we need to do is quiet the soul, so that it's content to just exist before God and to just exist with other people and we need to learn to just be quiet!** But, it’s an intensive concept to get to that place. It is accomplished by faith in the Word of God, by being occupied with Christ through his Word. And it speaks of waiting in faith on the Lord; something that a childish soul does not want to do. It wants things now! Just like the infant wants its bottle now! But David said, “*But I have stilled and quieted my soul; like a weaned child with its mother, like a weaned child is my soul within me.*” Psalm 131:2. In the original, we have an intensive passive concept describing the concept. Which, all of this, tells us **that to quiet our souls, we must exercise faith in God's Word, while we are waiting**. And after we have prayed to the Lord, we must take Elihu’s instruction of being quiet. “*How much less, then, will he listen when you say that you do not see him, that your case is before him and you must wait for him,*” Job 35:14”