water from rock

Selah: Stop, Look, Listen – February 27, 2021

The Lord be with you.

Some time ago, I was browsing in an antique store and a frankly, I was surprised, and some of the things they were calling antiques that I had actually gone up with, but oh well. I would find something that I did not know what it was, and I would ask the shop owner what was this thing for? Or what was its purpose? Because you know, there was something about being human that we want to know purpose, we want to know what something is for, and as a pastor and chaplain, I have talked with many people over the years who were wanting to know their purpose, they were wanting to know what they were here for. Well, as I look at the Psalms, I see that David was a man keenly focus on purpose and on his reason for being here. And I'm thinking that you too also might be wanting to know about your purpose and what you're here for. And I find that David has a lot to say about life purpose, that is helpful in the ups and downs of our lives.

First lets look at Psalm 57, in which the superscription at the top of the Psalm tells us that David is writing the psalm, when he is hiding in a cave from King Saul. And David directs that the same sung to the tune of do not destroy. And this Psalm is written at one of the darkest times in David's life as he is spending the whole decade of his 20s on the run. But here's what David says in the first verses of Psalm 57, Be merciful to me, oh God, be merciful to me, for in you my soul takes refuge. In the shadow of your wings, I will take refuge until the destroying storms pass by, I cry to God Most High to God who fulfills His purpose for me. So armies are out to destroy David, and yet he prays to God who fulfills His purpose for me.

Okay, that's Psalm 57. There's another Psalm in which we see David strong sense of life purpose, and that is Psalm 138. And I looked down to verses 7 and 8, though I walk in the midst of trouble, you preserve me against the wrath of my enemies, you stretch out your hand and your right hand delivers me. The Lord will fulfill his purpose for me. Your steadfast love, O Lord, endures forever. Do not forsake the work of your hands. Not again, in a psalm that David is surrounded by enemies, but David is not fearful that enemies will prevent God from accomplishing His purpose in David's life. Nor is David fearful that his mess up in his falling, that he might have to live with God's plan B.

So David says, confidently, The Lord will, He will fulfill His purpose for me. David sounds to me here, he sounds off a lot like the Apostle Paul over in Philippians chapter 1:6, I'm confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ. Okay, a couple of things I see here in these psalms about life purpose. First, God has a life purpose for every one of his children. And second, God will fulfill that purpose. Now, God does not

guarantee that He will fulfill our purpose, but God does guarantee that He will fulfill His purpose, our reason for being here. And I live long enough to see that God's purpose is always far better, it's always more wonderful than honors, God doesn't get it wrong, God doesn't swing and miss. He will fulfill His purpose for us. It is David certainty that in spite of all the things that are going on, in spite of all of His enemies, that God will fulfill his purpose. And that's what leads David to pray on the basis of God's promise. Do not forsake the work of your hands. Here, David is simply praying according to God's will, praying for God to do what he has promised. And so you and I, by prayer, we let go of what we might have purposed for our lives, and we say yes to God, we sign on to God's purpose for us.

Well, how did it work out for David? Did did God fulfilled His purpose for David's life? Hey, you know, David messed up a lot. He did, didn't he? And he stumbled and fell a lot, he had wanted to build the temple, and God said, no. Did God fulfill his purpose for David's life? Let's fast forward 1000 years to the New Testament, to the time with the Apostle Paul in Acts 13:36, where Paul says, For David, after he had served the purpose of God in His own generation, died. Well, I can't think of a more wonderful epitaph in that, that after David had served the purpose of God in his generation, he died. David did not die until his work was done, he did not die until God fulfilled His purpose for David's life. Like the old hymn says, mortals are immortal here until their work is done, although our citizenship is in heaven, you and I, we live here on earth, and we are called to serve the purpose of God for our generation.

I began today an antique store, wondering the purpose of something. Wondering what I was here for. Well, you be encouraged today, be renewed, be revived that God has you here for a purpose. God has you here for a special reason. Just like he did for David. Now, you and I may not know all that that would mean but God does. And the work he has begun in you, in me, God will complete.

So loving Father, like David, we pray a short of your good purpose for our lives, we pray that the work you have begun in us, you will complete by the day of the return of Jesus Christ, we pray this for our good and for your glory.

I'm Tim Smith, a fellow traveler. Thanks for listening until next time.