



water from rock

## Selah: Stop, Look Listen- September 22, 2022

The Lord be with you.

It is a favorite Bible verse of many people. It's a verse, that you often see greeting cards or a verse celebrated in song. Why, it might even be a verse you have memorized. I mean it's a great one. Isaiah 26:3, "that will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee because he trusts in thee." And that is a verse that I'm needing today, a verse you might be needed today as you look at the stock market, the price of food, crime in the streets, political warfare. We're all probably needing this verse and its promise of peace.

So let's take the next few moments to ponder this amazing verse. Isaiah 26, Verse Three comes in a song that we hear the people of God singing in the first few verses of Isaiah 26. It is a song about Messiah's coming. So it's really a song about here and now as Messiah Jesus has come. And the song is about a strong city, a victorious city, a city whose gates are open wide for any and all who will enter. So that in Verse 3 of Isaiah 26, we sing, God will keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusts in thee.

I wanna focus in on that phrase, "whose mind is stayed on thee". The Hebrew word that is translated mind in this verse, it is not what we in the modern west usually think of when we think of mind. Whether this Hebrew word comes from a verb, meaning to create, to fashion, to form, it is a word used of a potter forming a pot. The word is used in the Book of Genesis where God is forming Adam from out of the dust of the ground. So this word here in Isaiah 26:3, it has the idea of that place where thoughts and ideas are formed. Where they're shaped, where they are created. And if you check out a concordance of the Old Testament, you will see that this word is actually sometimes translated as imagination, as that place where ideas are formed and shaped. In fact, the Young literal translation of the Bible, it translates this Hebrew word as imagination. Isaiah 26:3 is talking about that place where our ideas and thoughts are formed.

Now, if you're anything like me, your imagination can run wild sometimes. We see what's happening in the stock market, the price of food, the crime in our cities, and our imagination goes wild. And we imagine, we awfulize, we form all kinds of ideas about the worst things that can happen. And so I ask What if, as this verse says, What if instead our imaginations, that place where ideas and thoughts are formed, what if our imaginations instead are stayed on God? What if we imagine ourselves, as Scripture says that we're more than conquerors through Christ who loved us? What if we imagine as the Apostle Paul imagines that the power of God at work in us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, Paul says. That's our imagine



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imagination's state on God. Now, the word translated here as stayed, that is stayed on God, it is a word that means to lean on to for support, and so here is the imagination that leans on to God for support. That's the idea. The imagination that leans on God is kept in perfect peace.

Now, when you and I see the word peace in the Bible, we must not think that it has anything to do with what the world thinks of as peace, that is really just the absence of warfare. The word peace here, well, it's that grand Hebrew word Shalom that means fullness, completeness, well-being, there's nothing lacking, so that there is no need for fear, but whether there is a sense of rest, a perfect security as in our imaginations, we lean on to God.

And I wonder if this is what the Apostle Paul has in mind as he sits in a Roman prison cell. And he writes in Philippians Chapter 4 vs. 7, that the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Read the gospels. And see that again and again Christ Jesus' first words to people after his resurrection, his first words are, "Peace be with you." Peace, fullness, wholeness, completeness is God's portion for you and me. As in our imaginations, we imagine God is for us, we imagine all the promises that God has for us, no, we don't imagine the worst, but we imagine God's love and power at work in us that will be perfect peace. God will keep him in perfect peace whose mind, whose imagination is stayed on thee because he trusts in thee. As God commands His people to be blessed, so I bless you with these words, "The Lord bless you would keep you. The Lord make us safe. Shine upon you and be gracious to you. The Lord lift up the light of his account and it's upon you and give you peace."

I am Tim Smith, a fellow traveler. Thank you for listening. Until next time.