



water from rock

Selah: Stop, Look, Listen- October 27, 2022

The Lord be with you.

Do you ever have days when you feel like you have the weight of the world on your shoulders? When you feel like everything depends on you? It might be in your family, your ministry, your business, your job where you're trying so hard just to keep it together and you're feeling the way of the world. You might feel like the proverbial hamster on the hamster wheel, running and running, trying just to keep up.

Well, if you ever do feel that way or you care about someone feeling that way, I've got a Scripture for you that I hope you'll consider. It is Psalm 127 a song by Solomon. That's right, Solomon. We've looked at several songs by his father David, but here's a Psalm by Solomon, whom Scripture calls the wisest person of his day. Solomon is a long remembered as one of the great movers and shakers of this world, one of the great builders. As you read the Old Testament Books of Kings and Chronicles, you will see that Solomon got a lot done. And he got a lot done without feeling the weight of the world on his shoulders.

I'm going to read Psalm 127 beginning with the first verse. "Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain. Unless the Lord guards the city, the guard keeps watch in vain. It is vain that you rise up early and go late to rest, eating the bread of anxious toil, for God gives sleep to his beloved."

Did you pick up on Solomon's repeated use of the word "vain?" Those who build a house labor in vain, those who guard the city keeps watch in vain unless... Unless, Solomon says, the Lord builds. Unless the Lord Guards. Did you get that? Unless the Lord builds, unless the Lord guards, all of our building, all of our guarding is in vain, futile, empty, stuck on stupid. Trying to do all of this. Trying to keep a family, keep a business, keep a ministry, it's vain. It's empty without the Lord.

I'm struck here by what Solomon says, "It is vain that you rise up early and go late to rest, eating the bread of anxious toil." Note the word here, anxious, anxious, toil. Now you read Solomon in the book of Proverbs and it's clear there that Solomon is not... Solomon is not against hard work. He isn't. Rather, what Solomon is warning about is what he calls anxious toil. It's doing our toil, our work as though it all depends on us, as though real success in life depends on us and not on God. And that results in anxious toil. Just read the news. And you will see today that our culture is experiencing an epidemic of anxiety. It's doing life as though it all depends on us.



water from rock

I remember when as a young pastor on our way home from church one Sunday, I said to my wife, "I just resigned from being the fourth person of the Godhead." I was gonna stop doing ministry as it all depended on me.

Solomon says that we build, we guard, we work knowing that the Lord, he builds, he guards, he works with us. And so Solomon cautions here in these verses, he says, It is vain that you rise up early and go late to rest, eating the bread of anxious toil. For know this, for God gives sleep to his beloved. That's quite a statement. God gives sleep to his beloved.

Now here's something I want you to check out. Look in the margin of your Bible and see that in the margin of the New Revised Standard Version, in the margin of the New International Version, and perhaps in your version too the translator suggest that this phrase is better translated as God provides for His beloved during sleep.

And I think that really is the gist of Solomon is saying. That God provides for you in me during our sleep. While we're not lifting a finger, God is building, God is a guarding, God is providing for us as we rest in Him. I wonder if Solomon as he says this, that he's thinking of God putting Adam into a deep sleep to provide Eve for him. Maybe Solomon is thinking of God in Genesis 15, putting Abraham into a deep sleep as he enters into covenant with Abraham to forever bless him. Or maybe maybe Solomon is thinking of 1 Kings Chapter Three, when Solomon is sleeping, not working, not doing a thing, but sleeping, God gives to Solomon the gift of wisdom as he is sleeping.

You see, God gets a lot done while you and I are sleeping, while we are resting in Him, and that is why in the Hebrew scriptures, the Old Testament, that the day begins not at sunrise when we get up and go about our work, but rather the day begins at sunset when God goes to work. Not at sunrise, when we go to work. There's such an important lesson for all of us here in these days of anxious toil. Its remember that we are saved by grace through faith, not of our works. God's greatest blessing for you and me come as we rest from our works, as we let go this crazy notion that it all depends on us.

There's such an important lesson here for us that just as we are saved by grace through faith, not of works, God's greatest blessings come to us. And Jesus is saying to you and me today, he's saying, Come to me and I'll give you rest. My yoke is easy. My burden is light.

I want to close this Selah with a couple of lines from William Newell's commentary on the Book of Romans, where he writes about our proper attitude under grace. Newell says, to believe and to consent to be loved while unworthy is the great secret. To expect to be blessed though realizing more and more or lack of worth, that is to live in the grace of God. And I would add that that is to be relieved of anxious toil. So I expect to be blessed by God. Not because I've earned it, not because I've deserved it, but because God is pleased to bless us.

And so I looked up for you today, this blessing that is commanded in scripture, Deuteronomy chapter 6, The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you. The Lord lift up the light of His countenance upon you and give you peace.



water from rock

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



water from rock

Thank you for choosing Scribie.com

Cross-check this transcript against the audio quickly and efficiently using our online Integrated Editor. Please visit the following link and click the Check & Download button to start.

<https://scribie.com/files/254b9d9e9b7144048630d873e1aac582a3e14d1e>