



water from rock

Selah: Stop, Look, Listen – July 29, 2023

The Lord be with you today.

I have in mind, any of you who feel like you're facing an impossible task. You know that God has called you to something. But you're feeling that maybe you don't have the strength, the ability, the smarts to get it done. Well, I know pastors who are feeling they're facing an impossible task with what the pandemic seems to be doing to churches, there are parents of school-aged children feeling that today, caregivers of loved ones feeling that... I feel like that from time to time, facing an impossible task, but I've got a bible verse that I come back to again and again as this first helps me get my bearings and gives me confidence for the way ahead... I'm going to read the verse and then I'm gonna talk about it a bit. I'm looking at the Old Testament prophecy of Zachariah, the Book of Zachariah, Chapter 4:6 as this is a word from God, a word that the prophet is to deliver to Zerubbabel. And we can take it as a word from God for us today.

I read it. "This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel, not by might nor by power, but by my spirit, says the Lord of hosts." Now, now, Who is this fellow Zerubbabel? It kind of sounds like a name from an advanced version of Bible trivia, Zerubbabel is a man with a big job before him, and he doesn't feel that he's up to the job. Zerubbabel is a descendant of king David, and he is a leader. Zerubbabel is the man who led the first group of Jews out of the captivity of Babylon back to the homeland, and God has chosen Zerubbabel to lead the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem, but they're just this little rag tag scraggly group of people. And they are surrounded by enemies on all sides, and they are discouraged. And so God gives his word to the prophet Zachariah to give to Zerubbabel. This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel, not by might nor by power, but by my spirit, says the Lord of hosts. The Hebrew word translated might as in not by might is a word translated might every other time that it is used in the Hebrew Bible, it is translated as Army as that's the idea. It's like God is saying to Zerubbabel, you might think that you need an army to defend you in this, you might think that you're going to need an army of workers to get the work done, but I tell you, you don't need an army because you're going to get this done, not by human might but by the spirit of God.

After all, it was not human might that brought Israel out of Egypt into Canaan, it was not a human might that brought God's people out of Babylon this time... Let's be straight about it. It was the Spirit of God. So God's word to a discouraged, bedraggled Zerubbabel is not by might and army, not by power, but by my spirit, says the Lord of hosts. I'm thinking that that could be a



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model for you and me today, that the word of God is as true for us today as it was then, that when God gives us something to do, God gives us His spirit to get it done. As a preacher, I am always encouraged by the words of the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians chapter 2, verses 2 and 3, where Paul says, I came to you Corinthians in weakness with great fear and trembling. My message and preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with the demonstration of the Spirit's power. It wasn't that Paul was all that great preacher. It wasn't that he did it without fear, but it was a demonstration of the

Spirit's power. It's not by might. It's by the Spirit's power.

Now, the next verse, verse 7 in Zachariah 4, God continues as God says. "What are you oh great mountain? Before Zerubbabel, you shall become a plain, and Zerubbabel will bring out the top stone amid shouts of grace, grace to it." So God says, what are you a great mountain? You see, Zerubbabel feels like he's got this huge mountain before him, that he is facing a mountain of problems, and God says, what are you a great mountain before Zerubbabel, you shall become a plain, God will smash you flat, not by human might or by power, but by my spirit says, the Lord of hosts. Before Zerubbabel, you shall become a plain, and Zerubbabel shall bring out the top stone that is, God is going to empower the Zerubbabel to put the capstone, the finishing stone on the temple. Zerubbabel will get it done by the power of God's Spirit. He shall bring out the top stone amidst shouts of shouts of grace grace to it as people will see, and people will realize that it's all of grace, God's grace. I like how the message version translates this verse... So, so big mountain. Who do you think you are? Next to Zerubbabel, you're nothing but a mole hill. He'll proceed to set the cornerstone in place, accompanied by cheers, grace grace.

So today if you're feeling like you're facing a mountain, a mountain of problems, hear these words as a God's word for you. So big mountain, who do you think you are? Next to my child you're nothing but a mole hill. He/She will proceed to set the cornerstone in place they'll get it done amid cheers of grace grace.

I am Tim Smith a fellow traveler, thanks for listening until next time.