



water from rock

## Selah: Stop, Look, Listen – February 10, 2024

The Lord be with you.

Henry Ford said that history is one darn thing after another. What is it? I mean, is history going nowhere? Is our world doomed? Do you ever wonder about that?

Well, I'm looking at today's news here and you know, the world seems kind of crazy right now, doesn't it? They were caught up in a brutal presidential election. Wars are boiling over in Europe, the Middle East and well, the national debt, I mean, it, it's out of control and sadly, for a culture that boasts about being post Christian, there's not a lot of reason for hope for the future.

The world around us today is just like what the Apostle Paul describes in Ephesians chapter two verse 12 as having no hope and without God in the world, I mean, just listen to the music, watch it TV, shows and movies and it, it seems that our culture has shrunk to what Macbeth said about life as a tale told by an idiot full of sound and fury signifying nothing but what a grandly different, gloriously different picture of our future is revealed to us in the Bible as in first Peter chapter three, verse 15, it calls for us to always be ready to give the reason for the hope that we have.

I'm looking here in the Bible at the New Testament Book of Ephesians chapter one verse eight that says with all wisdom and insight, God has made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time to gather up all things in Christ, things in heaven and things on earth.

Now, did you pick up on that word mystery? That means that you and I would be left guessing about the future of our poor world except that God reveals it to us. God reveals to us, it says his plan for the fullness of time. That means that when history has run its course, God reveals that in the fullness of time, he will gather up all things in Christ.

Now, the Greek word translated, gather up all things. It's, it's a word that was used in ancient Greek world for taking a column of numbers, adding them all up and, and then placing the sum total of those numbers under the column. It was bringing together all the numbers into that one number, the sum of it all.



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And, and that is God's plan for our world. It, it is a plan so big, so wonderful. There can only be a mystery for us as to how God is going to do this but God will in the fullness of time when God is writing the last page of history, God will gather up all that is divided, separated and he will bring them under the headship of Jesus Christ.

I like how the New International Version Bible translates it as it says, God will bring unity to all things in heaven and earth under Christ. That's why scripture calls Jesus the prince of peace. He's going to gather it all up together. I mean, it's what we sang about at Christmas not so long ago in joy to the world. He rules the world with truth and grace and makes the nations prove the glories of his righteousness and wonders of his love and wonders of his love and wonders, wonders of his love.

The Reverend Mal Babcock was 1/19 century Presbyterian minister described by his wife as often going on walks for what she called to see the Father's world. Reverend Babcock loved to meditate on the beauty and glory of God in the world that he had created shortly after Reverend Babcock's death, his wife published a poem that he had written. It's now sung as a well known hymn "This is my Father's World."

And I like how the poem's last verse celebrates the wondrous gathering up of all things in Jesus, our savior. It says this is my Father's world. Oh, let me never forget that though. The wrong seems off so strong God is the ruler yet this is my Father's world. The battle is not done. Jesus who died shall be satisfied and earth and heaven be one. Yeah, I know. I know things are kind of crazy for our world today but what great hope we have in Christ Jesus for our future. It's good news that we get to share and explain the reason for the hope that we have.

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