

Selah: Stop, Look, Listen – March 24, 2020

The Lord be with you.

I am Tim Smith and I'm calling these times together. We're calling them Selah which is an old Hebrew word that is something like the railroad crossing sign that says Stop, Look and Listen. And what I wanna do in these few moments together, I want us to do just that, I want us to stop, and I want us to look into God's Word and to listen for what God might be saying, to us in this time of the COVID-19 crisis and self-quarantine and social distancing. And I've been thinking how just a week and a half ago, I was making all these plans about places I was going to go and things that was going to do. And now where are those plans today? Now they're all gone. It's kind of like the old saying that Life is what happens while we're making our plans.

And today, I find myself drawn to a passage of scripture about a time when plans go awry, when life feels uncertain when everything is in a people everything that the psalmist thought he had nailed down is flying loose. It is Psalm 46, And so 46 was one of Martin Luther's favorite Psalms, and he would often in times of trouble, turn to Psalm 46, and it is the inspiration for his great hymn that he wrote, "a mighty fortress is our God. a bulwark never failing.

And in Psalm 46.

So, in is using the imagery of an earthquake when everything has been shaken, he's using the imagery of a Sinai when even the mountain in the sea or shaking and the waters are surging.

Listen to the opening words of Psalm 46 and let them flow over you.

God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble Therefore, we will not fear.

So, the earth give way, and the mountains, fall into the heart of the sea, though its waters, roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging Selah.

There was the word.

Selah.

The same is wanting us to stop and to look and to listen and to pay attention to what we have just heard that God is our refuge strength, he is an ever-present. Help in trouble. Therefore, we don't have to be afraid of anything, that is going on, I just heard the other day that 365 times in Scripture we're given the command. Don't be afraid, one for every day of the year. We don't have reason to be afraid because God is our refuge and strength, as he then the Psalm switches from the third person to the second person it goes from talking about God to God breaking in and talking directly to us in the midst of trouble. God says be still be still and know that I am God, no other word be still is a translation of the Hebrew word, it has different shades of meaning it has an idea to let go to let the arm hang, down to let your arm go slack to relax, stop racing about trying to fix things and be still... It's an idea that we see back in Exodus 14, where Moses and Israelites and they'd come up to the

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Red Sea, and the army of Pharaoh as clothing in and God says be still and see the salvation of the Lord. I know it sounds almost counterintuitive but be so still on one. And not that I am God.

The Hebrew were translated not is a word A-Y-A-D-A. and it's not so much to know intellectually but it is to know experientially Be still and know that I am God, allow yourself to be still, to let go the need to be in control, the need to fix the need to be strong, relax and know and discover in that an intimate, close up, knowing of God Be still and know that I am God.

And then, the psalmist picks up again, and he says, "The Lord Almighty is with us, the God of Jacob is our fortress. Selah. Stop, look and listen and pay attention to God.

It was a time of uncertainty in trouble in my life when I came across a few words by the great missionary statesman Andrew Murray himself was going through a very difficult time, and he sat down and he wrote these words, in time of trouble. Say first, God brought me here, it is by His will. I am in this difficult place in that I will rest next, he will keep me here in His love and give me grace in this trial to be haves. His child didn't say he will make the trial of blessing teaching me lessons, he intends me to learn and working in me. The Grace means to be so... And last, say in his good time, he can bring me out again, how and when he knows, therefore I say I am here by God's appointment and his keeping under his training for his time in God's grace He can bring us out again, "Be still and know that He is God over all, next time. I wanna take a few moments to share with you a prayer that can help you and me to be still and know that He is God.

You can also access this recording on our water from Rock website and our Facebook account.

I want to close with a prayer that comes right from scripture, it's in Numbers chapter 6, where God command his name to be put on his people with these words, "The Lord bless you and keep you the Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you, the Lord lived up the light of His countenance upon you and give you peace.

I am Tim Smith. A fellow traveler, thanks for getting together.

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