

Selah: Stop, Look, Listen – May 5, 2020

The Lord be with you.

Tell me, are you feeling a bit confused today? Maybe a little nervous. What with all the news about the coronavirus I mean, are we at the front end of the wave or at the back end? Will a face mask become an everyday accessory?

Are they gonna take your temperature before you enter church service when it's only gonna be 25% full? We are facing a lot of unknowns, aren't we?

And what they're calling the new normal... Well, it might really be a... Now, normal because everyday is different, it can be discouraging.

But I was actually encouraged this week I was encouraged, and spending time in the Psalms and to realize that God's people did not have to understand everything that is happening, or where it is all leading before we can begin to seize the opportunity in it and to embrace the future with a Psalmist confidence and hope. I am today, pondering Psalm 37, that is a Psalm of David. It might be one of David's last Psalms because he says he's writing it as an old man in verse 25, David says, I have been young. And now, an old yet, I have not seen the righteous forsaken.

Psalm 37 is the words of a man who has lived much and done much the words of a man who was sin greatly and been greatly forgiven. And all the ups and downs of life have not soured David, but they had quieted him and still his confidence as David has learned to see God in everything.

And David says, Take it from me. I've seen a few years, I fought some battles, but in verse 24, David says, that the steps of a man are made firm by God, that's David's voice of experience.

And then David adds, he says, Though we stumble we shall not fall, head long for the Lord holds us by the hand.

I like to think, David, is writing Psalm 37 for his grandchildren. I say that because he writes a Psalm, as an acrostic poem where every other line begins with a successive letter of the Hebrew alphabet. And they would sometimes do this in order to make something easier to memorize. And so, I'd like to think... David is writing these words of experience for his grandchildren to memorize and to live by. Of course, we don't have time to look at all 40 verses. Let me just show you a few verses that are towards the beginning of the psalm and the rest of the psalm illustrates and supports what David is saying in these verses.

I'm looking at Psalm 37, Verses 3-7, the voice of experience as David writes Trust in the Lord and do good. So, you will live in the land and enjoy security. Take delight in the Lord and he will give you the desires of your heart, Commit your way to the Lord, trust in Him, and He will act, he will make your vindication shine like the light and the justice of your cause. Like the noon day Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for Him.

Water From Rock

I see here that there are several verbs there are several things for you and me to do, I've underlined them here in my Bible - Trust in the Lord, take delight in the Lord, commit your way to the Lord, be still before the Lord and wait patiently for Him. I wanna focus on Verse 5, where David says, Commit your way to the Lord, trust in him and he will act.

David Livingston was a great missionary doctor and explorer of Africa. Perhaps you know that phrase, Dr. Livingston I presume. Well, those were words that were said by Henry Stanley, who was a reporter for the New York Herald upon finding Livingston who had not been seen in six years as he was ever taking a gospel deeper and deeper into the remotest, unexplored areas of Africa. And David Livingston, said that he recited verse 5, 5 times a day, commit your way to the Lord, trust in Him, and He will act. Livingston said, that verse 5 sustained him and guided him for the many years that he ministered in Africa.

Now, Hebrew is a very concrete language that uses a lot of word pictures in the Hebrew word galal translated as commit, commit your way to the Lord galal literally means to roll, to roll away. It is used in Genesis 29:10 of Jacob who rolled away the stone, from the mouth of the well. It is used in Joshua 5:9, where after the Israelites entered the promised land, it says the Lord rolled away the reproach of Egypt. So what David is saying to us here, he's saying, roll your way roll your life roll your destiny onto the Lord.

I love the word picture here. It's the rolling of what might be a heavy burden, that you're carrying it here today rolling it off your shoulders on to God so that God can bear it, so that God can carry it. Your future, your destiny, this new normal its way to big for you to handle. Roll it unto God, Commit your way to the Lord, trust in him, and he will act... And I have to think that David Livingstonn recited this verse five times a day, because at least five times a day, he needed to roll onto God, his burdens, his fears, his discouragement.

It's something we need to do today and keep on doing rolling it onto God, Lord, it's yours. It's bigger than me, I can't handle it. I roll it on to you now. Another place this Hebrew word galal is used, it is used by David's son Solomon. I like that. Solomon uses it in the Book of Proverbs 16 verse 3, where he says, "Commit your work or roll your work on to the Lord and your plans will be established, so don't to make plans for the future without God without rolling your work, your endeavors onto him. David is telling us we we don't have to understand everything that is happening, we don't have to understand where it is all leading, before we can seize the opportunity to embrace the coming days with faith and confidence. Now, there's a form of praying, that helps me very much to commit my way to the Lord, and it's what's been called the palms down palms up.

So would you take just a moment with me, with your palms turned downward to commit to roll on to God your way, your future, your plans and then turn your palms upwards to receive from God what God is going to do for you.

I am Tim Smith, a fellow traveler on the pilgrim way. Thanks for listening, until next time...

Water From Rock

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