



water from rock

## Selah: Stop, Look, Listen – September 24, 2024

The Lord be with you.

God spoke to me the other night. Now, he really did. My wife and I, we were in the wilderness of northern New Mexico, and God spoke to me as on a clear night, far from city lights, we saw the Milky Way spread out before us, like I had never seen the Milky Way. And God spoke to me.

Now less you think I'm just a little bit crazy to say that God spoke to me. I do want to share with you the amazing, good news about the two books that God has given to us to reveal Himself to us, to speak to us. God has given to us the Book of Creation, and God has given to us the Book of Scripture. Now, I always like to keep in mind that biblical Hebrew did not have a word for nature, they would never have thought of nature, the ancient Hebrews didn't talk about nature, they didn't believe in nature, rather they called it all creation. It was creation, pointing them always to the creator. Creation glorifying the creator. I always think of the old hymn, How Great Thou Art about creation glorifying the creator. It says, when through the woods and forest Glades, I wonder and here the birds sing sweetly in the trees, and when I looked down from the lofty mountain grandeur and here the brook and feel the gentle breeze, then sings my soul, my Savior, God to thee how great thou art. So we see God speaks to us in his book of creation, and God speaks to us in his book of scripture, the Bible. Now, listen to David in Psalm 19 as, David talks about God's two books. David says beginning in verse 1, "The heavens are telling the Glory of God." Notice, there's a message that goes for the present tense, "the heavens are telling the Glory of God, and the firmament proclaims his handy work day-to-day, pours forth speech and night to night declares knowledge."

You see, when a Christian's mind turns to the book of creation, the heart turns to God in worship and praise. Now, God's book of scripture, David is gonna pick up on, beginning in verse 7, as David says, "the teaching of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul. The decrees of the Lord are sure. Making wise a simple. The precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart." That's God's Scripture, of which David says they are more to be desired than gold, even, much fine gold, sweeter also than honey, and the dripping of the honeycomb. So that is God's book of scripture to which God is speaking to you and to me in the book of creation, in the book of scripture. They interpret each other. They help explain each other. And I better understand the Bible as I read creation, and I better understand creation as I read the Bible.

When I think about Jesus, who tells us to consider the birds of the air, that's the book of creation. Jesus says, consider the birds of the air, and we'll learn something about our heavenly father who cares for us. Jesus said, consider the flowers of the field. Pay attention to them. Stop and smell the roses and learn about our heavenly Father. And you know, I'm finding that in this time of pandemic and isolation and well, with all the stress and the pace of life, the internet, television, it's important to make time to listen for God's speaking in his incredible creation. Why that's what happened to me the other night as I saw the Milky Way, and that's why saints and sages through the ages have always encouraged people to go outside... To spend time outside in God's creation. And I do find that the more I pay attention in God's creation and appreciate and marvel at God's creation, the more that I am filled with praise and thanksgiving and joy. The Apostle Paul says in Romans 1:20, he says, "ever since the creation of the world, God's eternal power and divine nature, invisible though they are, have



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been understood and seen through the things that God has made." Creation is God's book proclaiming the creator. Now, I've got an idea. Try it on if it works for you. How about you go outside tonight or some night real soon where you can see the sky and you can listen to the sounds of the night and pay attention.

Well, if it's too cold where you live to go outside tonight, go outside tomorrow. And tomorrow make time to read God's book of creation in what you see, what you hear, what you smell. Allow God's book of creation to speak to you about our heavenly father. To speak to you about such an amazing creator of 80 billion other galaxies like our Milky Way, allow God to speak to you about loving you so much that he wants to spend eternity with you.

I love the old hymn that says, This is my Father's world, and to my listening ear, all nature sings and round me rings, the music of the spheres. This is my Father's world, the birds, their carols raise the morning light, the lily white declare their maker's praise. This is my Father's world. I rest me in the thought of rocks and trees of skies, and sees his hand the wonders brought. This is my father is a world, he shines in all that's fair. In the wrestling grass, I hear him pass. He speaks to me everywhere.

Now I told you that God spoke to me the other night. Well, I would love to tell you what God spoke to me, but I just don't have the words. That's how wonderful it was.

I'm Tim Smith, a fellow traveler. Thanks for listening until next time.