

The Dove's Escape

The Psalmist said, "...*Oh that I had wings like a dove! for then would I fly away, and be at rest*" Psalm 55:6). As I write these words, I find myself very tired. On Tuesday my mom, my wife and I headed for my first home on this earth in North Little Rock, Arkansas. My dear cousin suddenly passed away, the only child of my Aunt Florene. I am praying for rest to be given dear Aunt tonight. I pray for rest granted my eighty-six year old mom who made the trip. I pray for rest for my sweet wife who drove all the way home. I was honored to have part in the funeral service in North Little Rock, the graveside in Plumerville, and then when one of my friends in Hot Springs discovered I was in Arkansas, he asked me to come speak for him. I am ready to lie this body down. And the next tree days promise to be as busy as the last two. Let me say, I love what I do and I am not complaining. At times like this I often think of what George Whitefield prayed, "Lord, I am weary in thy work, but not of thy work."

There are different forms of being tired. There is an emotional tiredness. There is a spiritual tiredness. There is a physical tiredness. Have you ever heard the expression, "I am sick and tired"? For some life is like a battle and you may find yourself like one of King David's mighty men, Eleazar, "*He arose, and smote the Philistines until his hand was weary, and his hand clave unto the sword: and the LORD wrought a great victory that day; and the people returned after him only to spoil*" (II Samuel 23:10). Eleazar won a great victory, but he was tired. We must not become overconfident and think no matter how tired we become, God will overcompensate our worn out frame. We must take the initiative to rest in Him. Jesus said, "*Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest*" (Matthew 11:28).

There are four areas I would like to share where we can find rest in the Lord. There is a rest promised to those...

1. Looking for a Lift

"*And I said, Oh that I had wings like a dove!...*" Psalm 55:6). Wings allow the dove to escape gravity and all that pulls them down. We, too, can spiritually, in an aerodynamic kind of way, escape the pull of this earth. "*There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God*" (Hebrews 4:9). Come to the Lord when things are pulling you down. Come to the Lord when you are unable to bring the wind to your wings and give yourself a lift! Say this prayer: "*From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I*" (Psalm 61:2). There is a rest promised to those...

2. Looking for Love

The lonely Bridegroom looking for his beloved says, "*O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the stairs, let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely*" (Song of Solomon 2:14). We see this prophesy ultimately fulfilled in these words "*And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband*" (Revelation 21:2). Should you, like a mourning dove, need a visitation from the Heavenly Bridegroom, remember He is just a prayer away. "...*I did mourn as a dove: mine eyes fail with looking upward: O LORD, I am oppressed; undertake for me*" (Isaiah 38:14). Hear the words of Jesus: "*But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you. Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom*" (Luke 12:31, 32). There is a rest promised to those...

3. Looking for Life

"*When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory*" (Colossians 3:4). Make particular note that Christ does not become our life when He appears; He is our life now! Just before the Psalmist cried out to be like a dove and fly away, he said: "*My heart is sore pained within me: and the terrors of death are fallen upon me. Fearfulness and trembling are come*

upon me, and horror hath overwhelmed me" (Psalm 55:4, 5). He was "scared to death." The life that we have now in Jesus promises to negate all the negative fears, even of death itself. "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind" (II Timothy 1:7). Rest is promised to those...

4. Looking for Leisure

"And he said unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while: for there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat" (Mark 6:31). This is the promise of Jesus to His followers. A promise of rest; a promise for leisure. Vance Havner often quoted this verse with a saying, "If we do not come apart with Jesus, we will eventually "come apart." There is stress in the simple words, "coming and going." Like Solomon, God will give us wisdom if we desire to know how to govern our coming and going in this busy world full of people that need our help. "Give me now wisdom and knowledge, that I may go out and come in before this people: for who can judge this thy people, that is so great?" (II Chronicles 1:10). Yes, God will even give us wisdom when to come apart and rest for the journey ahead. Let us follow these inspired words of admonition: "Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart. Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass. And he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday. Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for him..." (Psalm 37:4-7a). God moves! Seldom early, never late.

- Pastor Pope -

Back to Pastor's Word