

In Peace I Will Lie Down and Sleep

Psalm 4

Introduction

It's hard sometimes to lie down and go to sleep, especially these days with a lot of problems arising in our world. Perhaps you're one who struggles to sleep. Perhaps you've sought advice on how to improve it (or if you're like me, you googled it), but nothing seems to be working. We aren't the only ones who have struggled with this. In fact, one of the people in scripture who did was David. Consider a prayer he wrote in Psalm 4.

This Psalm is believed to be written in conjunction with Psalm 3 during the time when his son Absalom was seeking to murder him and take his throne. If that's true, there's no doubt that it would've caused David to have trouble sleeping. So, what did he do in order to lie down and sleep in peace? I think the answer can be found in verse 4: *"Ponder in your own hearts on your beds and be silent."* How might we go about doing that?

Some translations say, *"Meditate in your heart upon your bed and be still"*. The idea here is to empty your mind and fill it with something, and to do so in silence. In other words, you first need to separate yourself from anything that will distract you. Then, what do we ponder/meditate on?

God's Deliverance

David remembered that in times past God had delivered him from other forms of peril: from wild animals when defending his sheep, from Goliath, and even from Saul's attempts to murder him. This gave him assurance that He could call on God when in trouble, and trust that God would hear him and be with him. Just as God delivered David, he also has delivered us. Ponder the times when you had difficulties, and how God led you through them, and trust that he'll continue to do so.

God's Faithfulness

David also remembered God picked him to be king when others disregarded him. He remembered God viewing Him as a man after God's own heart. He remembered the times when God extended compassion and grace towards him after he sinned. There is no greater joy than being in covenant with God, who will never leave us nor forsake us, no matter how tough it gets. This is why David did not waste his nights dwelling on the people who wronged him, nor the evil being committed around him. Because his hope was not in man or material things, but on God. And so, it should be with us.

God's Workmanship

Being a Christian is not just about what God can do for us, but also what God can do through us. We can see how God was working through David:

- Courageous against Goliath (1 Samuel 17)
- Refused to kill King Saul (1 Samuel 24)
- Gracious towards those who wronged him (2 Samuel 9; 19)
- Took responsibility for sins (2 Samuel 12)
- Skilled musician and poet who wrote many psalms

When it comes to right sacrifices, are you doing what is right in the sight of God? Is your life a reflection of the goodness of God? How have your works impacted the people around you in a positive way? Meditate on those things.

Conclusion

I'm reminded of a quote from Christian author & fellow millennial Jefferson Bethke:

"I hear a lot of people say that the fear of death and the fear of public speaking are two of the main fears in my generation, but I disagree. I think it's the fear of silence. We refuse to turn off our computers, turn off our phones, log off Facebook, and just sit in silence, because in those moments we might actually have to face up to who we really are. We fear silence like it's an invisible monster, gnawing at us, ripping us open, and showing us our dissatisfaction. Silence is terrifying."

In our day, we tend to have electronics in our bedroom (i.e., TV on our dresser, phone on our nightstand). It really doesn't make sense when you think about it. The other rooms in our home can accommodate for those devices just fine. Those devices aren't going anywhere. And by the way, we really don't really need our phones to be alarm clocks (You can buy one for \$6). I think we could acknowledge that these doesn't help our sleep at all. So why do we continue trend, all while consistently complaining how we don't get sleep and are tired?

Perhaps Jeff has a point here. Perhaps, we are afraid of silence. We are afraid of having to acknowledge a troubling reality: that maybe we can't sleep because we are empty, unfulfilled, or worse, we're not in right standing with God or brethren, or have unrepentant sin.

My challenge for you is to lie in your bed undistracted, ponder on godly things, and be silent. When doing so, you probably won't finish because chances are you'll have fallen asleep in the middle of doing so. And if you absolutely have to bring something to bed, bring your Bible with you, read Psalm 4, and get some sleep.