

July 1, 2018

The Job of Watching

Psalm 130

The gospel affirms that the cries from the depth are the voices which Yahweh is peculiarly attuned. This God is palpable, available—a staggering comment both about God and about the speaker. Moreover, the Lord is attentive to and moved by the beggar. A new solidarity is forged in the moment of speaking between the Lord and “the least,” a new binding between the throne and the depths (W. Brueggemann, 1984).

When we suffer, we attract counselors like money attracts thieves. We are flooded first with sympathy and then with advice, and when we don't come around quickly we are abandoned as a hopeless case. But none of that is what we need. We need hope. We need to know that we are in relation to God. We need to know that suffering is part of what it means to be human and not something alien. We need to know where we are and where God is. We need an eye specialist rather, than a painter. A painter conveys to us—with the aid of his brush and palette—a picture of the world as he sees it; an ophthalmologist enables us to see the world as it really is. We are helped to learn the skills of waiting and hoping by which God is given room to work out our salvation and develop our faith while we fix our attention on His ways of grace and resurrection (E. Peterson, 1980).

It is the Lord Himself, not simply escape from punishment, that the writer longs for. This is more than wistfulness or optimism. In plain terms, the psalmist speaks of a promise to cling to, and in picturing the watchmen he chooses as his simile a hope that will not fail. Night may seem endless, but morning is certain and its time determined (D. Kidner, 1973).

Next week: *Psalm 123*

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SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR THIS WEEK:

Today: *Psalm 31* (What is God saying to you?)

Monday: *Luke 14:25-33*

Tuesday: *Matthew 12:46-50*

Wednesday: *Acts 7:54-60*

Thursday: *2 Corinthians 4:7-18*

Friday: *2 Corinthians 13:5-10*

Saturday: *John 21:15-23*

Lord Jesus Christ, You have shown us what it means to be a servant. We ask now for Your grace and strength to faithfully follow in the footsteps of servanthood. We pray in the Name and Spirit of Jesus, our Savior; Amen.

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