

~Other Speakers S-Z: James Smith:

"Be still--and know that I am God!" Psalm 46:10

This most precious Psalm has been a source of blessing to many of the Lord's people. It is in general the language of one deeply taught of God, living in close communion with God, and therefore exercising strong confidence in God. Rising above second causes, God is seen working, supplying, and making his people happy. The most terrible convulsions are supposed--but faith remains firm. An invitation to behold the works of God is given, especially his victories over his warlike foes. Then the Lord himself interposes, he appears in his majesty, he speaks with authority, he commands silence, he says, "Be still!" He will be known, acknowledged, and exalted. His glory shall cover the heavens, and the earth shall be filled with his praise. Let us hear God speak, and seek grace to profit by his words.

"Be still." That is--do not fret. Do the wicked prosper, do your enemies increase, do your foes prevail? Are your circumstances trying, perplexing, and painful? "Fret not yourself." There is no cause for it. There is no good to be gotten by it. Your God knows all about it. He wisely permits it. He intends to glorify himself by it. It is for trial, for the trial of your graces and principles. "Be still." Complain not. Israel in the desert met with sore trials, with great privation, with painful mortifications; but we read that "when the people complained, it displeased the Lord." And as the Lord was displeased with complaining Israel, so will he be displeased with you; and if displeased he will hide his face, withhold his comforts, and perhaps close his hand.

They had little cause to complain, if they looked back to what they were in Egypt, or forward to what was before them in Canaan. Just so with us--what cause can we have to complain? What were we? Where are we? What would we have been--but for the grace of God? Complain! Nothing can be more unseemly! Nothing can be more ungrateful.

"Be still." That is--do not kick against God's dispensations. His purposes are like mountains of brass, on them we can make no impression--but we may greatly injure ourselves. His providence is a great deep; we may sail over it--but we can never fathom it, or divert its course. Are you wiser than God? Would you counsel him whose understanding is infinite? Resistance is folly! Rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft!

"Be still." That is--yield yourself unto God. Bow to his sovereignty. Submit to his rule. Acquiesce in his will. Be not like dead matter, or a lifeless corpse, "But submit yourself unto God, as one that is alive from the dead."

"Be still." That is--be silent before the Lord. The Psalmist said, "I was silent, and opened not my mouth, because you did it." This was wise. This was befitting. Look at Israel's high priest, his two sons were slain by one stroke, by fire from the Lord, "But Aaron held his peace." Deeply did he feel. Nature in him was the same as nature in us, and therefore when Moses afterwards reprov'd him for neglect he said, "Such things have befallen me." Such things! Such uncommon things! Such painful, such distressing things! Yet he did not complain. He held his peace. Believer, whatever loss you sustain. Whatever cross you are called to bear. Whatever rivers of trouble you may have to wade through--be silent. Keep your mouth as it were with a bridle. Utter not one word of complaint or repining--but bow like the pliant fern to the breeze.

"Be still." That is--wait. God will not be hurried. He will not have his work hastened. Lay yourself at his feet. Watch at the posts of his doors. Say with the tried Church of old, "I will wait for the Lord who hides himself--and I will look for him." The Lord will appear. Circumstances will change. It will be all right in the end. Lay yourself at the Lord's feet. Watch the Lord's hand. Expect the fulfillment of the promise, and all will be well.

"Be still" for God is working. He is the great Agent, whoever and whatever may be the instruments. He leaves nothing to chance. There is no contingency with him. He works according to a settled plan, and with a fixed end in view. While God is working you are to be still, you are to be silent; it will end better than you expect, as well as you could wish.

"Be still," for God will overrule. The things that appear most against you--will be overruled for your good. The end will crown the whole. God would not permit your trials, if he did not intend to benefit you, and get glory to himself. His hand turns the wheel. His eye watches the whole of the machinery. His wisdom will bring sweet out of bitter, light out of darkness, and good out of evil.

"Be still" for God will explain. He says to you, as Jesus to his disciples, "What I am doing, you do not understand now--but you shall know hereafter." Now we are to believe, to walk by faith, not by sight. The

promise is to be our stay, and the presence of God our solace. By and bye, every dark cloud will be dispersed, every mystery will be explained, every difficulty will be cleared up. "Now we know in part--but when that which is perfect has come, then we shall know, even as also we are known." Let us then be still, because God commands us, assured that he seeks our comfort, and will make all things work together for our good.

But if the reader is unconverted, if he has not been born again, we do not say to him "Be still." No, to such we say, "FLEE from the wrath to come!" Hasten to Jesus, that you may escape the terrible storm that is coming! To the refuge! to the refuge! for the avenger of blood is at hand, His sword is furbished, his arm is nerved, he is ready to strike the fatal blow! Beware, O beware, lest divine justice finds you outside of Christ! Lest the executioner overtake you on the plain. If he smites you once--all is over. Wrath will come upon you to the uttermost. Everlasting fire will kindle in your soul. The vulture of remorse will begin to prey upon your vitals, and all that will remain for you, will be weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth!

FLEE then, O flee to Jesus! Believe in his dear name, trust in his precious blood, rely on his faithful word, and cast yourself into his saving arms! There is mercy with him. There is mercy for you. Rest not, until you have obtained it, until you enjoy it in the pardon of your sins, in the peace of your conscience, and the sanctification of your soul.

Then, whatever storms may gather, whatever foes may arise, whatever troubles may befall you, whatever difficulties you may meet with, we echo the words of the Lord, "Be still."

Precious Lord Jesus, who did command the winds, and the waves on the lake of Galilee, speak to my troubled, tempest-tossed soul, and say, "Peace, be still," and there shall be a great calm!