

A BIRD THAT FINDS NO REST

TEXT: (Proverbs 26:2, NIV)

²Like a fluttering sparrow or a darting swallow, an undeserved curse does not come to rest.

INTRODUCTION

1. “No Ammonite or Moabite or any of their descendants may enter the assembly of the LORD, not even in the tenth generation. For they did not come to meet you with bread and water on your way when you came out of Egypt, and they hired Balaam son of Beor from Pethor in Aram Naharaim to pronounce a curse on you. However, the LORD your God would not listen to Balaam but turned the curse into a blessing for you, because the LORD your God loves you” (Deuteronomy 23:3-5, NIV).
2. “I see him, but not now; I behold him, but not near. A star will come out of Jacob; a scepter will rise out of Israel. He will crush the foreheads of Moab, the skulls of all the people of Sheth. Edom will be conquered; Seir, his enemy, will be conquered, but Israel will grow strong. A ruler will come out of Jacob and destroy the survivors of the city” (Numbers 24:17-19, NIV).

I. FEAR—THE RESTING PLACE OF AN UNDESERVED CURSE

1. “Each one threw down his staff and it became a snake. But Aaron’s staff swallowed up their staffs” (Exodus 7:12, NIV).
2. “Then I saw a second beast, coming out of the earth. It had two horns like a lamb, but it spoke like a dragon. It exercised all the authority of the first beast on its behalf, and made the earth and its inhabitants worship the first beast, whose fatal wound had been healed. And it performed great signs, even causing fire to come down from heaven to the earth in full view of the people. Because of the signs it was given power to perform on behalf of the first beast, it deceived the inhabitants of the earth” (Revelation 13:11-14, NIV).

A. Fear Is Taking the Focus Off God

1. "As Pharaoh approached, the Israelites looked up, and there were the Egyptians, marching after them. They were terrified and cried out to the LORD" (Exodus 14:10, NIV).
2. "Then Moses led Israel from the Red Sea and they went into the Desert of Shur. For three days they traveled in the desert without finding water. When they came to Marah, they could not drink its water because it was bitter. (That is why the place is called Marah.) So the people grumbled against Moses, saying, 'What are we to drink?'" (Exodus 15:22-24, NIV).

B. Fear Makes Us Want to Turn Back

1. “They said to Moses, ‘Was it because there were no graves in Egypt that you brought us to the desert to die? What have you done to us by bringing us out of Egypt? Didn’t we say to you in Egypt, “Leave us alone; let us serve the Egyptians”’? It would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the desert!’” (Exodus 14:11-12, NIV).

C. Fear Makes Us a Victim of Our Fears

1. "Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus. But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, 'Lord, save me'" (Matthew 14:29-30, NIV)!
2. "Then the man who had received one bag of gold came. 'Master,' he said, 'I knew that you are a hard man, harvesting where you have not sown and gathering where you have not scattered seed. So I was afraid and went out and hid your gold in the ground. See, here is what belongs to you'" (Matthew 25:24-25, NIV).

II. THE OPINIONS OF OTHERS CAN TEST OUR FAITH

1. "It is dangerous to be concerned with what others think of you, but if you trust the LORD, you are safe" (Proverbs 29:25, GNT).
2. "The fear of human opinion disables; trusting in God protects you from that" (Proverbs 29:25, MSG).

A. The Danger of Being Influenced by Others

1. "But as for me, my feet had almost slipped; I had nearly lost my foothold. For I envied the arrogant when I saw the prosperity of the wicked" (Psalm 73:2-3, NIV).
2. They have no struggles; their bodies are healthy and strong. They are free from the burdens common to man; they are not plagued by human ills" (Psalm 73:4-5, NIV).
3. "Surely in vain have I kept my heart pure; in vain have I washed my hands in innocence. All day long I have been plagued; I have been punished every morning" (Psalm 73:13-14, NIV).
- 4 "When I tried to understand all this, it was oppressive to me till I entered the sanctuary of God; then I understood their final destiny" (Psalm 73:16-17, NIV).

B. The Danger of Comparing Our Call with Another's Call

1. "As Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon called Peter and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. 'Come, follow me,' Jesus said, 'and I will make you fishers of men.' At once they left their nets and followed him" (Matthew 4:18-20, NIV).
2. "The one who received the seed that fell on rocky places is the man who hears the word and at once receives it with joy. But since he has no root, he lasts only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, he quickly falls away" (Matthew 13:20-21, NIV).
3. "After a little while, those standing there went up to Peter and said, 'Surely you are one of them, for your accent gives you away.'
Then he began to call down curses on himself and he swore to them, 'I don't know the man'" (Matthew 26:73-74, NIV)!
4. "If I want him to remain alive until I return, what is that to you? You must follow me" (John 21:22, NIV).

C. How Job Overcame

1. "Shall we accept good from God, and not trouble" (Job 2:10, NIV)?
2. "You (God) have blessed the work of his hands, so that his flocks and herds are spread throughout the land. But stretch out your hand and strike everything he has, and he will surely curse you to your face" (Job 1:10-11, NIV).

3. “Why do I go out on a limb like this and take my life in my hands? Because even if he killed me, I’d keep on hoping. I’d defend my innocence to the very end” (Job 13:14-15, MSG).

III. GOD CAN BE TRUSTED

A. God Is Trustworthy

1. “In you our fathers put their trust; they trusted and you delivered them. They cried to you and were saved; in you they trusted and were not disappointed” (Psalm 22:4-5, NIV).
2. “The works of his hands are faithful and just; all his precepts are trustworthy” (Psalm 111:7, NIV).
3. “All his products are guaranteed to last—Never out-of-date, never obsolete, rust-proof” (Psalm 11:7, MSG).

B. Job Trusted

1. “Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him” (Job 13:15, KJV).
2. “Just wait, this is going to work out for the best—my salvation” (Job 13:16, MSG)!

C. The Beauty of a Clean Conscience

1. “If I were guilt-stricken do you think I’d be doing this—laying myself on the line before God” (Job 13:16, MSG)?
2. “Paul surveyed the members of the council with a steady gaze, and then said his piece: “Friends, I’ve lived with a clear conscience before God all my life, up to this very moment” (Acts 23:1, MSG).
3. “Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need” (Hebrews 4:16, NIV).
4. “I’ll take whatever I have coming to me” (Job 13:13, MSG).

CONCLUSION

1. “The man said, ‘The woman you put here with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it’” (Genesis 3:12, NIV).
2. “I rest my case” (Job 13:19, MSG).
3. “Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if *there be any* wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting” (Psalm 139:23-24, KJV).
4. “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9, NIV).