

...For He Gives His Beloved Sleep

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[0 : 00] If we can take further texts, final words of verse 2 in Psalm 127, for he gives to his beloved sleep.

How did he sleep last night? It's a common question we put to one another. Most likely we ask it between our own families, or maybe someone that is under our care.

Maybe you can say you slept like a baby, or maybe you can say that you saw every hour of the night. But how did he sleep?

And we know for sure that there's nothing longer than a long night. And although we can lose our sleep, it's a very hard thing to find it.

And certainly we never quite realise it when we do. Some people manage to survive in a few hours, some people need eight, or maybe even more.

[1 : 09] But there is nothing sure that we can say that our sleep is precious. It has a huge impact on the following day if we don't get enough. It affects our health in ways we don't see, it affects our attitudes in ways that we do, or certainly other people do.

Such as our cars need refuelling, so do our physical bodies need refuelling. We need our sleep. It's essential, it's vital for a healthy life.

And our text tells us at the end of verse 2, that sleep is given to the beloved of the Lord. Sleep is a gift for the loved of the Lord.

But it does not mean that we sleep all day. No, though this word itself tells us in Proverbs, that we are not to love sleep, lest we come to poverty.

Not in the normal sense of sleep, it is for our refreshment. It is for our strength. It is to enable us and to equip us to work, to renew our minds.

[2 : 27] But in key terms of the context given here, in our Sam, we are revived and restored under the Lord's direction and His supremacy.

And that direction and supremacy must be sanctioned in each of our lives. He must be the chief builder. He must be the captain of your watch.

He must be the principal enabler, the gracious sustainer. He must be, and maybe most dearly known unto you, that he is the prince of your peace.

The Christian knows that to be such in his heart. And will have it no other way. They can essentially sign their name to the words that are written here, unless the Lord builds the house, unless the Lord watches.

They put their name to that unless. And they can vouch that that is true and trustworthy in their lives. Unless the Lord.

[3 : 43] And that word demands one way. An only way. There is no other way besides his way.

The Christian puts their name to it because they have received special good qualities that allows them rest and sleep.

But thinking practically, there are a few things that we need to sleep. We need to feel secure. We need to be comfortable.

And usually we like it to be peaceful or quiet. If we lack our security, our comfort or our peace, we tend not to sleep very well.

And even when we have all these things, it doesn't necessarily mean that we do sleep. Sometimes we do not sleep as we like. Though we have the external requirements, and though our building is secure in the storm, though we are comfortable in our beds, and though there is no noise to be heard, we don't sleep.

[5 : 00] The comforts and peace that the Christian has in Christ doesn't necessarily mean that he doesn't find sleep.

We are not free from the worries and anxieties of life that work within our souls and within our consciences.

That's why we need the Lord as our watchman. You see the watchman in the terms here, he was a lookout for the city.

He protected what was within the city. The watchman's words would declare a peace within the city, or unrest.

The watchman could break peace with that word. If the watchman saw trouble and announced it, there would be deep unrest within the city.

[6 : 03] But if the watchman proclaims that there is no danger, there is peace within the city, he is on watch, he is the lookout for the city.

And the same goes for our souls. We must have the Lord as the captain of our watch. The Lord will reassure you with unrivaled discernment and perspective on life.

The Lord is tested and trusted by those who confess to the unless of the Lord here in our passage. Peace is promised, but every so often as it's a course of life, that there is cause to be alerted, even as a Christian, but it will be justifiably so within our hearts.

Now if there was a watchman over your life, you'd want to hear truth. You'd want to hear words of truth and clarity to your soul.

You don't want a watchman that declared false worries, nor false comforts. This is what the devil does. He's telling you that there's nothing to worry about, and he's giving you all these comforts as a distraction, away from any real concern that you should have or any real comfort you can have.

[7 : 45] The devil's distracting you from the truth. That is what he does, and he will be happy if he can do that in your life.

What he says to us is no truth, and we must come to the truth in the Word of God that will speak to our souls.

Now the watchman's voice here is in measure, comparable to the voice of our conscience that works within us.

Because if there's ever a voice that will not let you sleep, it's the voice of your conscience. And I suppose we have all been there.

We lie in bed only to recall actions we shouldn't have done, words we shouldn't have said, and like King Darius in that count we read of in Daniel, he had all his kingly comforts.

[8 : 47] He had the external requirements. He had his securities. He had his peace that he had made with man, but his conscience would not allow him a wink of sleep.

Within his soul he had no peace. He found no sleep even though he rested in his worldly comforts.

Now people have often said of each other, I don't know how he sleeps at night. And there's a strange truth to it that in the night hours our conscience almost seems to awaken.

Things that never bothered us during the daytime and things that we just worked with during the daytime, they come and revisit us during the night hours, when we want to rest.

And often our sleep is broken by a healthy conscience and a healthy discernment. King Darius' mistake was eating away within his heart.

[9 : 59] But Daniel, on the other hand, his conscience was clear. He was blameless before God as he declared, blameless before the king, blameless before man.

But he was in alliance then. There was no security, well, in a sense there was no security, no comfort, no peace for him.

But I'm confident enough to say that he would have had a better night than King Darius because he trusted in his Lord, he trusted in his God and he was blameless before God and his conscience was clear and matters before God.

And I find as a Christian, as our consciences are increasingly alert, they're more so awakened to sift outs in our hearts.

Or at least they should be. It was said that a good conscience is a soft pillow. Maybe nothing truer than that.

[11 : 13] But I would prefer to word it as a clear conscience is a soft pillow. I bet at times if you have a good conscience, it maybe felt like that pillow was a pillow of nails.

Demanding a correction to be made, demanding a confession to be declared, an apology to be said, or ourselves to exercise self-control and matter.

I would say that is a good conscience, that is awake and alert, one that identifies error in our hearts. But it must be directed and discerned by the Lord's word.

Our conscience is not our final rule. It must be directed by the word of God. It's a funny thing, our conscience.

Richard Sybs, an English Puritan, made the point and said that the conscience is somewhat divine in it. There seems to be some truth to it, because when we lay down at night, it's almost as if we have this inbuilt moral auditor that assesses us when we try and close our eyes.

[12:39] And if we have done anything wrong, that keeps pointing out the mistakes that we have made, or things that we need to be corrected, things that we need to say or apologize for, things that we need to fix.

There's something morally put in us. And in Romans 2 verse 15, it was said of the Gentiles that the law was written on their heart, and their conscience bore witness to it.

And can we say that our conscience bears witness to our lives before God? Because the following words in Romans says that God judges the secrets of men by Christ Jesus.

Imagine you're in a line. You're in just a queue sort of line, all one behind another. But it's judgment day.

And you're watching the people before you've been judged. There's a distinction being made between the one that gets judged. They go to the left, or they go to the right. And as you draw closer and closer, you hear the exchange that gets made between the judge and the one that is getting judged.

[14:00] And you hear someone say, yes, I listen to church every week. I donated my thousands to your cause. But he has taken to heaven.

The next comes and he says, Lord, Lord, I did mighty works in your name. But they are likewise cast. Depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.

Matthew 7. And as you get closer, you may be asking to yourself, who then can be saved?

And what is your conscience saying to you? As you think on your own life, the next man is called, one that has been known unto you, has been untrustworthy.

This man was never held in high regard by anyone. Clearly, you knew that he had lived a quiet life. And he was not as he was.

[15:07] He speaks no words, but he stands before his judge and tear. And he can only point his hand to Jesus.

There's nothing else he can do. His eyes are focused on Jesus and his hands are out for Jesus. And the judge says that you have believed with your heart and you are justified. He says to him, I know your heart. And although it was a scarlet, I have washed it white as snow.

Enter now your rest. And he has taken to heaven. And we could go on and we could paint pictures of every person that is in this line being judged.

And what we'll find is that it is not of what we do or what men think of us or how we perceive men to be.

[16:11] It's a matter of our heart. It's what within our hearts that matters. The Lord knows our hearts.

Does our heart and conscience align with God's words? How is our heart? Think of yourselves before God.

And believe it or not, we are already lined up in this queue. People are passing before us. And we don't know the heart of any man.

But there are some that we can certainly see of. Because of their fruits, that they have fallen asleep in Christ Jesus.

They are the ones who have given up building their own house. They have given up watching over their own lives. They have let the Lord watch, they have let the Lord build.

[17:14] They have given up the vanities of work and toil and waited on the Lord. They can say that they have not lacked any provision.

And in Him, under His banner, they are secure in His dwelling. My soul has rest, my sleep is sweet. And they are known to the mortal as having fallen asleep in Jesus. What a comfort. And is that not a soft pillow for the believer?

And those that are left, knowing that the believer has gone to rest with Jesus. Will you sleep easy tonight?

A judgment will be passed on each of us. The secrets of our hearts. Will there be a divine voice convicting you when you close your eyes tonight?

[18 : 12] It's a matter of our hearts. Are we led by the word of God, corrected and reassured? Do we cleave to and less the Lord?

Is that words for our life? Unless the Lord. Is our heart desiring that builder and watchman to lead me every hour of the day?

And do I give him time? Or do I toil every hour of the day? It's easily that we can fall in line with worldly ways as Christians.

We can fall in line in consumed with work. And we can lack in our devotion, lack in our prayer, lack in our obedience, and lack in our couch in our daily lives.

And sometimes our hearts ache because of it. Are our consciences clear before God? Are we like Daniel and say that I am blameless?

[19 : 22] Daniel devoted himself to God. It's not before anyone else. It's not before me or the minister or the elders, but it's before God.

God knows at heart. And in a sense the phrase rings through, I would if I could, but I can't. I can't live in perfection.

But Jesus wills and wants you and can. Jesus promises to give you peace.

Jesus will wash you clean. Jesus will cleanse you and cleanse your conscience before God.

And that you can say that I have rested in Jesus and I will be blameless before God. But we are not free from the devil.

[20 : 21] He will stir our conscience to listen to the sins of our hearts. He will remind us of the sins that dwell in us.

But we must lean upon Jesus. That He will build us and be our watchman. That our hearts would not be troubled.

Neither let them be afraid because He is the giver of peace in John 14. We must sign our name to unless the Lord.

We must give Him all the glory and we must have a devotion to Him. A clear conscience is a man's peace.

A peaceful man is content and a content man has enjoyment. And your heart will confirm that man's defend is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever.

[21 : 24] And the forever will be promised. The forever will be realised as a treasure in your heart and a promise to you.

Preparation is a vital element in the class of contentment. Especially when there is a crisis approaching. And the gospel is the ultimate preparation for the final crisis you shall face.

Daniel was content in the crisis that was put before him. But Darius was convicted in the comforts that he had provided.

Daniel lent on the Lord fully and completely. Our sleep revives us.

Our sleep restores us. There are many unknown benefits to that. And the Christian has that restoration and revival in Christ.

[22 : 31] Christian must be mindful that he can so often be left eating the anxious bread of his toil. If we are caught up in worldly ways.

But we must spend time with Christ. We must spend time in private prayer and devotion with Him. As our bodies is renewed in sleep, Jesus will renew us in our spirits.

The man who lacks sleep is slower in action and in thought. He lacks energy, though he can keep working.

He is not efficient or as effective as he can be. The man who lacks sleep is more liable to make a mistake.

You've all had a good night's sleep once, I'm sure. And you've woken up and said, I am refreshed from that sleep. That was a good sleep.

[23 : 36] Maybe you went to bed feeling horrible or you had a sore head and you woke up one day. You just woke up the next day and said, I needed that sleep. That has done wonders for me, that sleep.

That has revived life for me and revived me. That's what the Christian should have in Christ. In reading the prayer and meditation.

We will read upon His Word, we will pray to Him and meditate upon His workings in our lives. It almost reminds me of leaving the Communion.

And after a weekend of being under God's Word, you feel revived as a Christian. You feel like you're going to live a new life and you're going to devote yourself and you to God.

And you're renewed. But the worldly ways get into your life and distract you. And you get tired, life is tiring.

[24 : 45] And that's what we need. We need to come back. We need to have that place of private devotion with our Lord. And He will revive us.

He will refresh us so that we can understand the times as we should. We can understand the Lord's voice clearly.

That we would maybe be effective in our Christian lives. And so that we do not make mistakes. Time with Christ is vital in Christian life.

As sleep is for physical life. Time with Christ is precious to the Christian.

As it is for the Christian, so it is for the church as a whole. That, some might say, the church feels tired.

[25 : 49] I'm not saying it should sleep at the front. But likewise needs to rely on the words of unless the Lord. It needs to be restored and revived in fellowship with Christ.

In seeking God's word as the guide, as the builder, as the watchman for the church. Because we are not immune as a church from being consumed in works and weighing ourselves down.

We can make good impressions and we can make good plans of our own. But are they God's plans? Are they the building bricks that God puts before us?

And are we allowing Him to build our church? The heart of the church needs refreshed by the Lord continually.

A strengthening, continuing. So that it is a discernment, correct discernment and understanding of the times. And it does not make mistakes.

[27 : 00] And I'm not saying every night as a Christian you will sleep well. What I'm saying is you will be revived and restored in your Christian life.

As sleepers for the human body, a revitalization and a restoration, we must rest in Christ.

So as you lay your head down tonight, how will you sleep? Are you trusting in the Lord as your builder?

Are you trusting in the Lord as your watchman? Will you sleep peacefully knowing your security in Jesus Christ?

Have you signed your name to enlist the Lord for your life? There is none besides the Lord who will lead you and build your life and watch over your life.

[28 : 03] I pray that you can sign your name to that and know that that is a true and trustworthy saying. And if you do, you will sleep peacefully.

The Lord Jesus Christ will satisfy you. And that will give you a most reassured rest. He tells you, you are His beloved, if you only trust in Him as your Lord.

Sleep on that thought. Jesus loves you and through it you will be satisfied. No matter what the world throws at you, supposing we are in the den of lions, that we would rest in Jesus and that we would have the peace as Daniel did to say that we are blimless before the Lord in Christ Jesus, that we would trust Christ Jesus in our lives, that with our heart we would not just confess but cleave wholly and completely to Him and that He will say to us, your faith has safety.

Go in peace. These thoughts be blessed to us. And may we know the Lord as the only guide in our lives, the only builder, the only watchman that will keep us, collect us, revive us and restore us as we go on.

And He will take us home to be with Himself. Amen. If we can sing now in Psalm 127.

[30 : 04] Psalm 127 in the Scottish Sopter. We'll listen to the singing of these words. It is the whole Psalm we'll sing.

Accept the Lord to build a house, to build us, to lose their pain, accept the Lord the city keep, the watchman watching rain, to slay that you rise, be times, or late for rest to keep, to feed on sorrow's bread so gives He His beloved sleep.

Though children are God's heritage, the womb fruit His reward, the sons of youth as arrows are for strong men's hands prepared.

O happy is the man that hath his quiver filled with those, the unashamed in the gate shall speak unto their foes. We'll listen to these words of God's praise being sung for us.

We'll sing along in our hearts and may we know these words to be true to us. Accept the Lord to build a house, to build a house, to lose their pain, accept the Lord the city keep, the watchman watching rain, to slay that you rise, be times, or late for rest to keep, to feed on sorrow's bread so gives He His beloved sleep.

[32 : 19] Though children are God's heritage, the womb fruit His reward, the sons of youth as arrows are for strong men's hands prepared.

O happy is the man that hath his quiver filled with those, the unashamed in the gate shall speak unto their foes.

We'll conclude with a word of prayer. Our heavenly Father, revive us, restore us. Renew our hearts this day we pray, may we come to you in the quietness of our own hearts and our own souls, admitting that we have done wrong before you and require our sins to be washed clean in the blood of Jesus.

You know our hearts. The way we act in our lives may not perceive the truth of our hearts. You know our hearts and may we lay our hearts fully upon you as our rest, as our own less the Lord. There is none besides you, there is none other whom we can go to, and in you we will have rest, we will have comfort, and because you have loved us, you will give us sleep, a sleep that will echo us a day that will come for the Christian, of eternal rest, of glory, and of his power. A day that will be no more toil, no more anxieties, no more worries that will keep us from sleep, and we will be set free from these things, and in Christ Jesus we shall be free.

[35 : 07] So let us dwell on these thoughts and meditate on. In the night hour, as we lay our hearts, as we lay our bodies down for physical rest, may we be rested in Christ Jesus also, and that you would revive us and restore us.

Be with us as we part, keep us in health and strength we pray, and all these things we ask in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior and our Lord.

Thank you for being with us here today and we ask that you remain seated until you are directed to leave. Thank you.