

Purposelessness

2 Samuel 6:16, 20–23

Enter into the Lord's presence with joy and gratitude.

Are you beginning to see patterns of sloth or pride in your life?

You are in Jerusalem awaiting the ark. Up until this week, we have seen a David who was very deliberate and patient. But, he gets a little too excited and opts for a quicker plan than God's. This leads to a catastrophe.

Pray that the Lord draws you out of sloth to embrace the kingly mission he has given you. Pray for the grace of freedom and humility for all Exodus Men, just as they are praying for you.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Lord and Master of my life, spare me from the spirit of indifference, despair, lust for power, and idle chatter. Instead, bestow on me, your servant, the spirit of integrity, humility, patience, and love. Yes, O Lord and King, let me see my own sins and not judge my brothers and sisters; for you are blessed forever and ever. Amen.

A Reading from the Second Book of Samuel

As the ark of the Lord came into the city of David, Michal the daughter of Saul looked out of the window, and saw King David leaping and dancing before the Lord; and she despised him in her heart. And David returned to bless his household. But Michal the daughter of Saul came out to meet David, and said, "How the king of Israel honored himself today, uncovering himself today before the eyes of his servants' maids, as one of the vulgar fellows shamelessly uncovers himself!" And David said to Michal, "It was before the Lord, who chose me above your father, and above all his house, to appoint me as prince over Israel, the people of the Lord—and I will make merry before the Lord. I will make myself yet more contemptible than this, and I will be abased in your eyes; but by the maids of whom you have spoken, by them I shall be held in honor." And Michal the daughter of Saul had no child to the day of her death.

Reflection

There is much to unpack here. First, Michal is described as the "daughter of Saul," not the "wife of David" because, quite clearly, she is exhibiting the behavior of her father rather than her husband in disdaining the ark of the Lord. Second, we could note that the tension between Michal and David has not been resolved, and David seems to be faltering in his duty to evangelize his household. Third, we could note the punishment for disregarding the ark is that the household of Saul is cut off. Michal will not have a child.

Consider how David's palace is becoming filled with sloth and discontent. Michal sees David from her palace perch, dancing before the ark (quite like David will see Bathsheba bathing from his window). We get the sense that

she is rather bored and resentful of all the joy the people below are having—especially her husband. She has perhaps lost her purpose after having to leave behind her beloved Paltiel. Because her needs are not being met, and because she does not have what she wants, she refuses to honor God and support her husband. She exhibits that distaste for spiritual things so characteristic of sloth. All she can do is criticize and complain. She tries to make David feel the pain she feels by coldly mocking his enthusiasm for the Lord. “Look at you,” she says to David, “you weak, pathetic peasant embarrassing himself before this God. You are not a real king like my father.”

People who struggle with sloth have lost their identity or purpose and, consequently, are incredibly critical and irritable. They feel such profound discontent, boredom, and purposelessness that they can only feel threatened by others who do have passion and purpose. They want nothing more than to show others what they perceive to be the meaninglessness and absurdity of their joy.

Do you find yourself lacking a purpose, such that you chafe at those who have one? Do you struggle with purpose if your career has not turned out the way you expected? Are you constantly complaining? Would the mood of your home be described as cheerful or joyless? Talk about these things with the Lord today.

Now place yourself before God, and converse with him.

Week 4 Action Items

Plan a Midsummer's Eve Bonfire for Friday and invite men into your fraternity.

Recommit to your daily prayer.

Evaluate your technology use.