

"I heard an unknown voice say, "Now I will take the load from your shoulders; I will free your hands from their heavy tasks. You cried to me in trouble, and I saved you; I answered out of the thundercloud and tested your faith when there was no water at Meribah. Psalms 81:5-7"

lectio // Psalm 81

Asaph is writing this Psalm and it begins with celebrations and shouts to God, saying "he is deserving. Then this voice comes and says something every burdened leader wants to hear. Every person under pressure with circumstances that were not of their making. The voice says, "I will take your load from your shoulders." It almost makes me cry. Just for someone to recognize the extreme stress of carrying others is freeing. For someone to "lighten your load" just makes you feel so much better. The hard part is that God was saying, I'll take your load Asaph, David, Leaders of Israel, but the reason is... the people aren't listening anyways! Oh, that's sad. It almost makes you want to take back the load because God is going to be handing out some discipline shortly. God says, "But no, my people wouldn't listen. Israel did not want me around. So I let them follow their own stubborn desires, living according to their own ideas." You try to do right, try to lead the best you know how, but there is a hard fact - people may not follow, they may just want to do their own thing. Does that mean we don't try to lead - NO! Does that mean God doesn't "take our load" - NO. Maybe it means that we singularly answer to God, do our very best and let God do what he has to do. Maybe it comes down to a nasty leadership flaw in one word - CONTROL. How do we lead without controlling? How do we submissively lead under the Lordship of Christ and NOT cross over the line of control vs. serve? It is not easy. I realize how little I actually control. My main concern is not the immediate actions or reactions of others, but is my own ATTITUDE while leading.

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pray as responding to the words, phrase, sentence that God has stirred within you

Dad,

Being in the body of Christ and being responsible to my calling and my gifting to lead is SO difficult because it is SO SLOW and requires so much effort and patience on the front end. Inviting and wooing people to come along feels so exhausting compared to pushing and demanding that people follow. No wonder so many Pastors flip to command-n-conquer tactics, it feels so SUCCESSFUL. I feel the stress of seeing where we need to go, but also feeling the weight of waiting for people to catch on and desire to move forward. Help me to keep my attitude renewed and my eyes focused on you.

contemplatio

rest in the presence of God, allowing the words revealed to take root