

Practicing Selah: The Power of Pausing to Find Intimacy and Peace with God

Discussion Questions:

1. Where am I seeking security?
2. Where am I finding encouragement?
3. What is calling me to “level up”?
4. Where am I feeling a sense of awe?
5. What is bringing harmony to my life?

Summary

In our fast-paced world, we rarely give ourselves permission to call a timeout, pause, and ask: *“God, what are you saying to me? Where are you working in my life right now? What do you want to show me?”*

In the Scriptures, particularly throughout the Psalms, we encounter the word **Selah** (S-E-L-A-H). While it functions as a musical notation, it carries a deep spiritual invitation. Selah is an invitation to pause, wait, stop, and think about what you have just read or experienced. Rather than blowing past God's truth, Selah allows it to air out, soak in, and deeply penetrate our hearts.

Be Still and Know

To enter into a practice of Selah, we need a grounding anchor. Consider **Psalms 46:10**: *“Be still, and know that I am God.”*

Scripture tells us, *“Your word have I hidden in my heart that I might not sin against you.”* In those critical “crunch times”—when life hits hard and you desperately need something from Jesus—it is the truth you have actually hidden in your heart that He will call back up. Taking time to quietly repeat, internalize, and pray Psalm 46:10 allows you to reset your focus and quiet the noise around you.

Five Reflective Questions for Your Spiritual Pause

To build a personal strategy for reflection, consider using these five questions as a guide during your quiet moments to help locate where you are on the map:

- **Where am I seeking security?** What am I relying on for hope and help in this present moment?
- **Where am I finding encouragement?** When I hit a low point, where do I turn to be built back up? (Whether through uplifting music, podcasts, faithful teaching, or key people in my life).
- **Who is calling me to level up?** Who comes alongside me to spur me on toward love and good works? We need a trusted team—spouses, mentors, friends—who call out the best in us when we are down.
- **Where do I find awe?** What causes me to step back, catch my breath, and say, *"Oh my God"* in a holy, reverent way? Whether it's a sunrise, sunset, the ocean, or the mountains, if you don't answer this question holy-wise, the enemy will offer unholy substitutes that lead to despair.
- **What brings harmony to my life?** In a world full of disharmony pulling you in a million directions, what reintegrates your soul and brings the broken pieces back together?

Planting Selah, Harvesting Shalom

Selah is a spiritual practice of reflection that ultimately leads to an intimate relationship with Jesus. Too many believers settle for a baseline faith—praying a prayer, waiting for heaven, and trying to tough it out in the meantime.

Jesus calls us into something far richer: to be His **intimate ally**. As the classic hymn says, *"And He walks with me, and He talks with me, and He tells me I am His own."*

When you plant the seeds of **Selah** in your daily life, the fruit that grows on the end of that branch is **Shalom**—the deep, complete peace, wholeness, wellness, and presence of God. While the enemy seeks to steal, kill, and destroy, Jesus promises life to the full right now.

Recognizing the Absence of Selah

Is cultivating Selah an absolute requirement? Perhaps not strictly, but its absence is instantly recognizable in our daily lives. When we neglect to pause and reflect, we begin to experience a distinct set of symptoms:

- **Scattered:** Your mind is pulled in a hundred directions, unable to focus or align.

- **Exhausted:** You feel drained physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually.
- **Leery:** You become suspicious, side-eyeing people's motives and feeling off-balance.
- **Anxious:** A constant sense of worry and unease settles over your day.
- **Hurried:** You feel pushed, rushed, and perpetually half a beat behind.

If these traits describe your current state, taking a timeout to practice Selah can serve as a life-saving reset to draw you back into peace.

Selah in Practice: A Lesson from Luke 17

In **Luke 17:11–14**, we see a vivid example of desperation turning into an encounter with grace.

Jesus was traveling toward Jerusalem along the borderland between Samaria and Galilee—the literal border between "us" and "them." As He entered a village, ten men with leprosy met Him.

In biblical times, leprosy was a visible, isolating skin ailment that forced sufferers out of their homes and communities. It serves as a striking picture of secret sin: something people try to hide for as long as possible until it develops deep roots and eventually causes total isolation.

These ten men stood at a distance, as required by law, but instead of calling out "Unclean!", they cried out in a loud voice:

"Jesus, Master, have pity on us!"

They were asking for Jesus to show mercy—seeking God's *chesed*, His loyal, covenant love that extends kindness even when we feel undeserving. Moved with compassion, Jesus looked at them and gave a simple command: **"Go and show yourselves to the priest."**

Under the Levitical law, a priest was the only one who could officially verify a healing and readmit a person into the community. By instructing them to go before they even saw the healing manifest, Jesus called them to step out in faith, turn their focus toward Him, and step into the restoration He was providing.