



## Sow Your Seed

*"Sow your seed in the morning, and at evening let not your hands be idle."*

(Ecclesiastes 11:6)

Assembled before Solomon was a mix of Israel's population: farmers, artisans, homemakers, builders, students. All had one thing in common: in their largely agricultural society, all knew about sowing seed. No planting meant no harvest, no harvest meant no supper. The principle was true not just for the field and garden, but true for every vocation: You had to take initiative in your work, or else you could never get ahead.

Why did Solomon tell his hearers the obvious? Solomon's hearers lived outside of Paradise, and battled life's brokenness. That battle tires us all. No matter how hard we try, we can't get things perfect, can't fix life's brokenness, can't remove the ache of failure. The easy answer to this frustration is to give up, to which Solomon says: 'Don't get passive, or give up! First thing in the morning, sow your seed, and even into the evening keep at it!'

Solomon worked with the Bible he'd inherited from his parents, including the revelation of God in the first chapters of Genesis. From Genesis 1:26 he learned that God intended people to rule over all he had made. From Genesis 2:15 he learned that God put Adam in the Garden with the instruction to *"work it and take care of it."* The cows of the Garden could lie down and chew their cud, but Adam was not to lie down beside them. He was to work, to rule over God's handiwork. David caught the privilege of the position when he said that man had a place *"a little lower than God"* (Ps 8:5, NASB). On a scale of one to ten, with God at ten, man was a nine!

Adam's rebellion ruined so much. God could rightly have revoked the kingly mandate he'd given, and consigned humanity to live like cows: graze, loll in the sun, chew the cud – mindless, thoughtless, passive, like Nebuchadnezzar (Dan 4:25). But God didn't do that because he intended people to be kings, not cows. So God set about working redemption through the Seed of the woman. And while he completed that redemption, people were to act like kings, to respect the office with which God endowed them.

Hence Solomon's inspired instruction: In the morning get out of bed, get to your land, and sow your seed. In other words, we are to plan ahead, make decisions, initiate projects, get things done – whether you're a farmer or a businessman or a homemaker or a labourer or an office bearer or a teacher. You're a king, with the world under your feet: Act that way!

It's hard work in a fallen world. The weeds in the fields you want to sow make sowing seem a waste of effort. The weeds in your business environment make a good decision hard to make. Why bother sowing seed, taking initiative, or deciding on a new project if the weeds will overtake it anyway?

Through Solomon the Spirit insists that kings-under-God be at it, right in the weeds of life. So Jesus Christ made it his business to rule, to sow his seed in the morning, and at evening to stay on task. He stilled storms, cast out demons, healed the sick, raised the dead, and did much more. As he did, the Enemy sowed his devilish seed so that weeds of resistance and unbelief threatened to choke Jesus' initiatives. The people among whom he labored cried out to crucify him, and the result was that the master Sower was suspended on the cursed cross under the hellish sign: *"This is Jesus, King."* Surely he sowed his seed in vain...

But in the evening he was himself sown into the earth, a seed promising new life. On the third day he sprouted to renewed life, ascended to be King of kings, then poured out his Holy Spirit so that those for whom he died might be made alive, renewed and equipped to be kings with Christ. The blessed result is that we're made able to rule again, rule over self and rule over all God has entrusted to our care.

So in the strength of the Spirit, we get at it in the morning, ruling over God's world to his glory, smack in the middle of the brokenness of personal, communal, and national life. In the confidence that Christ is King, we sow what seed he gives in business, in family, in education, and even in government. Kings under Christ – what a privilege! God forbid that we act like cows, just chewing our cud. Kings we are, eager to be at it!

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