



water from rock

Selah: Stop, Look, Listen- September 20, 2022

The Lord Be With You.

Do you have an "I don't understand" file? What I mean is, do you have a place where you file the things that happen in your life that you just do not understand?

Now, your I don't understand file, it might contain trying to understand the loss of a loved one. It might contain trying to understand the struggles that you're going through and try as you may, you just don't understand. Hey, I don't understand. Now I ask you about this because as I'm looking at my I don't understand file, it just seems to be getting bigger and bigger. Things that I just don't understand. Things from which I would need the mind of God to understand.

Now, I learned about having an I don't understand file. I've learned that from a great man. I learned it from King David, the Psalmist. I learned it as David is writing what is his shortest psalm, Psalm 131. It's been said that this song is the shortest to read, but the longest to learn, as this Psalm is just 33 words long in the original Hebrew. It is small, but it is so big in meaning for you and me today, as it is a psalm about growing up in our faith. A psalm about coming to maturity.

Now, I imagine David praying this Psalm in some wilderness cave, or praying it as he's on the run from King Saul. Here it is, it's short. Psalm 131: "Oh Lord, my heart is not lifted up, my eyes are not raised too high, I do not occupy myself with things too great and too marvelous for me, but I have calmed and quieted my soul like a weaned child with its mother."

Notice in this song that David is painting for us, a picture of weaning a baby. Now, I remember bringing our first son home from the hospital and a neighbor jokingly asked me, How's the little boss? Well, I didn't understand at the time what he meant by asking about the little boss, but soon I came to understand as when we bring a baby home from the hospital, the baby takes naturally to being the center of the universe. Feed me, hold me, rock me. Give me what I want, when I want, and if you don't, I'll let you know. I mean, the baby looks to mom for breakfast, for lunch, for dinner, for midnight snack, the baby becomes conditioned to thing that mom should be there whenever he calls. And you know they tell us that in those first days and weeks that a baby actually thinks that mom is just an extension of himself. And then the battle comes, the mother of all battle comes. As it is time for the baby to be weaned. And let me tell you, this is not a happy time for the baby for mom or for anyone else in the house.

Where's mom? Doesn't she Hear me crying? Doesn't you hear me screaming? Why doesn't Mom give me what I want when I want it? This is a picture that David is painting in Psalm 131, as he's



water from rock

talking about the difficult process of being weaned. And then the happy day comes. The tears, the whining stops, the demanding stops, as the baby is just happy to be with mom, to be held by mom.

Now you see what David is saying here. David sees himself as going through this painful process of being weaned of getting what he wants and coming to rest, to come to being happy, just to be with God, to be close to God. Listen to David again as he puts it all in his I don't understand file.

Oh Lord, my heart is not lifted up. My eyes are not raised too high, I do not occupy myself with things to great and too marvelous for me, but I have calmed and quieted my soul like a weaned child with its mother.

I think this is the beautiful thing in the life of David.

One of the things I think that makes him a man after God's own heart. It is his acceptance of things he does not understand, things that are too great and too marvelous for him. This acceptance that God is God and he isn't. So that he is happy just to be with God, even in the things he does not understand.

There's a prayer garden in our home where my wife read and I like to go and pray, and the place where we most like to spend time in that prayer garden is in the garden of Gethsemane. There was a statue there of Jesus as He was praying. And we like to make the words that are on that statue, we like to make those words our words. Father, I don't understand you, but I trust you. Father, I put all that stuff that I don't understand into your hands, and I trust you. I let it all go. I rest in you. And in that moment, we become like a weaned child, as we let go to God our demanding, we let go to God our plans and in that moment, we discover that it is enough to be with God.

Now, I like what David does next in this short psalm. He turns his thoughts from himself to all of God's people, as he ends a psalm wanting to encourage you and me, he writes, "O Israel, hope in the Lord from this time on and for ever more." So today, I turn from the things in my own life that I do not understand. I leave them with God, and I say to you, hope in the Lord. Whatever it is that you're going through, hope in the Lord. Let him draw you close. Lord, wrap your tender arms around us in these difficult confusing times. Times of things we just don't understand, as we put our hope in you.

I am Tim Smith, a fellow traveler. Thank you for listening. Until next time.