

Selah: Stop, Look, Listen – May 14, 2020

The lord be with you.

Do you have an I don't understand file? What I mean is do you have that place in your mind where you file things you do not understand? Things like, why doesn't God do something about this pandemic?

Why did I get laid off from work or why did my son died from cancer?

Actually, I have a growing I don't understand file. Things that I've learned to, well, to leave with God as I've come to realize that God is working on a much higher level than I am and there are questions that I would actually need the mind of God to understand the answer.

I learned about having an I don't understand file from the psalmist, David, in Psalm 131, it has been said of the Psalm that it is one of the shortest psalms to read, but one of the longest to learn and it is a short Psalm, it is a mere 33 words in the original Hebrew, but it is so big in its impact.

It is a psalm about quieting ourselves, about coming to rest, about leaving with God those things that don't go our way, about leaving with God when his plans, well, they don't mesh with my plans.

It is a psalm about growing up in the faith. I imagine David praying this psalm in some wilderness cave or praying it as he's watching his sheep out under the stars. Here's Psalm 131, O Lord. My heart does 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, my soul is like the weaned child that is with me. Oh, Israel hope in the Lord from this time on, and forever more.

Notice in this Psalm how David is painting a picture of weaning a baby. I remember when we brought our first son home from the hospital and a neighbor jokingly asked me How's the little boss? Well, I did not know at the moment what he meant by asking about the little boss, but I quickly learned that when a baby is born into the world, he or she takes quite naturally to being well to being the center of the universe. Feed me, hold me, give me what I want and if you don't, I'll let you know about it. And so baby looks to mom for breakfast, for lunch, or dinner for midnight stacks a baby is conditioned that mom should be there whenever he wants or mom should answer whenever he calls. Baby thinks mom is just an extension of himself and then comes the battle.

It is the mother of all battles. As the time comes when the child needs to be weaned. This is not a happy time for the baby, for mom for anyone and everyone who was in the house. Where is mom why doesn't mom hear me screaming, what doesn't mom give me what I want?

That's the picture David is painting in this psalm. It is a baby in the process of being

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weaned.

And then one day, one happy day, the tears stop, the whining stops, the demanding stops and the baby is happy just to be with mom, the baby is happy to be held by mom on her lap.

You get what David is saying here, David sees himself as having gone through life's painful process of being weaned. And then coming to rest, happy just to be with God. It's there in verse 2. But I had calmed and quieted my soul like a weaned child with its mother...

David is saying that through all of life's experience it is a now enough for him simply to be with God.

So then David says, I do not occupy myself with things too great, and too marvelous for me. David says he is no longer occupied he is no longer cut by those things he does not understand or could not understand. David says, he calms and quits his soul. That is a beautiful thing and David submission to God, his acceptance of God's plan for his life is a hallmark of David's life.

Then notice what David does in the next verse. In verse 3, David turns from his experience of being weaned and growing in faith, He turns now to talk to all of God's people. Oh, Israel, hope in the Lord from this time on and forever more.

Are you noticing how many times the word hope keeps coming up in Scripture as we are people of hope. Lord, there are many things that have happened that I do not understand, but I hope in you. There's a prayer garden here near our home that my wife and I often go to and we usually spend quite a lot of time by statue of our Lord Jesus Christ, as he's praying in the garden of Gessimini and the words below the stature we often make our prayer.

Father, I don't understand you, but I trust you.

And in that moment of prayer like a weaned child, we are letting go to God are demanding about the way things are supposed to be. We let go, wanting our plans to override God's plans and in that moment we discover that it is enough to be with God. I like to do this in praying, palms down palms up. With palms down, I let go all that I don't understand into God's hands and with palms up, I receive the goodness of God.

Hear David's words again to you today. Oh Lord, my heart is not lifted up my eyes are not raised too high. I do not occupy myself with things too great into marvelous for me, but I have calmed and quieted my soul like a weaned child with its mother, my soul was like the weaned child that is with me. Oh, Israel hope in the Lord from this time forth and from foreverever more.

I'm Tim Smith, a fellow traveler on the pilgrim way. Thanks for listening, until next time...

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