

Psalm 131

This short Psalm of Ascent was probably written by David in his younger days, before he came to the throne; while he was in Saul's court, or persecuted by him.

Psalm 131:1 - "LORD, my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty: neither do I exercise myself in great matters, or in things too high for me."

Rashi - "my heart was not haughty" - Behold I am with You like one who has no hands or feet, like an incomplete form lying before You.

Some see this as David's response to an accusation of pride and ambition - perhaps by Saul or his entourage.

NET - "I do not have great aspirations, or concern myself with things that are beyond me."

- **Romans 12:3** - "For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith."

Like Satan, the prideful "rise above the cloud" into arenas they know nothing about.

- **Isaiah 14:13-15** - "For thou hast said in thine heart, 'I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High.' Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit."

Jesus rebuked Satan when tempted to sidestep His mission of suffering:

- **Matthew 4:8-10** - "Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve."

Psalm 131:2 - "Surely I have behaved and quieted myself, as a child that is weaned of his mother: my soul is even as a weaned child ...as one weaned on the breasts of its mother, I am strengthened in the law."

The Targum puts it in the form of a vow: "if I have not put the hand to the mouth, and caused my soul to be silent, until it heard the words of the law ["then let God strike me down," or something similar is implied]"

"as a weaned child" - newly weaned, innocent and humble, with no ambitions

Childhood is associated with innocence and guileless dependence:

- **Matthew 18:3** - "And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."

This is the same metaphor as comparing the milk of the word vs. strong meat (**1 Corinthians 3:2, 1 Corinthians 14:20, Hebrews 5:12-13**), but with a different viewpoint.

- **1 Peter 2:2** - "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby"

The "milk of the word" comes to us through the experience and voice of someone else - a teacher. But a time comes when we need to "eat" the word for ourselves as solid food.

- **Isaiah 28:9** - "Who is it He is trying to teach? To whom is He explaining His message? To infants just weaned from milk? To babies removed from the breast?"

This verse is actually an admonition that they SHOULD be understanding His teachings, but they don't.

Hebrew children were often not weaned till three years old. A child while it is in the process of being weaned off the breast of its mother throws fits, cries and protests. But once it is weaned, its soul is quiet, is satisfied with solid food and takes it gladly.

[But Rashi and some other rabbis saw this differently, as describing the still "suckling child" quieted on his mother's breast. The Septuagint also renders this differently, reflecting a child in the process of weaning: "Had I not been humble, but exalted myself as a weaned child doth against its mother, how wouldst thou have retributed against my soul!"]

Psalm 132:3 - "Let Israel hope in the LORD from henceforth and for ever."

In the state of humility described in this psalm, we don't take action to force God's promises to fulfillment. How can we, if, as Rashi says, we are like "one who has no hands or feet"?

Instead, we wait with patience and hope in the Lord.