

# Psalm 131 - The Blessing of Not Knowing

*[Open with a prayer on suffering... How come God allows some of what he allows? It creates a crisis of faith for some people.]*

**Intro:** *[Talking with lady from Christie Street Baptist in her 70's... not able to understand her own life.] There's a lot of stuff in life that is very confusing... when your life is topsy turvy, and you're just wondering about things, this is the Psalm; in times of anxiety, it's been a go-to for me.*

*This is a Psalm of **Simple Trust** in God. It's 3 verses. It makes sense that it's 3 verses for a psalm on simple trust. For a Psalm on simple trust to be 63 verses would be too much.*

**It's a Psalm that reminds us of how little we know... and that's ok.**

**Question:** *Did your life turn out the way you thought it would?*

We do plan, but our plans don't have the last say on what lasts in our life. The humility to accept this is freeing.

*"A man's steps are from the LORD; how then can man understand his way?" - Pro 20:24*  
We can't even fully understand our lives. Again, the humility to accept this is freeing.

**It's a Psalm that reminds us that we are not going to find the clue to our lives that solves the whole puzzle of our past.**

We are always trying to figure our lives out... sometimes we are detectives looking for that one clue that will make it all make sense... and it just doesn't come.

**IT'S A PSALM THAT REMINDS US THAT BEING PERPLEXED,  
IS A NORMAL PART OF RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE.**

**The Lord often keeps much information from us.**

*Deut 29:29 - "The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things that are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law."*

**THIS IS A PSALM OF OUR PILGRIMAGE**

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*A song of ascents.* This would be a pilgrim song they would sing on their way to the temple in Jerusalem to celebrate the major feasts. Perhaps a little hymnbook among the ancient Hebrews. (*Psalms 120-134*) - *It is a Psalm that Jesus would have likely sung on his way up to Jerusalem.*

*We in the NT are not on our pilgrimage to Jerusalem are we? But we are on pilgrimage to Mount Zion, the heavenly Jerusalem.*

*The lesson of this Psalm...well... no one comes into the world like this. The Psalmist is not automatically in the place this, nor are you or I.*

## **Manna: There's a blessing in not knowing.**

### **Exposition:**

**v1 - A HUMILITY BEFORE GOD**

**v2 - A HUSH BEFORE GOD**

**v3 - A HOPE IN GOD**

### **Background:**

We don't actually know what the Psalmist's experience was. It's David who wrote it.

*Think about the life of David, what it may have been...?*

PERHAPS IT'S CHRONICLING THE PERPLEXING SUFFERINGS OF DAVID  
"HOW IS IT THAT I'M ANOINTED KING AND YET ANOTHER KING IS ON  
THE THRONE?"

"HOW IS IT THAT GOD CHOSE ME AND YET I CAN'T FELLOWSHIP AMONG  
MY OWN PEOPLE; I'M PERSECUTED, AND DWELL AMONG THE  
PHILISTINES..." **THAT IS PERPLEXING.**

DAVID might well have had perplexity of the sufferings that he had suffered.

Certainly his sufferings with Saul were absurd.

**Absurd suffering is one of the most difficult things in life. Let's be honest.  
That is one of the most difficult things in life if you take the time to think on  
it.**

Why do we have two kings here? We have one king too many.

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Why did God anoint me King without removing Saul, while having two kings?  
That's kind of perplexing.

He's suffering under Saul...

Then suffer under Saul 7 years...

Then he has to be hounded 7 years.

Surely he had such matters in his mind. - Waltke

*[Credit to Sinclair Ferguson for significant parts.]*

## vs 1 - A Humility before God

*"O LORD, my heart is not lifted up; my eyes are not raised too high."*

### **1. He guarded the ambitions of his heart.**

He no longer assumes he knows what is best for himself.

David's now concerned that his heart should be set only on what pleases God, and on the purposes which God has for him.

## LIFE OF DAVID

**We know of two occasions in David's life when his God-given ambition to be King was put to the test by opportunities to fulfil it before God's time.**

1) Saul pursued David in the Desert of **En Gedi** and was searching for him in the area known as the Crag of the Wild Goats. The king made a 'comfort stop' and actually entered the very cave where David and his men were in hiding (see 1 Sam 24).

David's men said, Now is the time! Saul could be eliminated.

David saw there was something more important than fulfilling his ambitions... obedience to God's Word, and obedience to the moral will of God. *Saul, despite his sin, was still the Lord's anointed.*

2) A Similar opportunity arose later when David and Abishai crept into Saul's tent under cover of darkness and found Saul asleep.

"God has given your enemy into your hand this day. Now please let me pin him to the earth with one stroke of the spear, and I will not strike him twice' (1 Sam 26:8).

Again David refused;

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*“But David said to Abishai, ‘Do not destroy him, for who can put out his hand against the LORD’s anointed and be guiltless?’ And David said, ‘As the LORD lives, the LORD will strike him, or his day will come to die, or he will go down into battle and perish. The LORD forbid that I should put out my hand against the LORD’s anointed.’” (1 Sam 26:9-11)*

*David’s ambition to be on the throne was held in place by a greater ambition: to yield his whole life to the Lord and to conform to his commandments, whatever the personal cost might be.*

David recognized that nothing is ours by right.

**So he guarded the ambitions of his heart.**

*“I do not occupy myself with things too great and too marvellous for me.”*

*Heb. “I don’t walk around in things too great and too difficult for me.”*

### **2. He controlled the preoccupations of his mind.**

David deliberately refused to allow his mind to become preoccupied with things that were beyond his possession.

**There were things that he just didn’t know.**

cf. Isaiah 26 / Philippians 4

**Bruce Waltke (in his 80’s): I have learned not to ask WHY, but what I can learn from all this?**

I do not walk around in problems that are too great for me.

I don’t spend my time in what I don’t understand.

I live in what I do understand.

I don’t live in the problem areas of life that I don’t understand.

We have to accept our humanity.

We don’t know everything.

We want to know everything. But we don’t.

What we do understand is God’s goodness.

### **Application:**

Not crying, “WELL HOW COME THIS!? HOW COME THAT?! like a weaned child, I just trust in you.

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**Jon Courson (my old pastor):** Over the years I have watched in my own life, and the lives of people around me, the vulnerability of becoming very unstable or unsettled when life gets difficult, or when disappointments come your way. *"Well why God?" "How come Lord?" "What's going on now!?"*

And if I feel that I've got to know WHY, it's going to make **me mentally & emotionally unstable.**

If the Lord told me **why**, I would argue.

SO God gives a peace that PASSES understanding.

You'll never read a promise in the Scripture where God says you're going to have peace that comes from understanding.

It's not going to come from your intellectual ability to figure things out logically. I'm going to give you a peace, just trust me.

**1 Cor 13 - We know in part, we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face. And when we see him face to face.**

**JON: I have watched, observed, gone through the dealing of tragedies and difficulties... IF YOU THINK THAT YOU HAVE TO KNOW WHY THINGS HAPPEN, OR DON'T HAPPEN... YOU'RE GOING TO BE UP OR DOWN LIKE A ROLLER COASTER..**

**HOW COME SHE LEFT ME?**

**HOW COME THE BUSINESS DIDN'T WORK OUT?**

**HOW COME THE COLLEGE DIDN'T ACCEPT ME?**

**HOW COME THAT WAS TAKEN FROM ME?**

**YOU'LL ALWAYS BE UP AND DOWN. But when you can just simply say, "I'M NOT GOD, I DON'T KNOW." BUT THIS I CAN SAY, I don't know why, I don't know what, but I know WHOM I've believed, and I'm persuaded that he is able to keep what is committed to me (2 Tim 1:12)**

**I know the one who is in control is THUNDERING from the cross of Calvary, he died in my place, and as he was on the cross, the earth shook, the sky darkened... it was a mystery to others, but not to you and me.**

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## **John 13:7 - Another text on us not knowing**

<sup>6</sup> He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, do you wash my feet?" <sup>7</sup> Jesus answered him, "What I am doing you do not understand now, but afterward you will understand."

*He just says, What I'm doing now you don't understand, but you will down the road. And that's the word of the Lord for some of us here today.*

**Application:** George Washington Carver. "Lord teach me the universe, earth, body... and then peanut."

## vs 2 - A Hush before God

*"But I have calmed and quieted my soul, like a weaned child with its mother; like a weaned child is my soul within me."*

Heb. "I make level and make quiet my soul."

**Quiet** - make or become silent, calm, or still. [Our bodies / our frail flesh]

David: I used to always be struggling for answers, demanding understanding of matters that were too much for me.

But he's saying, I have learned to trust the person.

To be reposed on the bosom of the person.

Not be struggling for answers.

Content with the person.

I don't need answers to all of my questions in life.

**That is the simile.**

To be at rest, at ease.

**Without struggling to be fed that God has to give us answers to our questions.**

**This is how the book of Job develops as well.**

It's sufficient to have the person without demanding answers to matters that are too great for us.

Testimony of Jon Courson... [Optional]

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Hymn - "Father I know that all my life." [Optional]

*"Father, I know that all my life is portioned out for me, and the changes that are sure to come I do not fear to see; but I ask thee for a present mind intent on pleasing thee*

*"I would not have the restless will that hurries to and fro, seeking for some great thing to do or secret thing to know; I would be treated as a child, and guided where I go..."*

*So I ask thee for the daily strength, to none that ask denied, and a mind to blend with outward life while keeping at thy side; content to fill a little space, if thou be glorified."*

*So we had 1) A Humility before God 2) A Hush before God... Now:*

## vs 3 - A Hope in God

*"O Israel, hope in the LORD from this time forth and forevermore."*

**Hope! - It's a command!**

**There is an ongoingness and a finality to this too... "from this time forth and forevermore!"**

**Let me phrase it this way though... Is there something else you are hoping in? Are you hoping in some person? Some relationship? Some job? There's an appropriate place for things...**

**But let this Psalm be a correction.**

**"For I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep what I have committed to Him until that day."**

## **Conclusion:**

**WHAT DO WE EXPECT OF GOD IN THE MIDST OF EVIL?**

We expect of God His grace, his comforting presence. And some of that comforting presence is going to come through his people here among us.