

A weaned child

"My heart is not proud, O Lord, my eyes are not haughty; I do not concern myself with great matters or things too wonderful for me. But I have stilled and quieted my soul; like a weaned child with its mother, like a weaned child is my soul within me" (Psalm 131:1, 2).

What did David mean when he compared his soul to a weaned child? He considered this word-picture important enough to mention it twice in one verse. A weaned child pictures a soul at peace, content and satisfied like a child who feels secure in the presence of his mother. The *Quest Study Bible* comments, "Some suggest this means a satisfied infant rather than a weaned child; as a nursing baby is comforted at its mother's breast, so David was content to depend upon God. Others, however, say that the word weaned pictures a child that no longer cries and fusses for its milk; David had matured and better learned to trust God for his needs."

Does your soul possess the humble, settled calm of a weaned child? Does mine? Are we content with what the Lord provides, or do we have proud hearts and haughty eyes that keep us worrying about "things too wonderful" for us to know?

But there's another important lesson here: A weaned child is capable of feeding himself.

A newborn baby depends completely on his mother. The same body that gave him birth nourishes and strengthens him for the first several months of his life. Even after the baby is weaned, he still depends on his parents to provide for him, but as he grows, he will eat a wider variety of foods and learn to prepare them himself. Eventually, as a responsible member of the family he will be strong enough to help feed his younger brothers and sisters. A weaned child is not only a picture of contentment; he's also a picture of growth.

The Scriptures make it plain that

God cares about our spiritual development:

"Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation" (1 Peter 2:2).

"Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness. But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil" (Hebrews 5:13, 14).

"Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up" (Ephesians 4:14, 15).

The Lord expects us to grow up.

There comes a time to quit crying, "My church doesn't feed me!" Learn to feed yourself. There comes a time when

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you have spent sufficient time studying "the elementary teachings about Christ," and now you need to "go on to maturity" (Hebrews 6:1). There comes a time when you realize that, for all its value, a sermon on Sunday morning can't replace the everyday nourishment God provides when you serve him and study his Word on your own. Could it be you've attended enough Bible classes that by now you ought to be teaching a class yourself?

Brand new believers need all the nurture we can provide, and none of us ever outgrow our need for spiritual nutrition. But when people who've been Christians for years still act like babies—self-centered, crying to be fed—it's a sign that some souls still need to be weaned. ■



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