

ousy, discontent, and confusion. We've all seen that.

But have you ever seen that same child when he is successfully weaned? A dramatic change has taken place. Now the child rests upon his mother, quiet and at peace (assuming she's spooning in the solid food!). The child has *changed*. Envision your own soul as a small child sitting on your lap. You used to be noisy, squirmy, and demanding. Now you sit still. That's the picture of learning peace.

The Reason for Peace

Israel, hope in the LORD now and forever. Psalm 131:3

We looked first at the result, and then at the process. This last line gives the reason. The Lord, Jesus Christ, is your hope. Pride dies as the humility of faith lives. Haughtiness lowers its eyes as the dependency of hope lifts up its eyes. You stop pursuing impossibilities when you start pursuing certainties. This simple sentence distills wonders. Consider the command and invitation you are now receiving.

First, you are called by name. *Israel* originally named an insignificant family of nomads.

Later it identified a mildly significant buffer state in the ancient Near East. But now the scope of Psalm 131:3 extends to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people. That includes you. We are all called to set our hope in the Lord now and forever. Sometimes Jesus applies the old name to his new people: “the Israel of God” (Gal. 6:16), or the Jew inwardly, with a circumcised heart (Rom. 2:29). But now we are more commonly called by other names:

- Beloved
- Chosen
- Holy ones (set apart to the Holy One; “saints”)
- Sons and daughters
- Brothers and sisters
- Slaves
- Called out ones (“church”)
- Disciples

Disciple is the name most commonly used to describe you. You intentionally learn and change as you live with your teacher-for-life, Jesus Christ.²

Second, you are called to *hope in the LORD*. Who is this person who topples all the ladders to nowhere and gives you something better?

He is the true God, the only Redeemer from the idols we construct. Your hope is in “I AM,” who becomes known simply as “the Lord.” Eventually, he more immediately and personally names himself: Jesus Christ is Lord.

What exactly are you to hope for? Psalm 131 is very condensed, stating the general principle without any specifics beyond the Person. You are free to particularize the content of hope with promises from throughout the Bible. But it would probably be wisest to start in the immediate vicinity. Psalm 131 is intentionally paired with Psalm 130, which gives details about what exactly we are to hope in (in italics).

Out of the depths I have cried to *You*,

O LORD.

Lord, *hear my voice!*

Let *Your ears be attentive*

To the voice of my supplications.

If You, LORD, should mark iniquities,

O LORD, who could stand?

But *there is forgiveness with You,*

That You may be feared.

I wait for *the LORD*, my soul does wait,

And *in His word* do I hope.

My soul waits for *the Lord*

More than the watchmen for the
morning;
Indeed, more than the watchmen for
the morning.

O Israel, hope *in the LORD*,
For *with the LORD there is lovingkindness*,
And *with Him is abundant redemption*.
And *He will redeem Israel*
From *all his iniquities*.

The things in italics invite your hope. You will not go wrong if you fulfill Psalm 131:3 by living out Psalm 130. The sense of need, the eager anticipation, and the inner tension of waiting effectively illustrate what Psalm 131's composure is like. We are racehorses, not milk cows, called to equine alertness and focus, not bovine placidity and apathy!

Third, you are called to such hopes *now and forever*. David speaks in a generality, literally, "from now until forever." That pretty much covers the territory! But the time frame of our hope is even more clearly defined than David could have known. We hope fully on the grace to be given at the revelation of Jesus Christ (1 Peter 1:13). Both *now* and *forever* shine with newer, brighter meanings for us who read Psalm 131 in the light of Christ.