

Dwell in Unity

תהלים קלג

Psalms 133

1 A Song of degrees of David. Behold, how good and how pleasant *it is* for brethren to dwell together in unity!

2 *It is* like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, *even* Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments;
3 As the dew of Hermon, *and as the dew* that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the LORD commanded the blessing, *even* life for evermore.

שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת לְדָוִד 1
to the goings up; Song
David the ascents

הִנֵּה מֵה־טוֹב וּמֵה־נְעִים
pleasant; and what; Behold
delightful - and how good - how

שָׁבֶת אַחִים גַּם־יַחַד:
one. - also brethren abide; rest
(sabbath base)

כַּשֶּׁמֶן הַטוֹב עַל־הָרֹאשׁ 2
the head - upon; the As oil
over good

יָרַד עַל־הַזָּקֵן וְזָמַן אֶת־הָרֶחַק
Aaron - beard the upon; go down;
beard - over flow down

שִׁירָד עַל־פִּי מִדֹּתָיו:
his garment; mouth; upon; that go down;
measure; height. edge; border - over that flow down

כַּטַּל־הֶרְמוֹן שִׁירָד עַל־הַרְרֵי צִיּוֹן 3
Zion mountains upon; that go down; Hermon - As
of - over that flow down dew

כִּי שָׁם צִוָּה יְהוָה אֶת־הַבְּרָכָה
the untranslatable there; because
blessing - identifies Yahweh command then
particular item

חַיִּים עַד־הָעוֹלָם:
the eternity. - until life

There's a song based on the first verse of Psalm 133. It is fairly simple, but is enjoyed by many. In fact, I would assume that when most of us read through this Psalm, we see nothing but simplicity. Not a whole lot of content. After all, it is only three verses long. The imagery of oil running down Aaron's beard and dew watering some mountains means little to us.

With a little more digging though, I perceive a significant gospel message hidden just a little deeper in this psalm.

Lets start off with a brief explanation of the lead-in copy:

1a A Song of degrees of David.

This particular psalm is one of a collection of psalms in the 5th, and final, book of the psalms. There is a collection from Psalm 120 through 134, making a total of 15. The psalm under scrutiny now, is number 14 in the list. There are different propositions as to what the "degrees" meant. The word indicates a going upward. A plausible theory, is that these were sung by Levite ministers at different levels of the steps. They would sing through them as they ascended toward Jerusalem, or the temple. This would have been during the celebration of the three main feasts that took place annually in Israel.

The Hebrew word I translated as "to" could be taken as the indication that this psalm is attributed to David as the composer.

1b Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!

The meaning of these words is easily seen at first glance. After all, isn't the desire for unity one of the greatest issues facing mankind and the church today? This is a beautiful and desirable issue; however, I see a secondary meaning found in this verse. To see this, we must step back to take a look at the Hebrew original. In looking at the Hebrew, it is important to know that Hebrew reads from right to left, with my English translation directly

under each Hebrew word. The key words I want us to examine are those last four Hebrew words of the first verse.

The word translated as "dwell", in the King James Bible, is that which is the base for the word "Sabbath". Remember the "Sabbath" day of rest. The concept of the word actually used in this verse could be used in a sentence like, "Instead of John making a career change, he decided to (abide; rest; remain without doing anything toward change) in the same line of work." As you can see, you can even use the very word for rest in a sentence referring to work! Now there is a significance for this, which we will come back to shortly.

The word "brethren" shows that this beautiful unity and rest is only amongst "brethren". Such unity and rest is actually evil, if it be amongst the ungodly. From such we are called to "Come out from among them." This is a common message throughout all of scripture.

Those final two words "*in unity*" carry a little more for consideration in the more literal reading of "also-one". I perceive in this form we can also see that unity as not only being an adjective of description, but more specific, a noun. This "also-one" is a living single entity. Take a jump with me to the New Testament in Hebrews 4:1-11:

1 Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left *us* of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. 2 For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard *it*. 3 For we which have believed do enter into rest, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world. 4 For he spake in a certain place of the seventh *day* on this wise, And God did rest the seventh day from all his works. 5 And in this *place* again, If they shall enter into my rest. 6 Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached en-

tered not in because of unbelief: 7 Again, he limiteth a certain day, saying in David, To day, after so long a time; as it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts. 8 For if Jesus (*referring to Joshua*) had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day. 9 There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. 10 For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God *did* from his. 11 Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief. Hebrews 4:1-11

A lesson of this passage, is that God has provided our rest in Christ Jesus. In the New Testament period, Christ Jesus came to be our rest. The Sabbath rest was a type of the rest God has provided for us in His Son, Christ Jesus. Taking this back to bear upon the psalm under view. As Christians, we literally “Shabbat (Sabbath) in One as brethren”. This brethren dwelling together in unity, is much more than simply family members getting along. It speaks of the one Body of Christ.

This concept, in seeing this in verse one, is supported through the remaining two verses. Actually, it is expounded upon.

2 It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron’s beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments;

The unity that was valued in the first verse, is compared in this second verse. Such serves the purpose of helping us to see the significance of the point he was seeing. At first glance, we may wonder what was so beautiful and inspiring from this imagery.

In reference to this psalm referring to Christ, Aaron was the High Priest, just like Christ Jesus is our High Priest. Not only is He our High Priest, He was anointed with the “good oil” of the Holy Spirit, which spoke of Jesus being the “Messiah”. “Messiah” means “Anointed One”. The anointing oil wasn’t only a little dab on

the forehead, like many anoint today. It was a total covering of the body. His anointing left nothing uncovered.

In the course of the anointing oil, it starts with the head. In the body of Christ, Jesus is our head. The oil flowed next to the beard. In time past, we found that the beard was a designation of pride for the man. It spoke of his manhood. When the ambassadors of David were half shaved, it was a sign of shame and contempt. It called for war. In a look for the first mention of the word “beard”, we find it in Leviticus with leprosy in it. Leprosy is a type of the uncleanness of sin. The anointing oil starts with Christ and flows down upon the sinful pride of man. Not that beards are evil, but the proper pride of man under the anointing of the oil, is something of beauty.

Further, that anointing is all covering to the feet. It leaves nothing in the body that is not covered by the oil. Such is the fulfillment of Joel, where the anointing will be poured upon all, even to the handmaidens. Such happens abiding in the One.

There is also another significant term that shows up here. The term translated, “ran down” and “went down” is seen twice in verse 2 and once in verse three. In connection with Hermon, as we shall see, this proves more of an eye-opener. In Hebrew, the term for going down is that used for the name of the river Jordan. In a way, you could read “Jordan” into these spots to help in remembering the connection to follow. For now, consider that that anointing oil is “Jordan” FROM the head. We are not told it was “Jordan” upon the head. The “Jordan” goes to the beard and the uttermost of His garments.

Now let’s connect this to the final verse:

3 As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the LORD commanded the blessing, even life for evermore.

To grasp this, we need to gain some

basic map knowledge. Hermon is a mountain. If you look at a map of Israel, you will notice Mt. Hermon is just outside of Israel on its northern border. Its height is just over 9,000 feet and is almost always snow covered. It is the source of two springs which feed the River Jordan. The other two sources for the Jordan are from the same region in Lebanon. It was on the foothill of this mountain that Jesus preached the Sermon on the Mount. I see Mt. Hermon to be a type of Heaven. From its high slopes comes the blessing of God down to His people's land of Israel.

So one might wonder, how the "dew" of Hermon gets to the mountains of Zion and what does this mean? Since the River Jordan is that "descending" from Hermon, we find our answer. The blessings of the heavenly type, found in "Hermon", "flow down - Jordan" to the Dead Sea. This river flows along the east side of the mountains of Zion. Mt. Zion itself was actually the term referring to the original fortress of Jebus (Jerusalem). It came to be used in reference to all of Jerusalem. The "mountains", being plural, would have included the neighboring mountains to Jerusalem. Such would have included the Mount of Olives.

The dew that would come up upon this region of Mt. Zion, would have been the moisture that "came down", via the Jordan. Now how is this also a type of the first verse?

I ran a search on the internet for "dew" and "tal", the Hebrew word for dew, together. I found an interesting article by a Jew. It was interesting to see he could clearly see the significance of dew as op-

posed to rain. The Jews see dew as a type of "resurrection". In fact, so much so, that they believe dew will be used in the day of resurrection to resurrect the dead! The article pointed out that rain was often given or withheld as a matter of blessing or judgment on men's sins. It was given to some degree based on merit. Dew, on the other hand, came regardless of merit. Therefore, this Jewish man showed dew to show both unmerited grace as well as resurrection. How much this shows of Christ's work and the Gospel! This dew comes as God's grace that flows down from Heaven and alights upon the mountains of Zion to provide the unmerited grace for our resurrection. The final half of the third verse pulls it all together. Listen to it carefully:

Yahweh COMMANDED the blessing. A particular, and specific blessing, was commanded of Yahweh to be poured upon the mountains of Zion that would specifically be "life everlasting" - ETERNAL LIFE! It was to be a blessing that came down from heaven.

Jesus Christ was this blessed 'Shabbat in One' in whom we rest for eternal life. He came as the anointed High Priest who was the blessing, shared upon us, come down from Heaven. His blessing, commanded of God, was poured forth upon the mountains of Zion for our eternal life.

BEHOLD, HOW GOOD
AND HOW PLEASANT!



Free to copy under CC-BY-NC-ND3.0

Copyright 2010 by Darrell Farkas

*The English version used is that from the
King James Bible, Cambridge 1769 Text.*

*The Hebrew text is that of the Second Great Rabbinic Bible, from which
the King James Translators made their translation.*

To find this article on-line go to www.basedintheword.org
entitled "Dwell in Unity"