



PSALM 19

The law of the Lord is perfect, restoring the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever; The judgments of the Lord are true; they are righteous altogether. (7-14)

1. The law of the Lord is perfect, restoring the soul. “Law” identifies Scripture as Divine instruction. It has in view Divine instruction relative to creed and character and conduct. This sets Scripture in contrast to the imperfect, flawed reasoning’s and instructions of men... The word perfect refers to comprehensive and completely sufficient.

The law of the Lord has the effect of restoring and refreshing the soul. Soul speaks of the inner person. English translations throughout the Old Testament include “life,” “person,” “self,” and “heart.”

Here, in the sense of the first statement, Scripture, which is Divine Instruction, is so comprehensive that it can totally transform the inner person. That is a monumental claim.

2. The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The word “testimony” in this phrase speaks of Scripture as Divine witness. It is God’s own witness to Himself. It is sure meaning it is trustworthy and reliable. It provides a foundation that will not move.

The Hebrew word translated “SIMPLE” comes from a root that describes an open door. The Old Testament saints viewed a simple-minded person as having an “open-door” in the intellect. The wisdom spoken of here is not just intellectual data – it is the ability to make right choices in daily conduct. The word “wise” really means “skilled in all aspects of holy living.”

Thus this couplet means that Scripture is so sure and reliable and trustworthy that it takes the simple-minded, undiscerning, uninformed, and makes him skilled in all aspects of holy living.

3. The precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart. The Word of God gives us guidelines for daily living. The intent of the Hebrew word "RIGHT" is that we have a correct path laid out. We are not left to wander around in a fog of human opinion. This leads to a rejoicing heart.
4. The commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. The word commandment pictures Scripture as the Divine mandate. Divine commands are non-negotiable. "Pure" means clear or lucid.

New Christians who have lived for many years in darkness appreciate the import of this phrase. Dark things all of a sudden become clear. The confusing things of life become understandable.

5. The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever. The noun used here is "fear." Why is Scripture spoken of as "fear?" Because the Bible is the manual on worship... As a manual on worship, the Bible is "clean" – without evil, without corruption, and without error.

Note that this fear of the Lord endures forever. It is permanently and eternally relevant.

6. The judgments of the Lord are true, they are righteous altogether. The word "judgments" looks at Scripture as divine verdicts. Where do we go to find an overcoming joy through all the trials of life? Where do we go to get light on the dark things of life? Where do we go to get a permanent resource that never changes? Where do we go for truth? There is only one answer. Is it any wonder verse 10 says "THEY ARE MORE DESIREABLE THAN GOLD< YES< THAN MUCH FINE GOLD: SWEETER ALSO THAN HONEY AND THE DRIPPINGS OF THE HONEYCOMB." Is there anything as sweet? Is there anything as precious?

Moreover by them Thy servant is warned; in keeping them there is great reward. Who can discern his errors? Acquit me of hidden faults. Also keep back thy servant from presumptuous sins; let them not rule over me; then I shall be blameless, and I shall be acquitted of great transgression. (11-13).

Here the Psalmist sums up what God is saying to us about His Word. It is our greatest possession, our greatest pleasure, our greatest promise, our greatest purifier. The Psalmist seems to have in mind Joshua 1:8: *This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success.*

Psalm 1:1-3 echoes the same thought: *“How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, nor stand in the path of sinners, nor sit in the seat of scoffers! But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in his law he meditates day and night. And he will be like a tree firmly planted by the rivers of water, which yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither; and in whatever he does, he prospers.”*