

The Just shall live by Faith

Volume 1 - Study 13 Psalm 19 A Song of David

C. Ronald Johnson, Christian Wilderness Press: The greatest or smallest work or action of God has within it (in ways indiscernible to us, except perhaps just barely) '**the glory of God**'.

These are brief studies, not
“teachings” or “doctrines.”

Volume 1, Study 13

‘A Psalm of David. The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament [i.e. heavenly expanse] sheweth his handywork.’

Last night in bed I had the lights out and my reading lamp on as I often do when not yet sleepy and opened my small bedside Bible. Nearly always it is this time that the Lord gives something special to me and usually only for me. However, when later I turn again to the book-marked passage to soak up a little more of it, sometimes much more, it is then that the Lord might give me an expanded concept for the passage becoming a brief study on our website.

Barbara rose early to make ready for her day: a luncheon at the women’s Bible group as this is the last until after the New Year. I have been walking in the mornings early, but a cold or something grabbed hold of me nearly two months back and does not go away, and it came back on me after yesterday’s morning walk (three miles usually just before or just after dawn). So, skipping the walk this morning, after getting dressed I was heading to my computer room (at the river end of our mobile home) and I turned off the living room light left on by my precious Barbara, whereupon I felt like praying. As I bent to kneel at my chair the thought came that I had already prayed and instead I sat down to spend a little quiet time before going to the computer. (I am immersed in a rather tedious learning curve in trying to gain more traffic to our website, and tempting me is perhaps advertising with Ad Words by Google. I would appreciate your prayers on our behalf.)

Therefore, if not praying when feeling like this then I reach for my study Bible (the Emphasized Bible by Joseph Bryant Rotherham) and I opened it to last night’s passage with the Lord, the Nineteenth Psalm.

Going through it in this Bible, I became even more elated and knew that perhaps here is at least another study for the webpage or something more. Thus, I knew that a day with the tedious learning curve was not today. So I enjoyed David’s Song at length and I wondered, “What Lord am I to do with it?” Therefore, I now sit typing and sharing my moments and thoughts with you. Not knowing at this point what else to do, I will begin as I normally do in working a study for the webpage. Unless the Lord shows me otherwise, I use the King James Version with Strong’s Numbers, though the numbers are left out of the typed study.

Psalms 19 A Song of David

19:1) <To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.> The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament [i.e. heavenly expanse] sheweth his handywork.

Here David is setting up a similitude of ‘**the glory of God**’...i.e. ‘**his handywork**’ and in this case he is using the heavenly expanse. He writes such that even more than the glory of the heavenly expanse is ‘**the glory of God**’, and he will be inferring that differing works and actions of God whether great or small are done within ‘**the glory**’.

Let me say the latter again: the greatest or even the smallest work or action of God has in it (in ways indiscernible to us except perhaps just barely) ‘**the glory of God**’.

Such, in fact, was my little experience last night in bed and again this morning sitting in my living room chair, and it continues. Dear reader, I simply continue doing what I am doing in typing this and I am not trying to give you a sense of what I experience. (Indeed, I have a natural tendency to keep myself out of what I write so as to distract as little as possible from the scriptures.) Even so, perhaps the Lord will do something similar as you

read these words. I pray so, for David was truly into it as he was composing this Song.

19:2) Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge.

In this study let us proceed in our thoughts beyond our best experiences (i.e., perhaps like on a beautiful day you were on your back gazing up at the clouds as they traveled through the clearest blue expanse - God's '**handiwork**'). David's words point us beyond God's '**handiwork**' to '**the glory of God**' as God works and performs His intentions... even in the tiniest things as we shall see.

As during the day the energy of the expanse speaks aloud regarding God's Creation, similarly does God gloriously '**utter**' deep things of Him into the attuned spirit of His child. In the glory of His handiwork sometimes we pause long enough to sense such workings. And when immersed in His Word (when we take time to be there) we sense it even more, and sometimes much more. For in the Garden of His Word is His favored place for us to be and for Him to visit.

'...**and night unto night sheweth knowledge.**' Early this year it occurred to me that, before going to sleep, I should be praying, "Lord, do something this night in Barbara and in me." I do not know how, where, or why the idea of it came to me, but it is now a habit. I cannot tell you if, and certainly not how, it might be happening (i.e. God working or revealing things inside us). Yet, the thought of it before going to sleep in itself is *Good*. If the Lord is sometimes doing this, then it is a tiniest thing that yet is full of His Glory. How can a tiny thing (so it may seem) be full of God's Glory? I surely do not know.

'...**sheweth knowledge**' perhaps is better translated '**...lively awareness** [i.e. of God]. The word 'sheweth' has to do with *the liveliness* of a living thing *being the proof that it is alive*. The Apostle James writes in his epistle of *liveliness* in regards to Biblical faith. Here David implies something of his nightly experiences in 'living awareness' of God upon his pillow and in his sleep. How much did David's God do within the man He 'loved' during the night?

19:3) There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard.

As with blessed security in the night and the many voices by day of the heavenly expanse, likewise their Maker speaks (usually whispering) to men, women, boys, and girls whose inward ears are attuned for it. To the simplest of His little sheep, this is '**the glory of God**' at work; for never is God not at His Best, in that He is always His Best.

19:4-5) Their line is gone out through all the earth [i.e. the land], and their words to the end of the world [i.e. man's habitations, society] . In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun, Which [i.e. the sun] is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race.

A more basic translation would be: 'Their measuring line goes out through the whole of the land and their word to the extremity of the habitations of men. [Furthermore] placed [or set] is a tabernacle for the sun, which...as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber...rejoices as a champion prepared to run the course of a race.'

The things that we consider as "nature" go out as a measuring line across the land and the voices of the heavenly expanse...speaking evidences of God's existence...go out to the ends of men's habitations.

The sun, too, is introduced as a similitude for Almighty God: At the beginning of man's daytime, the sun *which allows men to see* comes forth. David envisions God as coming forth, *so that men can see*, to run His course...and moreover, to view the courses of men as they run their courses.

19:6) His going forth is from the end [i.e. extremity] of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it: and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof.

As the sun, the Almighty passes through His circuit, observing what men observe and countless more. Do we think that the glory of the sun has '**heat**'? Infinitely more, God's glory is '**heat**'. Does He '**heat**' up your innards? Do you think upon Him before rising? If

so, does it warm you? Before stepping foot on the floor, do you sense from the night some remaining awareness of Him? I am sure that David would answer, “Well...no, not all that much; however, when the awareness does remain it is so very sweet.” Is your mind upon the course of your day when awaking, or upon the course of His day?



David has shared with us about some of his relationship with his God and how it brings him to Song when thinking upon it...whether by day or within the night. Now David turns to share with us how he arrived to his condition with God.

19:7-9) (Here I shall place David’s essential proclamations in a list.)

-- **The law of the LORD is perfect** [i.e. complete, integral, altogether one], **converting** [i.e. turning back] **the soul:**

David points to the Mosaic Law, but even more he points to *God’s essential requirements for all men* so that they could walk and *properly survive in the world* (i.e. mankind’s society). Earlier, before God gave the Mosaic Law to the people and nation of Israel, the Israelites were falling short of *the essentials of God’s requirements for all men*. Long before the time of Moses there were many ancient manuscripts and verbal stories from God’s earlier special (i.e. ‘chosen’) men, and Moses was well versed in them, gaining from them much of the information in his writings to Israel.

In other words, before the Mosaic Law, God’s people were acting as if they did not even know of these *essential requirements for all men*. After four hundred years living in Egypt (men like Joseph and the foundational fathers of the tribes having passed on to their reward), with the last two hundred years in indentured servitude, which turned into slavery, the great majority of Israelites were very confused in their abased condition. Then, when finally having escaped from Egypt, the great majority of them were on the one hand clinging to some of the religions of Egypt while on the other hand were trying to placate their newly discovered God who at times seemed very hard and demanding. “Have we not escaped? Are we not free? Why, then, such close regulation by Yahweh? And this Moses, just how special does he think he is?”

Therefore, to give them no further excuse, God had it all written down for them, starting with His own finger writing the essence of it into stone tablets. Then especially for the new Israelite nation He expanded it, doing it such that the more sincere of them would realize how far short they were of it. Moreover, set within the Mosaic Law was a Promise of a Messiah who would come to solve their continual problem of falling short of *the essential requirements for all men*.

This ancient essential law for all men, also the Mosaic Law, if obeyed turns back a person from destruction; of such destruction there are two kinds 1) destruction by means of men and 2) destruction by their Maker. The greater is saved by God for Himself.

-- **the testimony of the LORD is sure** [i.e. supportive], **making wise** [even] **the simple.**

God’s testimonies in all His Word 1) in the essential law (expressed in heavenly expanse and sun), 2) in the Mosaic Law (expressed in specialized fashion for Israel), and 3) in the individual child of God throughout all the ages...are *supportive*...and they *make firm* the person that receives them. God’s *supportive* and varied ‘**testimonies**’ make ‘**wise the simple**’. See such ‘**testimonies**’ in the Bible stories contained in God’s Hook.

David is speaking of his own process at the hand of God, which brought him into his relationship with God; thus, here he is introducing himself as ‘**simple**’; and, in God’s process with him, he is made ‘**wise**’. This kind of wisdom is only received in humility, similar to the humility of our Lord Jesus.

-- **The statutes of the LORD are right** [i.e. straight], **rejoicing the heart:**

Statutes are the individual mandated points within the Mosaic Law. You can see a new

statute being created by God with His people in God's Hook, Part II, Chapter 5, Section, **Daughters of Zelophehad**. In the realm of *the essential law for all men*, statutes (i.e. mandates) are points of the *inner law* in each child of God as God (through whatever means) impresses a personally tailored requirement upon His child. Though these are never new to *the essential law of God for all men*, they become new to a child of God as God lovingly or firmly points to them and requires that the child walk by each of them. Even when a group or tribe or person has never heard of the Bible, or seen or read the Bible, the Lord can and does place *the essential law* into the heart of one who accepts it.

The word '**right**' (more correctly 'straight') has to do with construction, like when a plumb line has been used. The word has to do with manufactured *straight* walls and *straight* paths and *right* roofs, etc. God's statutes or mandates (in the essential law, in the Mosaic Law, or in a personal relationship between you and God) give...when applied faithfully...a sense of security and wellbeing over which '**to rejoice**'.

-- **the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes.**

'Commandment' is nothing less than a command from a Commander to one over whom He rules: 'Do this or else!' Such were the Ten Commandments. Incorporated in these commandments was the 'whole' of the Mosaic Law, which itself contained the many 'statutes' for every essential aspect of life that God intended for His people Israel.

God gave the Law and its many statutes, and the less-than-pure-minded of men have had troubles with them because of our basic rebellious fallen nature. Often, dear reader, you have done it (or have observed it), that a parent carefully and fully explains an important concept within a child's responsibility to the family structure and then the child acts like he "does not get it" (due to simple misunderstanding or simple obstinacy). Ah, but when a simple 'commandment' pertaining to his role in the family is given, he "gets it"; that is, his eyes are '**enlightened**'.

God's commandments are '**pure**' (i.e. 'no imperfections') in the sense of something that is truly 'beloved'. The Song of Solomon vividly depicts the meaning of this word; it is the '**pure**' heart-and-mind concept that Solomon's beloved had of her Beloved, and she described him at length as '**pure**'. This is the *emotional* and not the scientific concept.

A true and real commandment (the one God gives, not the kind used so often these days by parents) has an '**enlightening**' effect, and should Almighty God...our Beloved... give us such a 'command' we will surely "get it"...*our eyes becoming enlightened*. Yes, God is merciful, but I honestly believe that we Christians need Him to grab us by the shoulders and shake us until our '**eyes**' roll around in our heads...until "we get it."

-- **The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring for ever:**

This word '**clean**' most correctly means *pure in the chemical sense of purity*. In the entire Bible we are spoken to by scripture about the proper 'fear of the Lord'. No matter a person's state before God (in joyful communion or humbled in sin) '**the fear**' *condition* of heart, soul, and spirit (if a child of God would allow the Spirit to humble him into it) is *clean* (i.e. sanitized) before the Father. Let me repeat it: when one is in this *condition* before God (no matter anything else) the *state* of '**the fear of the Lord**' is a *pure state* before God. This '**fear**' is not the same as a person being physically or spiritually pure or sanitized; for even a person with the best righteousness among us, his righteousness is as '**filthy rags**'. If you should say, "In Jesus I am pure," then I respond to you, "While in '**the fear of the Lord**', this momentary condition is '**pure**'."

It was the *state* of the Prodigal son *returning to his father* in Jesus' parable. The Church uses this parable for other things including evangelism, and in so doing we miss the magnificence of our Holy Father's Character to whom His Son points in the parable. David, too, found himself at odds with God on more than a few occasions and he experienced '**the fear of the Lord**' with its *humiliating effect*...which became to him so *freeing of circumstance* and *reengaging with his Lord and Master* as to be exhilarating.

The person upon whom is ‘**the fear of the Lord**’, he not is described as ‘**enduring forever**’. Instead it is ‘**the fear of the Lord**’ that is ‘**enduring forever**’. Do you see it? This condition is a *sanctified state* that can be placed upon a person if he is willing and when God so desires to do it. This is a *momentary state*, though upon a few of us it may linger for awhile. Whatever the life of the Prodigal became after returning home, his *condition in front of his father* upon his arrival was a *sanctified state* worthy of a ring and a new robe and the killing of the fatted calf. Yes, the son had to return in the proper spirit, but his momentary *sanctified state* at his arrival was entirely due to the father’s love.

-- **the judgments [i.e. verdicts] of the LORD are true [i.e. stable, certain, truth] and righteous altogether.**

God is the Judge. His verdicts (one by one and all of them together) amount to stability, certainty, and truth for His people. Thank Goodness, this Judge will judge the world ...and you and me as well, when we stand before Him in our Judgment. The embarrassments that you and I will surely have when the books are opened will surely turn to joy as we realize our *new condition* as ‘stable, certain, and true’ *for eternity*...a ‘**true**’ result of ‘**the fear of the Lord**’.

19:10-11) More to be desired are they [i.e. David’s essential proclamations above] than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. Moreover by them is thy servant warned: and in [the] keeping of them there is great reward.

19:12) Who can understand his errors?

David here infers *deception*, as too often he had foolishly deceived himself and been deceived by the Great Deceiver. A person when deceived knows not that he is deceived. And when one becomes aware that *something is wrong* then he begins to understand that he has been deceived by himself or by another person or by the Great Deceiver.

Even so, ‘**Who can understand**’ something that has entirely escaped his attention until a *realization* of his *condition* tells him that *something is wrong*. Consider again the Prodigal son when he finally ‘came to himself’. Surely he wondered how he had come to such a state. For many years later, when thinking upon it, surely he shook his head that someone as intelligent as he was could have done something so stupid.

Have you ever realized that you are on the wrong road because you finally realized that the road you are on could not possibly be the right road, and you have no clue of how you got there or even where there is? David’s answer to the question is “God knows.”

...cleanse thou me from secret faults.

Dear reader, you are aware of these...‘**secret faults**’. Some of them...you know quite well. Others...you know somewhat. And others...you know that they are there, but they are a mystery to you. I, too, know of these in me.

No matter! “Lord, ‘**cleanse thou me from [my] secret faults**’. As David instructs us, if we come into the condition of ‘**the fear of the Lord**’ then the matter of ‘**secret faults**’ is a simple matter for us to give them to Him, for we cannot handle them (they handle us). Ah, but what we might go through during God’s cleansing process may not be so simple; yet, having given them to God, all we need do is to hang on...and allow God’s working to keep us in ‘**the fear of the Lord**’ condition.

19:13) Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression.

This is better said: ‘Refrain your servant from presumptions [that they are] not to rule over me: then shall I be made complete, having been made clean from multiple transgressions.’ David is speaking of his mental processes influenced by his heart...his heart having its own desires. It is when we have ‘**presumptions**’ (founded upon arrogance in times of little or no humility before God) that we become mired down.

We ‘**presume**’ that we are good and that our ‘**transgressions**’ are not particularly bad.

We ‘**presume**’ (when becoming aware of an evil thought) that the thought must be from the enemy “because it could not have come from inside me”. *To presume* something is *not to deal with it*. God is faithful, giving us convictions and little red flags to warn us... but we ‘**presume**’ too much about too many things regarding ourselves and we ‘**pre-sume**’ too much about God’s Grace. This is when we might be ‘tempting God’.

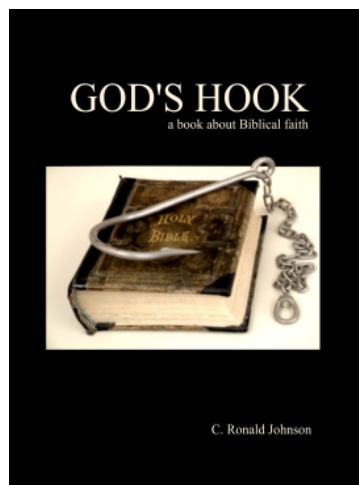
How often do we ignore the signs that we are on the wrong road when we are enjoying the ride too much to turn back...or because of fear of the environment of our friends, family, business, etc...if we would turn back. God is Able. We seldom are able.

If we would stop ‘**presuming**’ so much then perhaps we could be made clean from our multiple ‘**transgressions**’. God’s forgiveness is Good, Good, Good...but what about *an abatement of our transgressions that mire us down, perhaps like quicksand?* I often pray, “Lord, forgive me my transgressions against you. Forgive Barbara her transgressions against you. And *help us not to transgress so much against you and against each other.*”

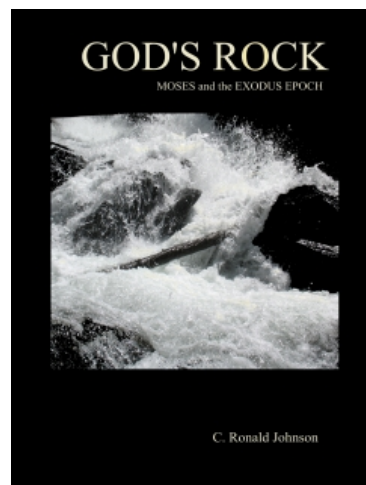
19:14) Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer.

Thus, David ends his Song to Yahweh Elohim. He is ‘**right**’ (i.e. straight) with his Master. Therefore, it was for you and for me that he wrote the Song. Amen

These are short Bible studies by C. Ronald Johnson at Christian Wilderness Press



a book
about
Biblical
Faith



the life of
Moses
and the
Exodus