

18-Gods righteous Word.docx

Psalms 119:137-144

To know Him and Make Him Known

The Word of God reflects the character of God. This stanza [Tsadhe, the 18th letter in the Hebrew alphabet] declares that because the Lord is righteous, His Word is righteous (vv. 137-138).

While this passage addresses the perfect righteousness of Yahweh and His Word, it also expresses the struggles of a seeker of God in reference to that righteousness. The Psalmist testifies of his own zeal and love for the Word. Because it is pure, it purifies him (vv. 139-141). Though the pursue of God may bring affliction (vv. 143-144; 92), [comfort and] a transformation toward righteousness is found by abiding in God's Righteous Word (CIT).

1) GOD'S RIGHTEOUS WORD, 137-138

- a) The Word and deeds of a righteous God are **righteous** declares verse 137. "Righteous are You, O Lord, And upright are Your judgments."
- b) God is praised by acknowledging His **perfect** righteousness.
- c) God is always right, in thought, word and deed.
- d) Righteous is part of the very essence of what it is to be God.
- e) God **cannot** be unrighteous.
- f) The Word of God **reflects** the character of God.
- g) God's revelation of Himself and His dealings cannot be less than Himself.
- h) Since God is righteous, His Word is righteous.
- i) More that that since God is righteous His judgments must be just or according to truth, or what is right.
- j) God's Word is a record of His judgments.
- k) As their Author is righteous that which comes from the Righteous God is itself righteous.
- l) The fact that God's decisions or judgments are right is a great **comfort** to our soul in time of trouble.
- m) When we are most afflicted, and cannot understand why, we may rest in this most sure and certain fact, that God is righteous, and His dealings with us are righteous or right too.
- n) It should bring us comfort to sing His praise -for His glorious righteousness.
- o) Verse 138 declares God's Word is **marked** by justice and faithfulness. "You have commanded in righteousness Your testimonies and exceeding faithfulness."
- p) All that God has testified in His Word is **right** and **truthful**.
- q) Their character is that they are like the Lord who has proclaimed them, they are the core of justice and the center of truth. God's Word is righteous, and may be relied upon for the present; it is faithful, and may be trusted in for the future.
- r) The idea of faithfulness is included to declare that God answers the promises in His testimonies or Word.
- s) What mercy that we have a God who is meticulously faithful, true to all the details and indications of His promises, and always punctual in His timing.
- t) May we **risk** all upon a word which is "exceedingly faithful."

2) GOD'S PURIFYING WORD, 139-141

- a) Verse 139 indicates the Psalmist was **ignited** for God and His Word, even though man's unresponsiveness was **burning** him out. "My zeal has consumed me, because my adversaries have forgotten Your words."
- b) The Psalmist has **worn** himself out trying to convince people to **trust** God's Word [69:9; Jn. 2:12].
- c) How could they abandon devotion toward God's revelation?
- d) Do they not know what God's Word is?
- e) Since they have ignored God, they have become God's enemies and thus the psalmist's adversaries.
- f) God's Word is the **purest**, the noblest, the most fire purged matter as verse 140 declares. "Your Word is very pure, therefore Your servant loves it."
- g) There is no error, defilement, or sin mixed into the Word [*'imrah*] of God.
- h) God's "Word is very pure" like the most refined of metals [v. 127].
- i) Because it is truth without any mixture of error, God' "servant loves it."
- j) The **purity** of the Word reflects the **purity** of its author.
- k) **ILL--In an excavation at Jerusalem archeologist Gabriel Barkay uncovered a small COPPER SCROLL with writing on it from the Bible. This fragment of Scripture was brittle and tarnished with age. Barkay took it to his laboratory and worked with unbelievable patience and delicate care to unroll it without destroying it. Dated around 400 BC, the scroll was a very important find because it contained the earliest written Hebrew name for God, Yahweh (or Jehovah). Apparently the scribe who copied it had broken with the practice of never writing that sacred name. Always before, because of their reverence for its holiness, Jewish scribes had felt unworthy to pen that special name.**
- l) The Bible is God's holy, inspired, infallible Word, and we must handle its truths with the same care Barkay gave to his discovery and the same reverence copyists gave to God's name. Scripture comes to us from God's heart.
- m) Therefore, we must guard its message with integrity by "rightly dividing the Word of truth" (2 Tim. 2: 15).
- n) We must respect its **every** word.
- o) To take Scripture out of context or twist its meaning to serve our purposes or justify our own opinions is to dishonor God's Word and His name.
- p) We must always handle the Word of God with due diligence.
- q) The Psalmist determined in verse 141 that no matter how the world treated him, he would hold tight to God's Word. "I am small and despised, Yet I do not forget Your precepts."
- r) Although he is "small and despised," insignificant and rejected by men, he does not capitulate to man's pressures.
- s) He knows that God's word is **changing** him, purifying him so he will "not forget" God's "precepts."

3) **GOD'S ETERNAL WORD, 142-144**

- a) Verse 142 reveals why he strives to **remember** God Word. "Your righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and Your law is truth."
- b) God's Righteous Word is eternal.
- c) Why pursue that which is passing away?
- d) God's righteousness, His salvation and peace, lasts forever.
- e) Pursue that which endures.

- f) Heaven and earth may pass away, but God's Word will last forever (Mt. 5:18).
- g) When all else **fails**, he can **count** on God fulfilling His Word.
- h) The Hebrew idea of truth is not merely that it is right, but that it will hold us up when we lean our weight upon it.
- i) God's Word is truth (John 17:17).
- j) The Son of God is truth (John 14:6).
- k) The Spirit of God is truth (1 John 5:6).
- l) The **Spirit** of Truth wrote the **Word** of Truth to reveal to you the **Son** of Truth.
- m) Majority rule is right and fair for electing mayors, representatives, and presidents.
- n) Although it sometimes allows less-than-honorable people to get into office, it is a good system.
- o) But people go too far when they want to apply the principle of majority rule to moral standards.
- p) They say that if the majority favors abortion or pornography or homosexual marriages, then it is acceptable.
- q) Some things, however, are not up for a vote.
- r) If we had a referendum tomorrow and 100 percent of the voters decided to repeal the law of gravity, it wouldn't change anything.
- s) You still couldn't jump off a building without being a smash hit.
- t) Just as God has established physical laws that cannot be broken, so too He has set up moral standards.
- u) And if we break them, we are ultimately broken by them.
- v) This is true of marriage, which God instituted as a one-flesh union between one man and one woman (Gen. 2:24).
- w) Even if a state votes to accept a perversion of that standard by allowing two people of the same sex, to marry, God's law remains the only correct guideline.
- x) We must look to the Scriptures to discover what God's moral laws say.
- y) Then we must obey them.
- z) They are never up for a vote.
- aa) God, not the majority is our authority.
- bb) God's Word not only consoles us in trouble, it can delight us as verse 143 infers.
"Trouble and anguish have come upon me, yet Your commandments are my delight."
- cc) Even in the midst of his **warfare** and **suffering** in this world, God's commandments are his "delights."
- dd) The plural delights denote fulness and a deepening of all other pleasures.
- ee) When your feelings deceive you into thinking that serving the Lord is not worth it, turn immediately to the Word of God and delight yourself in your Lord.
- ff) As he completes this meditation upon God's Word, the psalmist proclaims the Word's **eternalness** in verse 144. "Your testimonies are righteous forever; Give me understanding that I may live!"
- gg) God's Word is **eternal**, since God is its **source**.
- hh) But if we are to understand it, God must open it to us (Lk. 24:27).
- ii) The psalmist shows us how to ask for understanding.
- jj) As we receive and understand the Word, we live.
- kk) It is not the length of life, but the depth of life that counts.
- ll) Depth of life comes from laying hold of God's Word and obeying it.

mm) Jesus lived only 33 years, but the depth of His life altered the course of eternity.
nn) To look ever deeper and deeper into the Word of God and be changed by its perfect truthfulness is the need of a growing **spiritual** life.

IN CLOSING

This section is bound together by the theme of righteousness. A righteous God who reveals Himself in truth is true to Himself and to His covenant people. He will save them, judge them, bless them, and give them peace. Since God Himself is eternal, His righteousness is eternal (v. 142). Since God is eternally righteous, His Word is as righteous (v. 138) and eternal as He is (v. 144). Life comes in understanding and living out His Word. Life comes in connecting to the covenant keeping God. All else is fleeting and uncertain. [Williams, Donald. The Preacher's Commentary Series, Vol. 14: Psalms 73-150. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Inc, 1989, S. 375.]