

ing over. Since Abraham came and crossed over from the land of Mesopotamia to the Promised Land, that act of obedience in faith is pictured in his descendant's names as "Hebrews". That same spiritual action is reflected in this verse. Just as Abraham had to spiritually cross over from the corrupted land of Babylonian jurisdiction to God's Land of Promise, so the Psalmist knows the eyes must be committed to God for that same crossing over. We cannot have our eyes in the old way and the heart in the new. If our eyes do not cross over as well, we simply are fooling ourselves to think we have crossed over.

In verse 36, we saw the Psalmist dealing with his own heart in prayerful protection. In this verse, we see him dealing with the eyes in the same manner.

It is popular for certain groups to encourage the making of a covenant with God over their eyes, and what they will watch. This Psalmist doesn't follow that approach. He definitely wants to commit his path to follow God, but he also knows the making of promises that are too easily broken, due to fallen human nature. His way of dealing with the temptations of the eyes is to beseech God to do the right thing through him. The Psalmist doesn't say, "I will turn away mine eyes", he asks God to do it. That is the life of grace and not of law. The grace that obeys the law.

Now the "vanity", the Psalmist is praying for help with, is "emptiness and falsehood". That is what vanity is. It is all of this world that we would look to for joy and happiness in this life. It is all the temptations that would attract our eyes to be engaged in for the flesh's satisfaction. Maybe it is that movie that corrupts us, that is really nothing but emptiness and falsehood. We are destroyed and for what, simply to fulfill the craving of the eyes for entertainment?

The conclusion of this verse is the request for life. The "quicken" literally being, "give me life". He knows that the vanity the eyes go after is death. The pathway of life is definitely defined as being in God's way.

## Beholding The Holy God!

**38 Stablish thy word unto thy servant, who is devoted to thy fear.**

The word translated "Stablish" is literally, "Stand up". In this verse, the Psalmist is kneeling in the position of humility. We behold his self-acknowledged position of "servant". He does, as so many others in need have done, call upon God standing upon His reliable Word. He doesn't stand upon it in arrogance, but simply in the position of "I am yours God, I am given over to walk in the fear of You."

To stand in the "fear of the LORD" is to indicate having a clear knowledge of one's own corruption and counting upon God for anything of good. It is also to have some inkling of His holiness and righteousness. Longing to be what we simply cannot, and will not be, unless He is the doer of it. This verse shows great spiritual depth and insight, as our Psalmist has progressed in his walk with God.

### 39 Turn away my reproach which I fear: for thy judgments are good.

This verse follows verse 37 in launching with that same "cross over" term. The word for "reproach" also carries the meaning of "resting upon shame, disgrace". He follows this with a confession of "fear".

He has asked God to "cross over" his eyes, but now he asks God to "cross over" a shame and disgrace he clearly senses. He senses it with fear. Now he could be addressing the scorn of enemies, but we have not seen any such issue as "enemies" mentioned in this section. What we have seen is his "fear of the LORD", just preceding this. What I believe our Psalmist is asking for, is that God would cast off, as into a distant, forgotten land, the shame of his sinfulness. He behold's the character of God's holiness in seeing His judgments and commandments. He acknowledges they are Good. Remember Jesus' words:

*19 And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? none is good, save one, that is, God. 20 Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother.*

*Luke 18:19,20*

Verses 19 and 20 interlock more than many would realize. It is that in verse 20 that reveals the goodness of verse 19.

This Psalmist is looking at himself, and looking at God. The fear of the condemnation of a holy God, who beholds his shame, is glaringly in front

of him. He asks God to cast that disgrace far away. This is the heart of the fear of the LORD and walking in fear and trembling when one approaches God's holy Word.

### 40 Behold, I have longed after thy precepts: quicken me in thy righteousness.


This final verse takes us to the conclusion of this open and honest heart before God. He has no boast in himself. What he does have to lay before God he presents with, "Behold". Is it some great treasure he presents, some personal merit? All he has to present to God is his "desire" for God's ways. With this laid at Yahweh's feet, he presents his request. Literally, "in Your righteousness give me life". Yahweh has answered that prayer. It is in the righteousness of God in Christ that we have been given life:

*20b we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. 21 For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.*

*2 Corinthians 5: 20b,21*

Glory to God in the Highest! Praise His holy name! He answers prayer!

Psalm  
119




He

# The Heart Of A Pupil

5

Hebrew reads from right to left. Notice the "He" that precedes each verse:

וְאֶצְרְנָה עֵקֶב:	הוֹרֵנִי יְהוָה דִּרְךְ חַקֶּיךָ	33
וְאֲשַׁמְרָנָה בְּכָל-לֵב:	הַבִּינֵנִי וְאֶצְרָה תוֹרֹתֶיךָ	34
כִּי-בֹו חֲפָצָתִי:	הִדְרִיכֵנִי בַּנְּתִיב מִצְוֹתֶיךָ	35
וְאֵל אֵל-בְּצַע:	הַטִּילֵבִי אֶל-עֲדוֹתֶיךָ	36
בִּדְרֹכֶיךָ חֲנִינִי:	הַעֲבֵר עֵינַי מִרְאֹת שָׁוְא	37
אֲשֶׁר לִירְאָתֶיךָ:	הִקָּם לְעִבְדֶּיךָ אִמְרֹתֶיךָ	38
כִּי מִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ טוֹבִים:	הַעֲבֵר חֲרַפְתִּי אֲשֶׁר יְגִדְתִּי	39
בְּצַדִּיקוֹתֶיךָ חֲנִינִי:	הַנְּהַה תְּאֻבְתִּי לְפָקוּדֶיךָ	40

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## Psalm 119

He

33 Teach me, O LORD, the way of thy statutes; and I shall keep it *unto* the end.

34 Give me understanding, and I shall keep thy law; yea, I shall observe it with *my* whole heart.

35 Make me to go in the path of thy commandments; for therein do I delight.

36 Incline my heart unto thy testimonies, and not to covetousness.

37 Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity; *and* quicken thou me in thy way.

38 Stablish thy word unto thy servant, who *is devoted* to thy fear.

39 Turn away my reproach which I fear: for thy judgments *are* good.

40 Behold, I have longed after thy precepts: quicken me in thy righteousness.

This is the fifth section of Psalm 119. Having covered a more detailed overview of the Psalm, it is my intention to go more thoroughly through each section. Briefly, each section is according to the letter of the Hebrew alphabet. Each letter contains 8 verses that begin with that specific letter. “He” is the fifth letter, so each verse, in the Hebrew, begins with a word starting with the letter “He”.

In Hebrew, unlike English, each letter was originally also a word. We do not know the meaning of every letter today, but we do know most. “He” is one of those of uncertain meaning. With a certain amount of reservation, it is believed to mean, “Lo! Behold, Lo; possibly original form represents a window”. Since the Psalmist built the Psalm based on the letters, it is likely the meaning of each letter played in his thoughts as he composed each section. In this section, though with uncertainty, there is a reflection of “wake up and pay attention” as well as the concept that a window lets light into the house. The Psalmist is certainly seeking to have the light shine in.

This Psalm is also based upon the usage of a host of words that are “legal” terms in the Hebrew. I have gone into a more thorough definition of each word, as it has been encountered, in the previous sections. I would recommend going there to find those expansions. I will cover additional words as we come across them.

## Intelligent Consecration

### **33 Teach me, O LORD, the way of thy statutes; and I shall keep it unto the end.**

This section launches with the request of discipleship. The one whose teaching is sought, is Yahweh. That helps us see this request for discipleship is based upon a relationship with God. A consecration of the Psalmist’s life is understood. This disciple seeks to be taught “*the way*”, being that term of the path of life or “highway”. This way, is more specific in this case. It is not just the way of God in general. He focuses in on the detailed breakdown of individual laws God has given. In asking for understanding in “*the way*” of Yahweh’s statutes, I believe our Psalmist is seeking an understanding of the principles and spirit that underlies each. This is not a legalism, it is a seeking of life!

The Hebrew word for “*unto the end*” is a word that can be translated “as a consequence”. The idea

behind the second part of this verse is, that the Psalmist will keep, observe and guard that which God will teach him. He is giving a word of commitment to not just learn, but to obey. He is consecrating his discipleship to not be in vain. This shows the reflection of counting the cost and going forward in commitment, based upon that reflection.

### **34 Give me understanding, and I shall keep thy law; yea, I shall observe it with my whole heart.**

The Psalmist is certainly a wise man, for he knows that understanding is critical in learning. A major pitfall in the educational systems of today, is the unbalanced weight on “rote” memorization. People go through college, get their degrees, and are unable to process the information they have gotten in a discerning manner.

I have gotten advertising from a local safety training school. They say they are promoting the lost “western cowboy commonsense” system in their safety training methods. Their system is trying to get people back to thinking intelligently in their work, to avoid catastrophes in the first place. If that fails, then to think critically to come up with a solution based upon what resources are at hand. It seems to be taking a swerve away from the “rote” memorization of pat answers. I believe this is the principle we are seeing the Psalmist ask for.

When you think of the modern stereotype accusation against “the law”, you are presented with “the list of rules” mentality. That is not what was at the base of God’s law in the first place.

Consider this example: When King David’s son Absalom was in exile, this woman came to pose a problem-story of a fictitious situation:

*5 And the king said unto her, What aileth thee? And she answered, I am indeed a widow woman, and mine husband is dead. 6 And thy handmaid had two sons, and they two strove together in the field, and there was none to part them, but the one smote the other, and slew him. 7 And, behold, the whole family is risen against thine handmaid, and they said, Deliver him that smote his brother, that we may kill him, for the life of his brother whom he slew; and we will destroy the heir also: and so they shall quench my coal which is left, and shall not leave to my husband neither name nor remainder upon the earth. 8 And the king said unto the*

*woman, Go to thine house, and I will give charge concerning thee. 2 Samuel 14:5-8*

This account was part of a trick from King David’s officer Joab. The problem-story was made up to present a principal of law to David, in order to expedite the return of David’s son.

In view of the problem-story, according to the law, the one son would have to be killed for the death of the other. The woman would have no surviving sons to carry on their father’s line. David rules for the sparing of the son, for the other factors involved. David was exercising judgment based upon an understanding of the law. The principal weighs in mercy, and an importance of carrying on the departed one’s family line.

This Psalmist wants understanding, and commits himself to following in that wisdom with all his heart. He is committing himself to a complete consecration to obey all God’s directions in the path of enlightenment. Apart from that principal, David would have ruled for the execution of the remaining son.

### **35 Make me to go in the path of thy commandments; for therein do I delight.**

The request for “*Make me to go*” can be read as “Make me to tread (march)”. The part which follows, “*the path*”, can be read as “trodden with the feet (path)”. Both words draw the action of the feet to the trail. In a more modern scene, you could liken this to a train to be made to go in its track. The one is locked and dependent upon the other. So, in this life, the Psalmist seeks for God to set him, as the train, upon God’s tracks. These tracks being God’s “mitzvoth”, commandments.

Now don’t miss the important second half of this verse. The commandments of God are portrayed as burdensome by many, but this Psalmist obviously knows something so many don’t. To him, they are a pleasure. At this point, I think it is good to remember that passage in the New Testament that tells us that attitude shouldn’t change:

*3 For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous. 4 For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. 1 John 5:3,4*

The Apostle John knew God’s commandments and faith were intimately connected, not opponents of each other.

### **36 Incline my heart unto thy testimonies, and not to covetousness.**

Verses 36 and 37 make a slight turn in direction. The Psalmist has been asking God for spiritual enlightenment in the way of life. Laying a foundational net, as it were, of prayer to ensure a solid foundation in God’s ways. These verses make the shift to pray for God’s overcoming his corrupt human nature. He knows obedience to God involves more than knowing the right things to do. In this verse, he prays for his own heart.

In verse 34, he made the commitment with his whole heart, but here he acknowledged that even his heart was going to need God’s special help to go in the right path. This Psalmist is confessing the amazing point of ALL IS BY GRACE. He wants to know the ways that tell of God’s character, as do His testimonies.

The second portion of this verse opens up the first half. The word translated, “*covetousness*” has the translation also of “profit, unjust gain”. At its outermost meaning, the idea is of cheating from others to enrich oneself. That is obviously evil. The innermost meaning may make us a little more uncomfortable. It is that which is legitimately gained, simple profit. What we see here is the Psalmist seeing his own heart and knowing there are two roads before it. One is the path of material gain in this world, the other is the path of seeking God’s revelation in His testimonies. This is talking heart focus. It is not wrong to conduct business for legitimate profit. It is wrong to allow your heart to “stretch out” after those things. (The word used for “incline” indicating the stretching out of the heart towards.) This Psalmist also knows that unless God does something of a special work, he will naturally go the path of materialism. He is well aware of its captivating power. He knows war has to be declared against it, before God, to keep from loosing to it.

In this, we can behold some of the fear of God in action. The Psalmist beholding himself, and trembling at his weakness that would spell his destruction. He appeals to God for His merciful victory in this area of life.

### **37 Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity; and quicken thou me in thy way.**

When I first looked at this verse in the Hebrew, I was taken aback when I saw that lead-in word. It is the word for “Hebrew”. “Hebrew” means a cross-