

Psalms 18-12-13b

Let's resume our study now in Psalm 19. After having described the heavens, David makes this very interesting and somewhat puzzling claim that God has made a tent for the sun in the sky. Now, have you ever seen this tent? Evidently the sun comes out of its tent every day like a bridegroom and runs his race from one side to the other.

So we would guess the tent must be in the east if that's where he comes out, right? But I don't see the tent. Looks to me like the sun just comes up from behind the horizon. So I'm mystified by this tent.

What is going on with the tent? Doesn't make sense. Could have left it out. Didn't have to say anything about a tent.

Why does it say God made a tent? Well, here's my thought on that. Here we have the heavens that are wordlessly and yet effectively communicating who God is, what God does, the power, the regularity, the order, the pattern of it, right? And then God does a thing. After all of that has been observed and described and explained, then God does a thing.

It says he has set a tent for the sun, a tabernacle for the sun, and the sun, not the tent, is like a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, rejoices like a strong man to run its race. So God put a tent there and something powerful came out of it that is full of creative power. Why wouldn't this just be a strong man or a mighty warrior? Why is it a bridegroom? What happens when you have a bridegroom and he comes out of his pavilion and does what bridegrooms do and grabs his bride and begins to build a life together? What happens? There are offspring.

There is progeny. There is creative fruitfulness in Israel. This was the thing.

You start generating children. There is fruitfulness. And the idea of the bridegroom is that there is going to be a family involved.

You look at the New Testament and the parables that deal with the wedding feast and the wise and foolish virgins, and here comes the bridegroom. Well, what is anticipated in all of this? It is an initial happy celebration, but ultimately there are going to be those who are friends of the bridegroom, but he's got a bride and there is going to be proliferation. There's going to be a numerous family involved.

So he is a bridegroom and the picture poetically speaks of creative energy, creative power, something that makes a difference, something that's going to put something on the earth that wasn't here before. And the bridegroom coming out of his chamber, his pavilion, is ready to do something. He's not just coming out and standing around.

I was listening to myself, however many years ago it was, 22 odd years ago, talking about the melancholia that afflicted Amnon when he got to looking at his half-sister Tamar and said he

was just sick all the time. He was just moaning around and this was the medieval, I remember in my English classes, they're always talking about the medieval lovestruck guy who all he could do is lean against a tree and strum a lute and wonder, you know, how can I ever capture this maiden that's so far beyond my aspirations and whatnot? And it just rendered them worthless and weak and lily-livered and incapable of doing anything meaningful. The bridegroom has secured the bride.

He is ready to go forth and make things happen. He wants to support her. He wants to build up the family business.

He wants to build up the family. He's got a purpose. He's got a program.

He's got a direction. He is fitted. He's ready.

He's got everything he needs. And he comes out ready to tackle the day and he's got a tiger by the tail. He's ready to get it done.

Well, same thing when the vigorous man, the champion, the strong man comes out to run a race. He's not intimidated. He's not fearful.

He's not cowed. He's not depressed. He's not worried that, oh, I'll probably trip.

It's all gonna, you know, what's the point? Why did I even come out here? And now look at these guys. They're bigger and stronger and hairier than I am. How am I ever going to finish? What does he do? He's a strong, vigorous man.

He expects to win this race. He expects to run this course and succeed and prevail and conquer and overcome and win the prize. He is confident.

He has a great expectation. So these two pictures speak of vigor, of energy, of purpose, of a plan. There is a race to be run.

There is a marriage to be fulfilled, a bridegroom, that there's structure and order. It builds on what came before. So the son is pictured as coming out of this tent with this kind of attitude.

Then we forget all about the son. And in the next verse, the son's gonna run one end of the heavens to the other. Then verse seven, the law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul.

The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. Wonderful words, but there seems, it's like the bridge over the river Kwai. The bridge doesn't seem to be there anymore.

And you're, you go from one side of the river to the other. Well, the key in my mind, as I mentioned before the break is tent. Because metaphorically speaking, you've got the heavens and they're, you know, we just had president 41 Bush funeral.

And one of his famous phrases was, there's a thousand points of light. And when you look up in

the sky and the heavens and the firmament, you've got a thousand points of light. They're all, you know, they vary star to star in glory, but they're all within a range.

They've even got a scale for this. How bright is the star to the naked eye or they used to have. And so they're all kind of a piece.

And then against this backdrop, David says, God put a tent in the sky and out comes the sun that outshines everything. When that sun comes out, you can't see the stars anymore. You don't see the Milky way.

You don't see the night sky. It completely overwhelms everything around it. It's who's going to overwhelm the mighty champion when he comes to run his course, who's going to overwhelm the bridegroom when he comes out of his pavilion and he's ready to go.

What did God do in the course of history when that first great tent was built at Moses behest and under his direction from the pattern that was shown to him on the Mount? What is revealed in the tent? What is revealed through the tent? What comes out of the symbolism and the imagery and the Levitical ritual that is centered in that tent? What comes out of it? When you think about the revelation of God, it was largely general. You had almost no specific guidance from God. Can you think of the first time that God gave any really specific law? When did law begin? When did ordinance, when did command really start? There was a single command that said, don't eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. He tells Cain, if you do well, you'll be accepted.

If not, sin is crouching at the door. But in terms of who God is and what God has done, you don't have the book of Genesis floating around for Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob to read. They're creating the stuff that that book is going to contain as they live their lives.

They seem to know some things. They seem to know about altars and sacrifice and all of that, but nothing seems to be written down anywhere. Noah gets a little bit of guidance after the flood.

When he comes out and God talks about the menu has changed. Don't eat the blood. If a man sheds blood, by man shall his blood be shed.

You get a little bit more by way of ordinance, but practically nothing. What communicates who God is and what God has done all the way down to the time of Moses? It is, especially outside of the line of Abraham, it is entirely general revelation. It speaks without words.

What happens with the tent? With the tent, the sun comes out and it is a whole different thing than what's ever been seen in the heavens or in the firmament before. And it is replete. It is fulsome.

It is detailed. It is big. It is powerful.

It is life-changing. The tent, in my view, that David refers to here is a literal metaphorical reference. It is a tent here, but it's talking about the tent, capital T, the tabernacle, where God revealed with words who he is and what he does, what he has done, what he will do.

The books of Moses, the books that Moses wrote repose in the tent. So just keep that thought in mind here, because what has he said? All of this has communicated, even though it's gone out to the ends of the earth, there were no words. But then God has put this tent and the sun has come out and he's mighty and he's powerful and he's got a direction and he's got a course to run.

And he starts at one end of the heavens and he goes clear to the other. But notice, just as night follows day, day unto day spews forth, bubbles forth, springs forth with speaking, inaudible speaking, concepts that don't get formed into words, and night unto night reveals knowledge. Well, there's this sun, but it's got an arc.

It's going to start, it's going to shine, and then it's going to finish. It's so much interesting when you think of the sun as the law of Moses, as the books of Moses, as the written revelation of God that begins with the tent, begins with the tables of the law where God writes. And instead of his handiwork in the heavens, it's the finger of God on the tablets.

And where do those tablets go? Into the Ark of the Testimony, which resides where? In the tent. And the information, the knowledge, the doctrines come out of that revelation. So against the backdrop of the nations and general revelation comes Israel with its tent, and the Word of God shining like the sun, rising from one end of heaven, and its circuit to the other end, and there is nothing hidden from its heat.

It doesn't say it's light. All of the commentators say, well, you know, why didn't you say light? It says heat, but heat just means light. No, it doesn't say light.

It says heat. What's the difference in light and heat? These two fingers on my left hand can tell you the difference between light and heat, because I was out in the travel trailer and I wanted to, the refrigerator is off, and I wanted to leave the door open so it doesn't mildew, as one does with a non-functional refrigerator, but it's got a light in there. It's got a little tubular bulb.

It had only been on a few seconds, and so I slid the cover back, and I was just gonna pull that little, you know, it's got a contact on each end. It's like a car dome light or whatever. It's 12 volt.

I thought, eh, it's only been on a couple of seconds. I reached over there to get it, and I was seeing the light, but I did not realize the heat, and I've got a giant blister on my index finger and a giant blister on my thumb from grabbing that bulb, because heat has an effect. I could hold my hand there and the light shine on it all day long and suffer no ill effect.

Heat cooks things. Heat fries, blisters, burns, changes. When the sun comes out, David's not, it has light.

He's not talking about the light. He says, nothing is hidden from its heat. Nothing is unaltered.

When the sun is in the sky, the sun is going to be felt, not just seen, it is going to be felt. It is going to be sensible, the sun. Now, there was already the unspoken, unwritten, unvoiced testimony of the heavens, but now the sun is going to convey with heat.

Heat speaks of fire, fire speaks of judgment. Now that the sun is out, there's going to be a judgment. You remember Paul's diatribe in Romans about, I was alive once apart from the law, but when the law came, what happened? Sin revived, then I died.

The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is what? Oh, we have to go back and do Romans all over again, all 16 chapters, verse by verse. The sting of death is sin, the strength of sin is the law. It's a puzzle, unless you get it in context in Romans.

Why is the strength of sin the law? I thought the strength of sin was like lust and corruption and the powers of darkness and the world of flesh and the devil. And Paul says in Romans, the sting of death is sin and the strength of sin is the law, why? Well, I was alive once apart from the law, law came, sin revived, I died. Because the law reveals sin, shines on sin, and it's like something dark in the sun, it heats up.

I've owned black cars and I've owned white cars. Guess which one gets hotter in the noonday sun? The black car, just becomes an oven. You can fry an egg, literally, I've seen people do it.

Fry an egg on the hood of a black car or even any dark colored car, summertime. So what are we talking about here? The words of the law are revealed when that sun comes out of the tent. The word of God emanates from Israel, from the tabernacle, now there is the writing.

You remember they began by writing the law on the cliff. You remember that when we went through Exodus and Moses and Joshua and this is why Canaanites are accountable. Everybody cries the blues because the Canaanites got wiped out to the last man, woman and child and dog and cat and everything else.

Israelites went up there, crossed the river, wrote the whole law on a whitewashed cliff for them all to read, gave them plenty of time. This is how Rahab and some of the others in the land knew what was coming. They knew the standards of this God.

They knew they couldn't meet it. They had a choice of coming to the God of Israel or being destroyed. They chose destruction and they got it.

It's the law. The law put the general revelation of God in nature into powerful, communicative terms in words. So you start out the Psalm the way history starts out.

Heavens declare God's glory. The firmament shows forth the works of his hands. You get that just by looking and you're accountable just for that much revelation.

But when the sun comes out of his tent, starts running his course like a powerful bridegroom

champion runner, that's a whole different thing. Nothing is hidden from its heat. It is going to shine and blaze down like nothing in the heavens and firmament have ever done before.

Isn't it interesting that even in creation week, you start out with day and night on day one, but you don't get the sun and the moon and the stars until day four. And in my view, you don't actually even see them until after the flood. And I think it's Genesis nine where God talks to Noah and gives him the covenant of the rainbow and talks about that you can eat the meat if you drain out the blood and man, capital punishment now is incumbent upon man.

Man sheds blood, by man shall his blood be shed. All of that comes when the sun comes out, in my view. There's a bright shining sun in the sky that they didn't see before the flood.

That's, you know, there hadn't been rain. The whole physics of weather was different and a mist came up from the ground and watered things and you don't have rain. Nobody knew what rain was until the flood and the fountains of the deep were broken up and it's a whole different world.

And I think when Noah and his family walked off of the ark 14 months after the flood began and looked up in the sky, now, instead of a greater light by day and a lesser light by night, here's the bright, distinct, clear orb of the sun, too bright to look at directly. You really have to almost look at it indirectly. And then you've got the moon at night and so on, but whatever the mist or the water in the air that had been there before, whether it was a canopy or what, is gone now.

And at that same time, specifics of law and justice come from God to Noah. That's when it begins, is when the sun becomes visible. Same thing here, the sun comes out, nothing's hidden from his heat.

So now, what would you talk about? Let's talk about the revelation that comes from the words, from the sun that has come out of the tabernacle, out of Israel, and has been communicated to the whole world through Israel. God told Abraham, your descendants are gonna be a light that shines to the Gentiles, and in you all nations of the earth are gonna be blessed. How are they blessed? It's not because Abraham and his descendants are such great people, it's because of what comes out of the tent.

It's the revelation of God in and through them. Their mission is to be God's witness on earth. They abdicated that responsibility, failed that responsibility.

Whose responsibility is it now? Who are God's representative on earth now? Who's the body of Christ? The literal body of Christ is seated at the right hand of the father, whereas the metaphorical body of Christ, the effective and actual body of Christ now, it is us. We are here. And what did Jesus say? Let your light so shine before men that they see your works and glorify your father in heaven.

It's the sun shining, it's the heat that radiates. We ought to make a difference. We ought to be

visible as light and heat.

So to me now, if you take that perspective, and David moving from general revelation to, and Genesis, the early chapters of Genesis, that's when the world is created. The tabernacle is what creates Israel as a nation. That's the presence of God in their midst.

That sets them apart as a special and chosen and unique people. It's the tent and it's God in the tent and the word of God coming forth from the tent. That's what streaks across the sky and nothing can escape its heat.

And I think it illuminates Romans where Paul talks about, in Romans 6 and along in there, talking about the effect that the law, sin is not imputed where there is no law. Why? Didn't have the sun out of the tent yet. You can be aware of general revelation, but if you haven't been told, how can you avoid the bad and do the good other than your conscience being your guide? And of course, Paul talks about that as well, that their conscience either accuses or excuses them, even apart from the law.

But the idea here is the sun in the sky that makes all things plain and there is no excuse is not just the general revelation of Romans chapter one, but it is the specific revelation in and through Israel, the word of God that has come out of the tent. So now look at verse seven, the law of the Lord. See, now that the sun is out, we can talk about the words, the law of the Lord.

You read Exodus and Leviticus and Numbers and Deuteronomy. You've got a lot of words, right? There's no general firmament and happy heavens there. You've got specifics, details, rituals, ethics, morality, justice, injustice, definitions, and punishments for the same that are reflecting God's attitude and the various levels of ire that are generated in divine wrath by various levels of sin or corruption or defilement or abomination, sins of the high hand.

There are gradations. There are intensities of sin and intensities of evil and God's response to those is reflected in the graduations in punishment and whether or not there is a remedy, whether or not you can pay a fine, whether or not you can eye for an eye, whether or not there is no remedy but execution or being driven from your people and cast out. It is clear.

And now that you have that, look at all of the benefits David enumerates. The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul. The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple.

The statutes 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 and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold, sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. Moreover, by them your servant is warned and in keeping them there is great reward.

Let me just say in passing, in case I don't get to it tonight, when you look at verse 10, what do you see? We've had these descriptions that are very parallel and very much follow a pattern.

And then he says something about them, about how they should be appreciated. What are the two comparisons? Just the two nouns.

You got gold. What's the other one? Honey. What color is gold? What color is honey? What color is the sun? What brings out the beauty of gold? Take something gold and put it in the sunlight.

Let the light shine on it. It's, there's nothing like it. Honey is golden.

It's radiant. And it's, I think this is a little wink back. He could have chosen any number of things to compare the word of God to, but he compares it to gold and to honey.

And notice one of them is, is permanent. What do you want to survive the wood, hay and stubble fire? Gold, silver and precious stones, right? But first and foremost is gold. Gold survives the fire.

What about honey? What's the great thing about honey? What did Jonathan use it for and got in trouble with his father, the king? Grabbed a piece of honeycomb on the way into battle when Saul had said, I've made a vow on behalf of the whole army. Nobody can touch any food until we've defeated this enemy. Jonathan wasn't there for that.

He was busy doing other and better things. So he grabs a honeycomb and his father's ready to execute him. But why did Jonathan grab it? It brightened his countenance.

It gave him fresh energy. It strengthened him. But it's perishable, it's edible.

You have it, you eat it, it does its benefit and you're ready to go get some more. Why does it mention the honeycomb? There's content and there is structure, right? There's the good stuff and you can eat them both, but they serve two different functions. But I think it's no accident that the two comparisons that David makes here go all the way back to the color of the sun.

It's golden. You talk about a golden sunset, a golden sunrise, and these two things partake of that type of glory, that type of visual glory. Well, quickly now, let's talk about these comparisons in verses seven through nine.

And I made myself a little chart because I didn't want to forget everything I figured out. But of course, you got to keep track of your chart. There it is.

So, notice that in verse seven, you have two sticks, two lines. Verse eight, you have two lines. Verse nine, you have two lines.

And in each of them, you have something of the Lord described as something and it does something to someone. I know that's a lot to cover, but look at the first one. The law of the Lord.

So the first one, and I just made a grid. So I've got all of these are of the Lord, every single one. Look at verse seven, the law of the Lord, the testimony of the Lord, statutes of the Lord,

commandment of the Lord, fear of the Lord, judgments of the Lord.

And this is not El, the great mighty God that created the firmament and the heavens and His glory and His handiwork is visible. Who is this? Yahweh. Who finds out that Yahweh is God's name? The people of the tent.

When Moses comes, who shall I say has sent me? Tell them Yahweh sent you. I am that I am, the great I am. Yeah, yeah, Yahweh.

It is the verb to be in Hebrew in a particular and unique form. But the covenant name is revealed when the son comes out of the tent. And so they said, oh, this is another clue that it's two different Psalms pasted together because it's El in the first part and it's Yahweh.

And I just think, ah, it makes you want to tear your hair out. No, there's a reason why the name changes because you've got the covenant people now. You've got the covenant of God in writing.

It's in words. You're not relying on the unspoken universal witness. You've got a specific fiery witness as effective as the sun in generating heat.

So the first one, the law, this is Torah, but this is not the technical Torah, the five books of Moses, the law per se. In David's day, that meaning hadn't really solidified because you didn't have a complete Old Testament yet. Most of the prophets are future for David.

He's got the books of Moses and just a few others at his disposal. But the law of the Lord, Torah, basically means instruction. You don't get instruction.

What does it say in Timothy and in Hebrews about the word of the Lord? What's it profitable for? The word of God is alive and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword. It pierces the dividing asunder of the soul and spirit joints, the narrow critic of the thoughts and intents of the heart. All scripture is inspired by God.

God breathed doctrine, reproof, correction, instruction in righteousness. The word of God is profitable for instruction. The words of God, the Torah of God gives a specific instruction.

So what does he say? The instruction of Yahweh is tamim. Tamim is the word, it's the same problem we have using the word perfect in Ephesians. Or continuing the verse I just quoted, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

That the man of God may be what? Perfect in the sense of morally perfect, stainlessly sinless. What is it? Complete, mature, reaching his full stature and capability. That the man of God may be complete.

And tamim means perfect in the sense of complete, perfected, fulfilled. It's got its full potential. So the instruction of Yahweh is comprehensive.

There's nothing missing, there's nothing lacking, there's no gap, there's no shortcoming, there's no flaw. The instruction of God is complete. Then you have the word Mishabbat.

Mishabbat, which means to turn back in its literal sense. But this is really more like turning back the clock. It means to refresh or restore or renew.

The prodigal son left and then he came back and he was restored to the privileges and the opportunities and the grace and the immediate favor of his father, right? That's what this means. So the instruction of the Lord is complete and it restores, it refreshes, it renews, it brings us back. And what does it bring back? The soul, the nefesh.

This nefesh is soul and it's also life. So if your life seems incomplete, if it seems to lack, if it seems to have a gap or a missing couple of pieces in the thousand piece puzzle, the instruction of the Lord is complete and it completes, it restores and renews and refreshes the soul. The second statement in verse seven.

The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. Testimony here is edut and it does mean testimony but it's testimony in the sense of what someone tells you whenever you're trying to buy something, you go to Amazon, you wanna get something for Christmas, you say, well, what do other people say? Why do they post all of those reviews? Well, I see that 97 people gave this one star. This must be a bad apple slicer.

This is a rotten can opener. Look at all these bad reviews. This is testimony in the sense of witness or advice, counsel on what to do or how to proceed.

So the testimony, the witness, the counsel, edut, E-D-U-T, of the Lord is emunah. This is a form of emunah, E-M-U-N-A-H, which means something that provides a foundation. It is a support.

It upholds, it anchors, it steadies, it confirms, establishes a thing. It puts it into bedrock. Nothing like having your foundation supported by things that they've driven down to bedrock.

That part of your foundation is never gonna move. That's emunah. So the counsel, the witness, the testimony of the Lord, this written testimony, which is the sun that came out of the tabernacle in Israel, upholds, supports, nourishes, confirms, making wise or instructing the one who is plain.

It says simple, but this is not simple as in dumb. This is simple as, remember in our last psalm, we talked about the twisty. To those who are twisty and torturous, God will show himself unpredictable.

Well, the simple is the opposite of that. If you're not devious and playing the angles and trying to find a loophole and a gap, and well, you didn't say I couldn't do this. You said don't light a fire.

You didn't say don't light a match or whatever. The simple are those who what you see is what

you get. Everything is plain.

It's black and white. There's not 50 shades of gray. And so people like that, people say, well, you can be taken advantage of.

You're naive. You're so simple that you're naive. You're easily fooled.

But the testimony, counsel, witness of the Lord is a firm foundation that instructs and makes wise those who aren't relying on their own craftiness and wiles and experience of the world. They used to argue that, well, you know, you ought to sleep around and get a lot of experience. And then you'll, when you get married, you know, you'll know your way around or whatever.

It's just nonsense. You want to be simple. You want to be uncomplicated.

You want to be straightforward. And for support and for a foundation, the counsel of the Lord is all you need. You don't need worldly experience.

You need the testimony of God's written word. That's what David says here. That's verse seven.

Verse eight, real quickly now. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart. Statutes here is piquede, P-I-Q-U.

Actually, it's P-I-Q-Q-U-D-E. And it's a, I can't hardly even say that word. But this talks about the precepts of the Lord.

The statutes are precepts. This is principles of guidance. This is the how-to, the procedures.

If you're going to do a thing, this is the way to do it. They are procedures of the Lord. And they are yeshareem.

You'd think this might be tzedek or some form of righteousness, but it's yeshareem, which means they are straight. They're true. It's these precepts, these procedures will enable you to do everything straight and true.

Plumb, level, whatever standard you apply to it, it's going to conform. It's going to be accepted. It's going to pass inspection because you've got a true measure.

So the precepts of the Lord are a perfect reference. They're a plumb line. They're a good level.

They are just scales. What do they do? They make the heart glad. A heart that loves God is gladdened when things are right.

If you're a carpenter, I know a guy that's a carpenter and he's gone in and rebuilt a number of houses, restored them and such. There's nothing more daunting than when you start taking things apart and you realize that your walls are not plumb, your corners are not square, the floor is not level. Everything is out of whack and it's structural.

The structure isn't good. The bones are bad. What rejoices your heart? You start tearing off plaster and lath and you get there and the bones, the sides are just plumb and true and square and well done.

It was done like it's supposed to be done. The studs are where they're supposed to be. The wiring is where it's supposed to be.

The plumbing is done right. And it rejoices the heart. It's a joy to see things that are as good as they can be.

Nothing rejoices my heart more than to finish a piano and I go back and play it and the notes just sound like a single string. The triple string notes sound like one string, every one of them. I run up, I run down, I listen to them and they're just pure tones.

And on a good piano, it's a joy. You just wanna sit there and hammer a note. You know, it's like, wow, that sounds great.

That's what the precepts, the statutes of God do for the heart because they're true and because they're right. They ring true. The conscience of a Gentile that never even had the light of the sun in the ancient day recognizes these when he hears them because he's seeking truth.

He's looking for that which is right. When he finds it, he's like, finally, here it is. It wasn't Buddhism.

It wasn't any one of these cults or any one of these false religions. Here is the truth. And there is a joyful response in the heart.

Second part of verse eight says, the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. This is what it says, the commands of the Lord, what he demands, what he ordains, what he requires. So these commands, the instructions that God gives, do this, don't do that.

They are pure. And this is the word that's used of metal that's been refined and the impurities have been taken out. It's free of contamination.

These commands, people try to find fault with them. Oh, why did God command Israel to do this and so? And wasn't he an awful Old Testament God? The commands that he gave Israel are pure. And if you don't see that, you need to look more closely because they are unpolluted, they are uncorrupted, they are just, they are fair, they are righteous.

And if you don't see that, you need to keep looking. But the commandment of the Lord is pure. It's not a mixed bag.

It's not so many laws in the United States try to do one thing and break two or three other things. You know, they're impure. God's commands are pure.

And what do they do? They give light, they shine, they illuminate for the eyes. They shine for the

eyes, you're back to the sun. These written precepts and commands and statutes of the Lord shine on your path for your eyes.

You can see where you're going. Verse nine, the fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever. This is fear, yirei in Hebrew means awe and respect.

Healthy recognition of just who and what God is. Anybody that came into the presence of God in the Old Testament, you look at them, they fell on their face. When Peter realized who Jesus was, he fell on his face.

He said, depart from me, I'm a sinful man. I'm not worthy to be in your presence. That is the healthy kind of fear.

And the fear of the Lord, respecting him, recognizing him, realizing that you can't look straight at the sun because it is too glorious for your eyes. The fear of the Lord is clean. And this is another word that's translated pure, but it's tehora in Hebrew, T-E-H-O-W-R-A-H, tehora.

This is the word that's used for ceremonial purity. You're undefiled, you're morally pure. The commands of God are pure.

And when you follow those commands and adhere to those statutes and appreciate those testimonies and witnesses and words of instruction, you are pure in a different sense. You're not as pure as God or his word, but you are undefiled. You are qualified to approach, ceremonially clean.

And those who have this fear of the Lord can take a stand or remain or abide forever. Remember our Psalm a few back, talking about who can approach God's holy hill, who can enter his tent as a guest? Those who are obedient, those who are faithful. Well, the fear of the Lord, that obedience and faithfulness enables us to be sanctified, to be purified, to be cleansed, to be undefiled.

Second part of verse nine, the judgments of the Lord, true and righteous altogether. This is Mishpat, these are the judicial decisions of God. Shafat is the word for judge.

M-shafat turns it into a noun. It is the judicial decisions, the decrees, the penalties, the adjudications of God. The adjudications of the Lord are emeth, they are truth.

It's just the simple word for truth. And tzedek, righteous, altogether. Yakdav here, translated altogether, is the word for unified.

They are of a piece, they are part of a whole. They're not wayward, there's not an outlier, there's not a strange one that's out of keeping with the pattern. God's judgments are part of a unified, consistent, righteous, true entirety.

None of them are weird or strange or uncharacteristic. And you get the idea that this rhythm, this ritual, this pattern of statements is something that David hoped, this might've been a

refrain in the song where they would go back and sing that part two or three times so that you could remember the blessings of knowing God's word. This is all about God's word.

It is the son that has made what was general and universal specific and clear for us. It's a wonderful, wonderful tribute to the word of God. It is more to be desired than gold because it lasts longer.

It is sweeter than honey because it nourishes eternally, not just for the moment. And by them, your servant is warned and in keeping them, great reward. You can scratch out, there is.

In keeping them, great reward. Keeping them is a great reward. Just dwelling in it, all of those benefits above listed.

In keeping them, great reward. Well, we'll pick up next time at verse 12, but hopefully we've at least suggested a good way of understanding these first 11 verses and particularly the unity of the first part of that section with the second part. It anticipates it, it sets the backdrop for it.

The heavens are the backdrop for the sun and these first verses give us an appreciation for the specificity and the glory and the power of God's word that began to emerge. And in David's day, that's what it was. It was the word that came through Moses from the tent, from the tabernacle, which was a copy and picture of the heavenly.

So, what a wonderful encouragement it is to us to remember how important God's word is for us, not only to listen to it on Bible class nights, but to reflect on it, to think about it, to figure out where it illuminates our path and sustains and energizes us, enables us to lay a treasure for ourselves that will be that gold and silver and precious stones, to eliminate our impurities, to turn us back and restore us and renew us, to energize us and give us strength. Well, we'll pick up, as I say, at verse 12 next time. Let's close here in a word of prayer.

Father, we thank you for the truth of your word. We thank you for the gift of your word and for its tremendous effect in our lives, purging away the dross and enabling us to stand in your sight for all eternity. We pray that God, the Holy Spirit, will minister to our hearts in a powerful and effective way, enable us to see clearly in its light the path that we should walk, the course that we should follow, so that our lives will reflect your glory and the glory of the Lord Jesus.

We pray these things in his name, amen.