



The Soul-Winner's Secret

Chapter 19 – King David's Use Of His Bible

David said, "Princes also did sit and speak against me; but Thy servant did meditate in Thy statutes. Thy testimonies are also my delight and my counsellors." (Psalm 119:23, 24)

What a picture! Evil men are plotting against him, digging a pit for him, gnashing on him with their teeth, but he sits quietly meditating on God's statutes. These statutes are his counsellors. He talks over his affairs with them and finds out what they have to say. Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and Moses and Joshua are his advisers. To be sure they are dead, but they live more vitally in the truths they spoke and exemplified than they did in their bodies.

Paul says in writing to the Romans, "Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning; that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." (Rom. 15:4.) David discovered this blessed secret for himself, and although his Bible was much more limited than ours, he made glorious use of it. Here are some of the blessings he got from it:

1. Wisdom and understanding. We are very foolish and shortsighted, but the wisdom and foresight of God are at the disposal of our faith. David says, "Thou, through Thy commandments hast made me wiser than mine enemies; for they are ever with me. I have more understanding than all my teachers; for Thy testimonies are my meditation. I understand more than the ancients, because I keep Thy precepts." I have often been amazed and delighted at the keen insight and uncommon common sense of otherwise ignorant and illiterate men and women who have been full of the Holy Ghost, and who were lovers and diligent students of their Bibles. They have more wisdom than their teachers, and easily outwit and confound all their enemies. Paul in writing to Timothy said, "The Holy Scriptures are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." (2 Tim. 3:15)

2. Joy. "The joy of the Lord is your strength," said Nehemiah.



"But how am I to get this joy?" you ask. By receiving the Lord of joy Himself into your heart, which you do by hearty faith in what He says. Once upon a time my wife said "Yes," and because I believed and acted upon my faith, that filled me with joy that has been increasing for years. God has said great things, given us "exceeding great and precious promises." If we believe them and act upon our faith, He will come into our lives and our joy shall be full. (1 John 1:4) Hear David: "I have rejoiced in the way of Thy testimonies as much as in all riches." "I rejoice at Thy Word, as one that findeth great spoil."

The Word of God was the well of salvation from which David drew water with joy. There is the outer shell of the letter and the inner kernel of spirit and life in the Word of God. Those who have learned the secret of getting at the kernel in a text and hearing the whisper of the voice of Jesus in it, and have caught the flash of the love-light and tender sympathy of His eye through it, will understand David's joy.

3. Hope. Faith has to do with the present, hope with the future. Many a man fails, not because of the present trouble, but because the future looks dark and his hope fails, and in discouragement he casts away his shield of faith and gives up the fight. Well does Paul name hope as one of the three divine graces. He who wins in the battle of life must "hope to the end." During the darkest days of the Revolution, Washington never lost hope. Amid the awful suspense and uncertainties of the Civil War, Lincoln remained confident and hoped on. And so it was with David. He passed through dark hours. Taken from the quiet, sheltered life of a shepherd, he was placed in a palace and made son-in-law to the king, only to be hated and hunted for his life for years, while his wife was given to another. His own people murmured against him and would have stoned him. His own son rebelled against him and sought his life, until in the agony and perplexity of his soul he cried out, "All Thy waves and Thy billows have gone over me."

But then he remembered God's promises and cried out again, "Remember Thy word unto Thy servant, upon which Thou hast caused me to hope." My soul fainteth for Thy salvation; but I hope in Thy word," and then he questions and assures his soul, "Why art thou cast down, O my



soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God; for I shall yet praise Him, who is the health of my countenance and my God."

4. Comfort. The idea of comfort in the Bible is not simply to soothe, but to aid, strengthen, inspire and encourage. And when God comforts us He draws nigh to us and draws us nigh to Himself, and wipes away our tears and assures and strengthens our hearts and fills us with a sense of His presence and almighty sufficiency, until our poor little fears and sorrows vanish and a great calm, a river of joy, and a holy courage take possession of our souls. In youth we start out strong and defiant, asking only a platform on which to display and prove our powers, but sooner or later we each come to that pathetic spot where our heads droop and our hearts fail and we want comfort. It was so with Paul, and he cries out, "Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort, who comforteth us in all our tribulations.... For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ." And even our blessed Lord Himself was strengthened by an angel in the days of His flesh. (Matt 22:43)

Shall we not follow David in his diligent study of God's truth, and shall we not thank God for His immeasurable and unspeakable gift, and prize as never before the infinite treasure He has bestowed upon us in His Word?