

CONVICTIONS AND CONCERN Psa. 139:19-24

Intro: In the first 18 verses of Psalm 139 the Psalmist soars to lofty heights as he contemplates the character of God. We see:

- (1) God's omniscience (vv. 1-6). He knows all things.
- (2) God's omnipresence (vv. 7-12). He dwells everywhere.
- (3) God's omnipotence (vv. 13-18). He can do anything.

It is no wonder that he reaches a crescendo in vv. 17, 18.

There is nothing objectionable, nothing but truth which becomes more glorious the longer we think about it, in vv. 1-18.

THEN SUDDENLY HE COMES BACK TO EARTH! This is the way it should be. We should look at the earth in the light of revealed truth, not at heaven from the standpoint of our meagre understanding. The knowledge of God gives us the right perspective.

What did he realize?

/ Cf. Psa. 36:9.

He saw as clearly as the light of day that man was responsible for all of the disturbance, the noise, the upheaval, that is present in the world. This basically is the meaning of the word, "wicked," in v. 19.

He was under no disillusionment about the outcome. Man is so hopelessly set against God that the only remedy is for God to banish him from His presence.

At least 2400 years (if this Psalm is post-exilic) confirm the Psalmist's conclusion.

So, first of all, we have

I. THE PSALMIST'S DEEP CONVICTIONS (vv. 19-22).

A. Concerning the outcome of human history (v. 19a).

How strange it is to read such words from a man of God, and yet the Psalms are full of such expressions. It does not overlook the grace of God. It does not deny that men here and there will turn to the Lord and be saved. BUT IT DOES RECOGNIZE THAT THERE IS NO OTHER ANSWER TO THE HORRIBLE CONFLICT BETWEEN RIGHT AND WRONG ON THE EARTH EXCEPT DIVINE JUDGMENT!

B. Concerning his own involvement in sin (v. 19b).

We heard this morning about Daniel—a man with some strong convictions. I heard this past week about Dr. John Snyder's stand at the U. of Indiana against a mob

ONLY WORD
TO MAN IN
THE PSALM.

of 10,000 students, and he stood his ground!

THE MAN WHOSE HEART IS FULL OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF THESE THREE TRUTHS CONCERNING GOD WILL DIE AT THE HANDS OF "BLOODY MEN" BEFORE HE WILL BE DEFILED BY THEIR SIN.

How many of us are even inclined to take such a stand?

Contrary to
the Word

In v. 20 he points out that they will speak against God to get others to commit wickedness, and then use God's Name to back it up!

This started in the Garden of Eden, and it has never stopped!

- C. Concerning his own refusal to compromise with sinners in any way (vv. 21, 22).

"Grieved" means nauseated. "Rise up," as in v. 2, suggests a life dedicated to oppose the ways of God.

Cf. 1 John 2:15-17; Jas. 4:4, "Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God."

The Psalmist stands like a rock, refusing to be anything but an enemy of those who are the enemies of God. How refreshing to read such words when all around us today the word for the day is compromise.

But notice! The transition between vv. 22 and 23 is just as abrupt as that between vv. 18 and 19. Suddenly the strong appears to be very weak; the confident, unsure. WHY? Because he begins to look within his own heart.

First God—then the world—then himself.

How does the Psalm end? With

II. THE PSALMIST'S DEEP CONCERN (vv. 23, 24).

A believer's spiritual state can best be determined by the way he prays for himself. For the first time in the Psalm we come to petition. There are four requests.

- A. "Search me." The Psalm ends as it began. Remember that this is a mining term. God searches us, but what a difference when He does it with our permission because we want to know what He finds in His excavations of our hearts.

- B. "Try me." This means to put us to the test—even in small things. Cf. Job 23:10, "When He hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold."

"Thoughts" are pictured here as represented by the branches of a tree. The Psalmist is willing to expose his whole inner life to the Lord.

Ill. Funeral Directors' meeting during which time they invited full discussion and criticism of their work. Would pastors do the same?

- C. "See" me. A "wicked way" is a way that would grieve God. A man who knows God as this Psalmist did is not concerned primarily about what he will enjoy as much as he is concerned about what will please God, OR WHAT WILL GRIEVE HIM.
- D. "Lead me." He wants to be led as a shepherd leads his sheep.

Knowing God makes a child of God less self-reliant, and more aware of his need to trust the Lord.

Why does he call God's way, "the way everlasting," ~~THE~~ ~~THE~~ For one great reason. God's ways do not change. They are still the same today that they were 2400 years ago—and even farther back. Truth is not relative. Times may change, but God does not, nor does His Word. The person who knows the Lord understands this. He refuses to be guided by the passing standards of the day. He is willing to accept nothing but the Word of God.

Concl: Does not your own heart tell you that there is something very, very right about this Psalm? It is only as we come to know the Lord that we see the world and ourselves as we should. He is the One we need.

Perhaps it should be mentioned that whoever wrote this Psalm had already trusted God for his salvation—a salvation that was to be purchased by the death of the Lord Jesus Christ. Coming to the Lord in this way is the first step . . .

But then, as His children, we need to be learning more and more about Him—His omniscience, His omnipresence, His omnipotence, His love, His grace, His righteousness, and on and on.

Every day we need to pray vv. 23, 24 if we are to please Him and to be saved from the confusion that characterizes men in our day who have tried to live a life which no man can really live—a life without God!