

I WANT TO KNOW MY BIBLE

Kingdom Living

TEXT: 1 Kings 1-4

INTRODUCTION: Psalm 119 is a psalm about the excellencies of the Word of God. The psalm itself is a poetic masterpiece which is not readily apparent from the English translations.

It is composed of 176 couplets, organized into 22 groups with 8 couplets in each.

The 8 couplets in each group begin with the same letter of the Hebrew alphabet. The first 8 couplets each begin with the aleph (marked in the red), the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet. The second 8 begin with beth (marked in blue), and then gimel (in green), and so on until the final 8 each begin with tau.

But even more magnificent than the structure of the psalm is its content in which the Spirit of God comments up the wonders of the Word of God. Listen to just a few of those precious truths:

119: 9 How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your word.

119: 11 Your word I have hidden in my heart, That I might not sin against You.

119: 89 Forever, O LORD, Your word is settled in heaven.

119: 105 Your word *is* a lamp to my feet And a light to my path.

119: 160 The entirety of Your word *is* truth, And every one of Your righteous judgments *endures* forever.

David is not identified in the superscription as the human author of this psalm, but much of it sounds like other things he wrote or said. The beginning of the psalm is very much akin to the words David spoke to his son Solomon before the young man became the new king of Israel.

119: 1-2 Blessed *are* the undefiled in the way, Who walk in the law of the LORD!
²Blessed *are* those who keep His testimonies, Who seek Him with the whole heart!

Our text this morning comes from 1 Kings 1-4, in which Solomon begins his rule in an attempt to live up to his father's counsel and the desires of God. What he does, and what God does, provides some important instruction for us concerning Kingdom Living.

I. THE GIFT OF KINGDOM LIVING

A. Came by the grace of God.

2 Sam. 7:8-11 ⁸ Now therefore, thus shall you say to My servant David, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts: "I took you from the sheepfold, from following the sheep, to be ruler over My people, over Israel. ⁹ And I have been with you wherever you have gone, and have cut off all your enemies from before you, and have made you a great name, like the name of the great men who are on the earth. ¹⁰ Moreover I will appoint a place for My people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own and move no more; nor shall the sons of wickedness oppress them anymore, as previously, ¹¹ since the time that I commanded judges to be over My people Israel, and have caused you to rest from all your enemies. Also the LORD tells you that He will make you a house.

B. Came through the faithfulness of his father.

1 Kings 1:29-30 ²⁹ And the king took an oath and said, "As the LORD lives, who has redeemed my life from every distress, ³⁰ just as I swore to you by the LORD God of Israel, saying, 'Assuredly Solomon your son shall be king after me, and he shall sit on my throne in my place,' so I certainly will do this day."

C. Came not because Solomon earned or deserved.

D. So also is our entrance into the Kingdom of God.

1. By grace, through faith, not of ourselves.

Eph. 2:8-9 ⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; *it is the gift of God,* ⁹ not of works, lest anyone should boast.

2. **By the faithfulness of others:** parents, witnessing friend, SS teacher, preacher, radio or TV preacher, evangelist

(I count two people as being the special tools of God to bring me to personal faith in the Lord Jesus. One was a friend named Ruthie. Another was a Sunday School teacher named Mrs. Wright.)

3. **Have you entered the Kingdom of God by receiving the gift of the Lord Jesus Christ by coming to faith in Him?** Solomon did not have to receive the kingship or the kingdom. It comes as a gift; it must be received that way.

Now the next things we look at are not things Solomon did in order to receive the kingdom, but in order to live in the kingdom he had received by the grace of God. And as the Holy Spirit leads us to understanding the parallels for the Kingdom of God, let us remember that we are to do these things for successful, happy, living in the kingdom; not as prerequisites for entering the kingdom.

II. CLEANSING FOR KINGDOM LIVING

A. There were some folks in the kingdom of Israel that were going to hinder successful living in the kingdom.

They had to be removed.

1. Solomon's half brother Adonijah - the usurper of the throne.

When King David was on his death bed, Adonijah declared himself king. He knew this was not his father's will or God's will, but he presumed to enact his own will. When Solomon ascended the throne, he at first allowed Adonijah to live. But when Adonijah sought to make David's last wife his own wife, Solomon saw that his wicked ways were unceasing; and he had the usurper of the throne executed.

2. Abiathar, the high priest, sought favor with politically powerful Adonijah more than with God. Solomon replaced him and sent him into exile.

3. Joab, the general of the army who had turned traitor and followed Adonijah. He was executed by the new commander of the military forces of Israel.

4. Shimei, who had been a thorn in David's side for years, was given one final chance to demonstrate loyalty through obedience. He failed and was executed.

These were removed, not in order to gain the kingdom, but to make living in the kingdom and ruling as king successful. Solomon could have allowed them to live and stay, but these would have always undermined him, circumvented his rule, led others astray, and hindered the purpose God had for him in being king.

Likewise there are at times in our lives things that hinder our living successfully and abundantly in the Kingdom of God which need to be removed. It is not that the failure to remove them means we are not in the Kingdom of God, but the failure to remove them hinders our successful living and working in the Kingdom.

a. Philosophies that usurp the throne that belongs only to the Lord Jesus.

1) The philosophy of evolution has done this to many.

I was one of these. And while the Lord rescued me, the adoption of this philosophy stole much productivity from my spiritual life for nearly eight years.

2) The philosophies of psychotherapy has done this to others by

- Labeling sins as illnesses
- Prescribing therapy instead of repentance
- Attempting to normalize perversion

Even well intentioned philosophies, with many good thoughts within them, can hinder successful living in the Kingdom of God if they are allowed to usurp the throne by leading a person to make decisions not based upon the Lord Jesus and His Word but upon this controlling and usurping philosophy.

b. Activities can prove traitorous in reducing our loyalty to the Lord.

- **These activities do not in themselves have to be wicked to be traitorous.**
- **They just have to infringe upon territory that belongs to the Lord.**
- **When we do not**
 - **worship,**
 - **study the Bible,**
 - **pray,**
 - **give,**
 - **witness,**
 - **fellowship with fellow believers**

because we are too busy with some recreational activity then we have a traitor in the kingdom of our lives that hinders successful, abundant living in the Kingdom of God.

Hear me carefully. I am not calling you a traitor. I am saying you are being betrayed. You have a traitor who is robbing you. If your affinity for football or hunting or fishing or golf or shopping is hindering your life in the Kingdom of God, you are having God's very best stolen from you.

If something is doing that in your life,

- **It needs to be removed.**

Parents, sometimes we have to do similar things for our kids.

I told you this story before, but it so illustrates this point, pardon me if I tell it again: I heard on the radio about a boy's hand which had three scars. If you had asked them how they got there, you might have been horrified to hear him answer, "From my mother's fingernails."

But your impression would change if you heard the whole story. Young Michael was swimming in the middle of a pond with a sister and cousin behind

their house here in Florida where the family had just moved. His mother had just come to the shore's edge to call him in to do some chores when she heard a neighbor across the way scream for the kids to swim to shore. She looked, and saw an 11 ft. alligator headed right for the kids.

The girls heard the warning and swam for shore; but Michael had on his mask and snorkel, so with his head buried in the water, calmly moving about with his swim fins, he was oblivious to the danger that glided dangerously straight toward his head.

Actually, the mask and snorkel that kept Michael unaware of his perilous predicament probably saved his life. As the huge jaws of the giant gator engulfed the little boy's head and upper body, the upright snorkel acted like the proverbial stick stuck in the open mouth of the alligator. Michael struggled free, leaving the gator with the mask and snorkel in its jaws. Michael swam for shore, underwater at first, while the gator circled, looking for its prey.

Michael surfaced for air about twenty feet from safety and the alligator immediately spotted him. Just as Michael reached the outstretched arm of his mother, the gator engulfed his legs. What ensued was essentially a tug of war between a 400 lb. alligator and a 100 lb. mother for the life of little Michael. Eventually the swim fins came off in the gator's mouth and Michael's mother pulled him to the safety of the shore.

A few months later, you would hardly have been able to detect any sign of this awesome ordeal in this little boy's life. A long scar on his head was covered by his bushy brown hair. His shoes and socks hid the scars from the gator's teeth imbedded in his feet. The only thing at all that showed were three scars on his hand, caused not by the gator, but by his mother as she hung on to her son with all she had to pull him from the jaws of death.

Oh parents, **may the scars on our children's lives be from those times that we wrestled them from some pursuit that would draw their loyalty away from the Savior.**

Like Solomon may we learn,

to live abundantly, successfully in the kingdom,

there are some things we must get rid of.

III. WISDOM FOR KINGDOM LIVING

A. Second we learn that we need wisdom to live successfully and abundantly in the Kingdom.

B. God told Solomon to ask whatever he wanted.

1 Kings 3:5 At Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night; and God said, "Ask! What shall I give you?"

**Solomon could have asked for power,
wealth,
luxury,
peace.**

Instead he asked for wisdom.

1 Kings 3:9 Therefore give to Your servant an understanding heart to judge Your people, that I may discern between good and evil. For who is able to judge this great people of Yours?"

C. God granted his request.

1 Kings 3:12 behold, I have done according to your words; see, I have given you a wise and understanding heart, so that there has not been anyone like you before you, nor shall any like you arise after you.

D. Illustration of Solomon's wisdom (Tell story of 1 Kings 3:16- 28)

²⁸ And all Israel heard of the judgment which the king had rendered; and they feared the king, for they saw that the wisdom of God was in him to administer justice.

E. And we need wisdom to live successfully and abundantly in the Kingdom of God.

James 1:5 If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.

And we have the Word of God to make us wise.

IV. RESULTS OF KINGDOM LIVING**A. Solomon was living evidence of the truth Jesus would later teach us:**

Matthew 6:33 "But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.

B. Because after God gave him wisdom, God said, 1 Kings 3:13 "And I have also given you what you have not asked: both riches and honor, so that there shall not be anyone like you among the kings all your days.

CONCLUSION: Have you come into the Kingdom through faith in Jesus Christ?

Are you making your life in the Kingdom to be as successful and abundant as God wants it to be

By ridding yourself of things that hinder Kingdom living?

By gaining God's wisdom through His Word and applying it regularly to your life?