

# The Lord Is My Portion

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Preacher: Rev. Kenneth Ferguson

[ 0 : 0 0 ] Let us turn to this book of Psalms in Psalm 119 where we write together. I'd like to focus particularly on verses 57 and following.

Where the psalmist says, the Lord is my portion, I promise to keep your words, I entreat your favour with all my heart, Be gracious to me according to your promise.

When I think on my ways, I turn my feet to your testimonies, I hasten and do not delay to keep your commandments and so on.

It is clear enough that this is the longest of the Psalms and the book of Psalms. The psalmist seems to have a particular focus upon the Word of God right throughout this psalm.

He talks about the Lord's words, the Lord's testimonies, the Lord's commandments, the Lord's law, the Lord's righteous rules, the Lord's precepts, the Lord's statutes.

[ 1 : 3 9 ] Each of these words mean the Word of God and the psalm tells us how much the Word of God played a part in the life of this man.

He is a man who lived his life, sought to live his life according to the Word of God. He says that the Word of God is his delight, he meditated upon it day and night and so on.

And some commentators are off the view that rather than having sat down on one particular day and written this psalm, the psalmist, David B. David, we think it is, from an early time in his life, wrote down his feelings regarding the Word of God.

And at a later stage he compiled these thoughts as it were that he had put together in this particular form.

And each of the sections as you see is headed by a succeeding letter of the Hebrew alphabet. And in the original, each verse begins with the same letter of the Hebrew alphabet.

[ 2 : 5 9 ] And we believe that that was meant to be a need to memorizing the whole psalm. In the Hebrew it would be easy to memorize each of these sections because each verse began with the same letter.

But be that as it may, we see in this particular section, verses 57 onwards, the psalmist speaking about himself and about his involvement with the Lord and his involvement with God's Word.

And under four different headings, I'd like to say a few words. First of all, he makes a profession. The profession he makes as the man of God is, the Lord is my portion.

I promise to keep your words. He is a professing man, a man who says, the Lord is my portion.

Secondly, he tells us as a man who makes that profession that he is also a man of prayer.

[ 4 : 1 2 ] Verse 58, I entreat your favor with all my heart. Be gracious to me according to your promise.

I mean, if he was a professing man who said, I am a believer, but wasn't a man of prayer, well his profession would be worth nothing at all.

Everyone who has a true profession of faith in God and in Christ is a person who is a man or a woman of prayer. So that's the second thing. He is a man of prayer.

Thirdly, he is a man who searches himself out in verse 59 when I think on my ways.

He is a thinking man about the kind of life he's living, about the kind of path he's walking, the activities he has in his life.

[ 5 : 12 ] He thinks about it in the presence of God and we also have to do the same. And fourthly also, he is a man who repents.

Having prayed and having thought about his life, he repents. Second part of verse 59, I turn my feet to your testimonies.

I hasten and do not delay to keep your commandments. So these four things. He is a man who makes a profession, he is a man who prays, he is a man who searches himself out, and he is a man who repents.

And I pray that we will find ourselves within these words here today. Firstly then, the profession this man is making.

He says, the Lord is my portion, I promise to keep your words. The Lord is his portion. Well if indeed this is David, you think of the portion he had in life.

[ 6 : 21 ] He was a man who was elevated to take his place on the throne of Israel. And available to him in that particular position would have been much power and much influence.

And much of this world's riches. And everything that his heart could desire by way of the things that this world could offer him, he could easily avail himself of any or all of these things together.

But what does he say? He says, the Lord is my portion. He is the one who really fills up my horizons.

He is the one who really fills up my desire. He is the one who satisfies the deepest belongings of my soul.

He is the one who is my inheritance, my portion. We find others in the scripture saying exactly the same thing.

[ 7 : 33 ] In Psalm 73, verse 26, we have Asav, who is the writer of that, Sam said that the Lord himself is his portion.

He is talking about his heart and his flesh, fainting and failing. But the Lord, he said, will fail me never.

He is the hope of my heart and my portion forever. Asav, that man who knew himself with all his limitations, he said, well, I have something and someone who fills my whole life with gladness.

And he is the Lord himself. I think also one more example of somebody who made this kind of profession, and that was, we believe, the prophet Jeremiah.

When you look at the book of Lamentations, at chapter 3 and verse 24, Jeremiah there says, the Lord is my portion, saith my soul.

[ 8 : 45 ] Therefore will I hope and trust in him. And when you think of the circumstances surrounding that statement by Jeremiah, the circumstances were these, that Jerusalem had been sacked by the Babylonian forces.

The gates of Jerusalem had been burnt, the temple in Jerusalem had been destroyed, the walls of Jerusalem had been flattened, and the people of God who dwelt in Jerusalem had been taken away into captivity.

Having had Jeremiah pinched to them repeatedly over the years, and they broke his heart repeatedly because of their waywardness and sin.

And he sat us at where on a stone in the midst of the ruin of Jerusalem. And he said, despite all these things, the Lord is my portion, and I will hope in him.

Could I ask, who do you say, or what do you say is your soul satisfying portion?

[ 10 : 02 ] Well, I know some people, and if they've got the postious card in the village, that's what makes them happy. If they have a certain amount of money in the bank, that's what makes them really happy.

If they have their family around them, and their house, mortgage is all paid, and everything is going well at work, that is what makes them happy. And we don't deny that to anyone. That is a blessing in itself.

God's providential blessings are wonderful. But this man's portion was higher than the world, more precious than anything this world or this life could offer.

This man's portion was the Lord himself. You know, if we gain the whole world, what profit is it if we lose our soul?

That's the challenge Jesus lays before those in the Gospel of Matthew. Though I gain the whole world and lose my soul. Well, this man, he had, I said, where the whole world at his feet, David, the king, powerful, influential.

[ 11 : 22 ] Nevertheless, he said, I'm not resting on any of these things, I'm resting on the Lord. He is the one to whom I look. How did he come to do that?

Well, the Lord, you see, had commended himself to him. The Lord says in the Bible, look unto me and be saved all the ends of the earth.

He says that to those in high positions, in the lowest position. Whoever we are, whatever our circumstances, the Lord says, look to me. Look beyond your circumstance, look beyond yourself.

Look beyond the riches of this world to the one who will enrich you with heavenly blessings and eternal blessing.

And you see, this man was able to receive God at his word and he embraced the Lord as his portion.

[ 12 : 24 ] With the arms of faith, as it were, embracing God's word and God's invitation and God's promise. Doesn't the Lord Jesus say in the New Testament, come unto me, all you who labour under heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

Take my yoke upon you and learn from me. I am meek and lowly in heart, and you shall find rest unto your souls. My yoke is easy and my burden is light.

This is the rest we need. At the very centre of our soul there is a yearning. And that yearning can never be satisfied apart from embracing the Lord as our portion.

Whoever we are, whatever we have, you will have annoying yearning in your spirit until you come to the place where the psalmist has come to.

And he says, the Lord is my portion. I lean upon him, I trust in him, I commit myself to him. As Jesus says, come to me and I will give you rest.

[ 13 : 38 ] That's the first thing. This man's profession. The second thing is, he is a man of prayer. I entreat your favour with all my heart.

Be gracious to me according to your promise. He wants the Lord's favour to be made known to him.

What does this mean? Well, he wants as it were the Lord to smile upon him. That's basically what it means in the original.

He wants to know the Lord's smile, the Lord's blessing. He wants to know the love of God shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Spirit.

He wants to know the peace of God that passes all understanding. He wants to know that he is at peace with God and that the Lord himself is happy to shower grace upon him in every circumstance of life.

[ 14 : 54 ] Be gracious to me according to your promise. Do you pray for this? The people who were on board the ship with Jonah, when the storm came, they started each man praying to his God.

They started crying out of a situation where they felt they were in imminent danger of being drowned. They called upon whichever God was central to their life and affections.

Some idol, maybe. There are some people when they call upon the Lord only when there is trouble in the family, or trouble at work, or trouble personally.

Maybe it's a health issue and you're panicking and you call upon the Lord, get me out of this, heal me so that I can get on with my life.

Well, there's, I suppose, nothing wrong with that in itself that you want to enjoy good health. But what you need particularly to be praying for is that the grace of God be bestowed upon you in your heart and in your life.

[ 16 : 14 ] I entreat your favour with all my heart. Be gracious to me according to your promise. And you know, what I suppose is at the very root of this particular prayer is that the Lord would forgive all of his sins, that he would show him grace and mercy and forgiveness.

We are all sinners by nature and practice and we all need forgiveness in the presence of God. I have sinned grievously.

David said in Psalm 51, against thee, the only, have I sinned and in thy sight have I done this too. Wash thou me and then I shall be quieter than the snow.

And he says, I entreat your favour, wash me, cleanse me, forgive my sin. Be gracious to me according to your promise.

Wonder what promise David had in mind. Well, I don't know. But when you look at the prophecy of Isaiah, you see that Isaiah there, we call it in chapter 1.

[ 17 : 32 ] At verse 18, I think, the Lord speaking through Isaiah says to the people of Israel, who are gone far away from the Lord, he says, calm down, he says, that his reason together says the Lord, though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow, though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.

The Lord is able to cleanse our sins when we come to confess and forsake them. He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

So the man who makes the profession of fear, he is the man who comes in prayer, confessing sin and seeking forgiveness.

Thirdly, the man here says in verse 59, when I think on my ways, he thinks about his life, my newtley.

That's what the meaning of the word is in the original. And I explained this on her before, that when the man of God here is talking about thinking on his ways, he is thinking with the precision and the exactitude of our Lady who is working with her needle and thread, making a lovely tapestry.

[ 19 : 21 ] And the needle has to go through at a particular place and come back through again so that the pattern is perfectly executed. That's the kind of precision this man is talking about when I think on my ways.

When did you last think about your ways with such precision? When did you last think about the way you think about God?

How do you think about him? What do you think of? The Bible reminds us that God, he is all pervading, he is in all his fullness everywhere.

And he is all seeing and he is all knowing and he is all powerful. And he is the one who upholds us moment by moment and who searches our hearts.

And he knows our deepest heart and our deepest thoughts. And when we come to examine our own thought processes about God, or we realise how far short we can, we don't grant him, as it were, access into our deepest thoughts and brain or heart activities.

[ 20 : 59 ] We cannot prevent him from doing that because he sees my nuclear into every corner of your soul. And you have to realise, well, he knew when I thought that particular thing about that person.

Or when I thought that particular thing about the scripture. Or when I thought that particular thought about Christ. And I questioned the veracity or truthfulness of his words.

When I found thought with the fact that God has an election, and that God's elect will be saved, and there are some who are not in the elect and they will not be saved.

And you have found yourself objecting to that kind of biblical teaching. And the Lord knows that. And you think, well, you have thought, some time before I die, I'll make my peace with God.

Well, the Lord knows that. But it's not up to you when you choose. The Bible says, now, if you hear my voice, don't harden your heart.

[ 22 : 22 ] Today is the day of salvation. Now is the accepted time. Now you have to turn to the Lord. I'm just bringing all these things in because this man is thinking on his ways.

Thinking of his thought processes, his thoughts about God, about other people. Then he's thinking about the past he's been walking, the places he's gone, that he shouldn't have gone, the things he's done, that he shouldn't have done, the things he's read or viewed, that he shouldn't have read or viewed.

And this man is honest with himself in the presence of God. And he says, I find myself coming short again and again and again. I'm a law breaker.

I break God's law in thought and word and deed every day of my life. I think on my ways with shame.

I think on my actions with shame. I think on my thoughts with shame before God because he knows me and he will hold me to account.

[ 23 : 35 ] I must stand at the judgment seat of Christ and there receive according to what I've done in the body for the good or bad. This man thinks on his ways.

What about you? Are you a thinking man or a woman? Well, this man, a man of God was thinking man in that respect.

But then, fourthly and finally, we see that having thought on his ways, he hastens and does not delay to turn his feet to the Lord's testimony.

I turned my feet to your testimonies. He turns his feet. He realizes that his trajectory has been completely wrong.

His life has been imperfect. He has been going in the wrong direction. He has given his heart to some kind of sin or idol of some kind.

[ 24 : 41 ] He has spoken words that he shouldn't have spoken. He has thought thoughts that he shouldn't have thought. He has been places where he shouldn't have gone.

And he says, Lord, I find myself guilty before you and I seek to turn from my sin onto God.

This is a constant and an ongoing scenario in the presence and in the life of the people of God. They are not perfect once they believe.

They themselves are the first to acknowledge the struggle that they have, the good fight that they are engaged in, the fight against evil thoughts, against creeping up worldliness.

And sins of various kinds. They are coming short repeatedly of what God asks them to be. He says, be ye holy, for I am holy.

[ 25 : 49 ] And we see ourselves very, very far from what God requires of us in that respect. And this man says, I am turning my feet away from my sin.

This is through repentance, a turning from our sin with grief and hatred and to God. And we embrace him as the God who commends himself to us, as the God who is gracious and long-suffering and slow to wrath and plenty is in mercy.

He is the one who calls us to himself from whatever wayward path we have been walking. He says, come to me and I will give you rest.

I will cleanse you. I will forgive you. I will bless you with eternal blessing. And you say, well, I'll have to do that.

Well, don't leave it any minute longer because this man says in verse 60, I hasten and do not delay to keep your commandments.

[ 27 : 02 ] There are some people and they resolve, yes, I'm going to change. Yes, my life is going to be different from now on. But then something comes in, like we see in verse 61, the chords of the wicked in Sneerna.

Satan is waiting at the door. Whatever resolve you have made here, whatever thought you have made to turn away from your sin at the door, Satan is waiting to turn you from your resolve, to turn you away from the Lord again.

This man says, well, the chords of the wicked in Sneerna, I do not forget your law. He keeps the Lord focused, as it were, his mind focused upon him.

And he makes his way unto the Lord and I hasten and I do not delay to keep your commandments. Isn't it wonderful that we have a man such as David Walks, giving us such a picture of his own life?

Having first of all said this word of wonderful professional faith, the Lord is my portion. But then he says, I continue in prayer, I continue examining my life.

[ 28 : 32 ] I turn my feet to the Lord's testimonies, I hasten and I do not delay to keep the Lord's commandments.

What an amazing life the Christian has. It's a battle, really, as they go on in life. Remember when the Apostle Paul came to the end of his life?

In 2 Timothy chapter 4 he said, I have fought a good fight. Well, if we are Christians, we know what that fight involves. The enemy is hidden. The enemy is full of trickery.

He will try and make you stumble and slip and fall. He will try and sidetrack your affections from heavenly things to worldly things. He will try and get your heart focused on the things of the flesh rather than the things of the Spirit.

That is his purpose in life. That is his purpose to try and get us out of the way of obedience and righteousness, to walk in his way.

[ 29 : 43 ] But praise God, who is the portion of his people, that he supplies grace to us in all of our times of need. And we pray that as we go on, that we will know more and more of his grace and of his strength.

Doing what pleases him. Running our race with patience. Looking to Jesus, who is the author and finisher of our faith.

Amen, let us pray. Help us, O Lord, to be ready to confess our sin and turn away from every aspect of unrighteousness.

We thank you for your great kindness to us in bringing us together here today. And for the word of God opened before us. Grant that the word would be a word in season to our souls.

We thank you for your people and for the witness that they have in our communities. And we mourn the passing of some whom we have known ourselves in this place over the years and elsewhere more recently.

[ 31 : 03 ] We pray that you would fill the gaps that their passing has left among us. And that you would beget in the hearts of others a prayer of faith.

So that there would be praying people in our communities while the world remains. We pray then for your blessing upon those who are sick and suffering.

Those who are mourning the passing of loved ones. Bless them we pray. Go before us now and forgive our sin. In Jesus' name we ask it. Amen.

We bring our worship to our clothes just now. Singing from the Scottish altar. And Psalm 130.

Lord from the depths to the eye cry. I voice Lord to thou here. Onto my supplications voice. Give an attentive ear.

[ 32 : 13 ] Lord who shall stand of thou, O Lord, which is to mark iniquity, but yet with thee forgivenesses, that fear there mayest be. To the end of the Psalm.

Psalm 130 from the Scottish altar when we stand to sing. Lord from the depths to the eye cry.

I voice Lord to thou here. Onto my supplications voice.

Give an attentive ear. Lord who shall stand of thou, O Lord, which is to mark iniquity, but yet with thee forgivenesses, that fear there mayest be.

I pray for all my soul away. My hope is in this world.

[ 33 : 58 ] More than it had, more more in one. My soul waits for the Lord.

I say for the middle of the world, the morning light to the sea.

Let this fire open the Lord for with emergency, unleashed redemption.

It is ever found within. And from all its illiterate ease, it is well shall begin.

Now with the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, rest and abide with you all, now and forevermore.

[ 35 : 38 ] Amen.