

Psalms 119:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Blessed are they that keep his testimonies, and that seek him with the whole heart.

Analysis

Verse 2 expands the blessing: Ashrei notzrei edotav (Blessed are those who keep His testimonies). Natsar (keep/guard/observe) indicates careful preservation and obedience. Edut (testimonies) refers to covenant stipulations—God's witnessed declarations. B'khol lev yidreshuhu (with whole heart they seek Him). Darash (seek) means to inquire, pursue, study diligently. The verse pairs external obedience (keeping testimonies) with internal devotion (wholehearted seeking). Mere external compliance without heart engagement is insufficient—God requires integrated obedience flowing from love.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern treaties required covenant partners to keep stipulations and seek treaty lord's favor. Israel's covenant with YHWH demanded similar loyalty but added unique element: heart engagement. Deuteronomy 6:5 commanded: "love the LORD thy God with all thine heart." Yet Israel repeatedly demonstrated external compliance while hearts pursued idols. Jeremiah condemned: "this people draw near me with their mouth...but have removed their heart far from me" (Jeremiah 29:13). Jesus later opposed Pharisaic hypocrisy using same language (Matthew 15:8-9).

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. How can you guard against keeping God's testimonies externally while hearts remain distant?
2. What does wholehearted seeking of God look like in daily practice?
3. What areas of your spiritual life involve duty without delight, compliance without love?

Interlinear Text

אַ שְׂרִי	נֶצְרִי	עֲדֹתַי	בְּכָל	לִי ב
Blessed	are they that keep	his testimonies	H3605	him with the whole heart
H835	H5341	H5713		H3820

יִדְרְשׁוּהוּ:
and that seek
H1875

Additional Cross-References

Jeremiah 29:13 (Parallel theme): And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.

Deuteronomy 4:29 (Parallel theme): But if from thence thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul.

Psalms 119:10 (Parallel theme): With my whole heart have I sought thee: O let me not wander from thy commandments.

John 14:23 (Parallel theme): Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.

Psalms 25:10 (Parallel theme): All the paths of the LORD are mercy and truth unto such as keep his covenant and his testimonies.

Ezekiel 36:27 (Parallel theme): And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.

Proverbs 23:26 (Parallel theme): My son, give me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe my ways.

2 Chronicles 31:21 (Parallel theme): And in every work that he began in the service of the house of God, and in the law, and in the commandments, to seek his God, he did it with all his heart, and prospered.

Deuteronomy 6:17 (Parallel theme): Ye shall diligently keep the commandments of the LORD your God, and his testimonies, and his statutes, which he hath commanded thee.

1 Kings 2:3 (Parallel theme): And keep the charge of the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, to keep his statutes, and his commandments, and his judgments, and his testimonies, as it is written in the law of Moses, that thou mayest prosper in all that thou doest, and whithersoever thou turnest thyself: