



“God Is In Control”

Study: Zechariah 6:1-15

Reading: Psalm 20:1-9

Memory: Psalm 119:16

There were many times when our children were growing up that my wife and I had to remind ourselves that we were attempting to raise “mature, responsible adults.” Yes, we had many other visions for our children, but that was the summary of our desire for them. This helped guide us at times when we wanted to step in and spare them from punishment for wrong decisions or when we had to inspire them to be disciplined and focused. There are many times where it would have been easier to ignore problems or choose to do the easy thing, but we tried to keep our focus on our vision for them.

Today, we will read how God wants us to have a vision for what His desire is for our lives and future. He wants us to choose to make the decisions needed each day to reach that desired goal.

What Does the Bible Say?

In the next vision, Zechariah saw four chariots coming at him. These chariots traveled in a valley between two mountains that were made out of bronze. Each of these chariots was powered by a very strong horse and all the horses were a different color. Zechariah wanted to know the meaning of this vision so the angel described how the horses represented the four directions of the earth. They were symbolic of angels being sent to all of the world. The north appears to be a reference to Babylon while the south appears to head to Egypt. We are not given much further explanation of this passage, and many commentators believe that this is speaking about the judgement of God just before the millennial kingdom is ushered in (vs 1-8).

Verse 9 transitions from a vision to God giving a command to Zechariah. God instructed him to take three exiles who had arrived from Babylon and to go to the house of Josiah. They were to take silver and gold from Josiah to make a crown for the high priest Joshua (Jeshua). Zechariah was to proclaim that one day there would be a “Branch” who sits on the throne, but is also a high priest. The role of priest and political

leaders had always been separate since the first king of Israel, but one day, they will be the same. The term “Branch,” which we have seen used already in Zechariah, seems to be similar to that used elsewhere which described the “root of Jesse.” This priestly king would be in the Davidic line and he shall rule and reign from the temple (vs 9-13).

This message was to be a reminder to the four men who helped Zechariah make the crown. Most likely, this is meant to be a picture to reveal how people would come from all over the earth to help build the temple of the Lord. Just as these men had arrived from Babylon to help build the temple, in the millennial kingdom, people will come to Israel from all parts of the world to help in the building process. This was probably also meant to be an encouragement and a reminder that God wanted them to complete the temple that they were currently working on. The overarching theme of this chapter is that God is in control and has a great plan. His desire was that His people continue in obedience and finish the current temple (vs 14-15).

How Does this Apply to Me?

Are you confident that God is in control of this world? One of the reasons the Israelites had stopped work on the temple is because they feared the nations around them. The fact that these horses and chariots were powerful and traveled in every direction as they patrolled the earth indicated the great power and control of God. God had a master plan and nothing would happen to His people outside of this plan. This plan included great hope for their future in the coming of the Messiah as priest and king, but also included the current finishing of the temple. God’s desire was for obedience from His people in that current day. This sums up much of the focus of prophetic visions. Prophecy was and is meant to give a hope for the future that will encourage you to live in obedience today.

Suggestions for Prayer

* *Thank God that He gives you a vision for the future.*

* *Ask God to help you be faithfully obedient to Him today.*

Thought for the day

What did Zechariah see (vs 1)?

What was unique about these horses (vs 2-3)?

Why do you think it was mentioned that they were strong?

What did Zechariah want to know (vs 4)?

What did the angel say these horses and chariots represented (vs 5)?

What directions were these horses going (vs 6)?

What were the horses commanded to do (vs 7)?

What was going to happen in the north country (vs 8)?

Who had arrived from Babylon (vs 9)?

Where was Zechariah supposed to take these men (vs 10)?

What were they to do (vs 11)?

Who was Joshua (vs 11)?

Who was going to build the temple (vs 12)?

What two positions was the Branch going to have (vs 13)?

Why was this unique?

Where will the Branch rule from (vs 14)?

Why is this important?

Who will help build the temple (vs 15)?

What would the people know (vs 15)?

What were the people challenged to do (vs 15)?

“The Wrong Focus”

Study: Zechariah 7:1-14

Reading: Matthew 5:17-20, 23:1-36

Memory: Psalm 119:16

When it comes to playing board or card games, I find myself gravitating towards the games that have fewer rules. When I can't quickly catch onto a game because there are so many rules, I find myself quickly losing interest and not wanting to play that game. Maybe it is because I have a short attention span or perhaps I am not patient enough. Whatever the reason, I often avoid most new games simply because I don't want to spend a great deal of times learning the rules.

Today, we are going to see how the Israelites were often more concerned about the rules of life and religion than they were about loving and caring for people.

What Does the Bible Say?

The Reese Chronological Bible, the general order we have been following, places the story of Esther starting around this point in the historic time line, around 520 B.C. Many commentators place the story of Esther much later, starting in the 480's B.C. The difference is the editors of the chronological Bible take the approach that Ahasuerus in Esther was the same as Darius in Ezra, while many commentators believe that Ahasuarus was Xerxes. We will go with the majority of commentators and look at Esther a little later on.

It was around 520 B.C. when the first message came to Zechariah and the message in chapter 7 came around two years later. Some of the Jews who had been living in the land near Bethel sent some messengers to seek advice from the priests and prophets. They wanted to know if they should continue to weep and choose to fast in the fifth month of the year. The temple was burned in the fifth month and the people took that time to commemorate the destruction (vs 1-3).

God sent a reply to Zechariah in the form of a question. The people were asked if they observed these times for themselves or for God. He then declared that when they participated in their festivals, they were

doing it for themselves and not for Him. This was the same message that many of the prophets had been declaring to the people before destruction came. The people had become consumed with keeping the law, but they were not keeping it for the sake of God. These times had become personal celebrations and feasts, but had lost the meaning behind why they were celebrated (vs 4-7).

The people had come to God asking questions about observing special dates, but God responded to them by encouraging them to do the right thing daily. They were to treat each other with honor and respect, showing mercy and kindness. They were not to take advantage of their widows or foreigners. They were not to come up with schemes to cheat one another. Basically, the people concerned themselves with the wrong things. They were so concerned with special days and rules that they failed to show kindness and love (vs 8-10).

This was the same message that God has been continually declaring to His people, though they failed to listen. They were like people putting their fingers in their ears, actively choosing to not do what they were told. They hardened their hearts and brought judgement upon themselves by their refusal to listen (vs 11-12).

Because they chose not to listen to God, God refused to listen to them. God scattered the people like a tornado that caused homes to be strewn in many different directions. Their land became desolate. The land that once produced abundantly had become like a desert (vs 13-14).

How Does this Apply to Me?

Are you more concerned about keeping the rules than you are about caring for people? It is much easier to find yourself in a religion that focuses on do's and don'ts than you realize. God has established rules which are good to seek to follow, but it is very easy to get so caught up in the rules that you forget why the rules were made. The Israelites came with a question about rules and God's response was about the way they treated one another. This reveals to us the priority we should have when it comes to rules. No, we can't throw out the rules, but the rules do us no good if they don't lead us to a greater love for God and a love for others.

Suggestions for Prayer

- * *Ask God to help you put people above the rules.*
- * *Thank God for teaching you what is important in life.*

Who was sent to Zechariah (vs 2)?

What did they ask (vs 3)?

What had they been doing for many years (vs 3)? Why?

What question did God ask (vs 5)?

Why do you think He asked this?

What did God infer with His question in verse 6?

How can you say you are doing something for God, but really doing it for yourself?

What had the prophets proclaimed over and over again (vs 7)?

What four things did God say He wanted the people to do (vs 9-10)?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

What did the people refuse to do (vs 11)?

What happened to their hearts (vs 12)?

How did God respond (vs 12)?

Why did God choose not to hear His people when they called (vs 13)?

What did God do to His people (vs 14)?

What happened to the land (vs 14)?

What lesson did God want to teach His people through this?

What are ways where you can be tempted to let all the rules and regulations become your religion?

“Obedience for Future Blessings”

Study: Zechariah 8:1-23

Reading: Matthew 25:14-30

Memory: Psalm 119:16

What Does the Bible Say?

The region of Jerusalem has had a special place in the heart of God throughout history. It was on Mt. Moriah, where the temple was eventually built, that Abraham was directed to go to offer Isaac as an offering to God. Jerusalem eventually became the capital city of Israel under David and has continued as a special place for the children of Israel to this day. God destroyed the city because of the sin of the people, though this destruction came from a jealous love. The jealous love also looked forward to a future rebuilding of the city which had begun with the rebuilding of the temple. God’s plan was for the city to be repopulated with older men and women talking in the streets while their grandchildren played around them. Jerusalem would once again become a glorious place. People would come from all over to repopulate the city, but this time God would be at the center of what they did. The city would be filled with faithful and righteous people (vs 1-8).

In order to obtain this goal, those who had been sent back to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple were not to grow weary. They were to be strong and to continue with the work on the temple. This is what God had instructed and they continued the work. They were going to be living in a different time than what the inhabitants of the land had been experiencing. After the destruction of Jerusalem, over 65 years before, the city had become desolate. There was no way to earn a living and survival was difficult. Things were going to be different. The rebuilding of the temple was the first step in the rebuilding of the nation. If they chose to obey, they did not have to fear the nations around them and didn’t have to worry about going hungry. The city, which had become a byword, would now gain respect and honor. God was going to save them and bless them once again (vs 9-13).

Just as God had the power to bring disaster, He would use that same power to bring blessings. In order to reach this point, they had to choose to live in faith and not live in fear. They were not just to rebuild the temple, but they were also to live differently than their fathers had lived.

They were to treat one another with respect and they were to be honest with each other. Their hearts were to be focused on the good of others rather than on personal gain (vs 14-17).

Verse 18 circles back around to the question that was asked in chapter 7. Those from Bethel wanted to know if they needed to keep fasting in the fifth month. They also fasted in the fourth month, the seventh month and the tenth month. Apparently, these were times to remember different parts of the destruction of Jerusalem. The reason they would not have to remember these days anymore was because the city was going to be rebuilt. This time, God wanted the inhabitants of the city to focus on loving truth and peace (vs 18-19).

The wonderful restoration of the city was pictured in verses 20-23. God described how there would be a time where Jews would come from all over. Jerusalem would one day be a place where many desired to be. Neighbors would hear about Jews headed to Jerusalem and would ask to join them. If the Jews continued physically building the temple and the city, and also chose to spiritually build their lives, they would be the start of something wonderful (vs 20-23).

How Does this Apply to Me?

The Jews that were sent back to Jerusalem were called to begin something great. This greatness would not come through their human effort or by selfish gain, but this greatness would come through obedience to God. As they continued to obey by physically building and by spiritually treating one another with mercy and grace, they would be ushering in a great new age for the land of Israel. These words were meant to inspire the people to do the right thing both physically and spiritually. God wants you to do the same today. No, you have not been called to rebuild Jerusalem, but God has a special plan for your life and He has called you to physically and spiritually obey. Your obedience today can lead to amazing results down the road. It is easy to live with little vision for the future which will often cause you to lose focus on what God has called you to do today. Daily obedience to God today will produce results that will last for all eternity. Don't despise the small acts of love and obedience that God directs you to carry out each day. This was already mentioned in Zechariah 4:10 as the people were encouraged not to let the slow progress or lack of splendor of the temple discourage them. God is wanting to do great things through you, but you must be faithful in the little tasks today.

Why do you think God said He was “zealous for Zion” (vs 2)?

What did God want to do in Jerusalem (vs 3)?

What picture did God give of Jerusalem (vs 4-5)?

Why would this picture have given them great hope?

What do you think verse 6 means?

Where was God going to bring His people from (vs 7)?

What was going to happen in Jerusalem (vs 8)?

What were the people encouraged to do (vs 9)?

What had Jerusalem been like (vs 10)?

How were God's dealings with His people going to be different (vs 11-12)?

What had Jerusalem been (vs 13)? What would it be (vs 13)?

What was God's new purpose (vs 15)?

What did God want the people to do (vs 16-17)?

Why were their personal and spiritual dealings just as important as the physical building?

What were the fasts in verse 19 a reference to?

Why would there no longer be a time of mourning (vs 19)?

What would people soon desire to do (vs 20-21)?

Who would seek the Lord (vs 22)?

What will people hear (vs 23)?

“Great Anticipation”

Study: Zechariah 9:1-17

Reading: Matthew 21:1-11, John 14:1-7

Memory: Psalm 119:16

When my daughter and son-in-law first told us that they were expecting a child, my heart greatly rejoiced. We were hoping to become grandparents and now that hope was becoming a reality. The ultra-sound pictures gave us glimpses into what our little grandson would be like and the more my daughter grew, the more excitement we experienced. When the day finally came for him to be born, my wife and I were thrilled. All the expectation was now fulfilled, but unlike an event that comes and goes, his birth was only the beginning of time that we would get to spend with him for many years to come.

Today, we will read how Jesus came as predicted, but that there is far more to His coming that we will experience when He returns again.

What Does the Bible Say?

The oracle given in chapter 9 was a prophecy which was against many of the nations that surrounded Israel to the West and the North. The identity of Hadrash is unknown, though it was probably north of Damascus in the region of Hamath (about 125 miles north of Damascus). Though these cities had been conquered by Nebuchadnezzar and were under the Persian empire, they were built back up and regained some of their power. The city of Tyre had been destroyed by the Babylonians, but many of the people escaped to an island into the Mediterranean sea, about ½ mile from the shore. They built a new city of Tyre on the island. Alexander the Great would build a causeway in the ocean to this city to conquer it. The city would be destroyed and stripped of all its wealth. This reference to Tyre appears to point to the events that would later take place during the conquest of Alexander the Great (vs 1-4).

The regions of Philistia which had been rebuilt would not escape the swiftness of this attack. The Philistines would completely cease to exist and become a mixture of many different people. Eventually, those living in the region of Philistia and all the other regions who were enemies of Israel would turn to God. They would all be a part of the kingdom of

God and eventually there will be no enemies to fight against them (vs 5-8).

The time line appears to shift from the current judgement of God on the surrounding nations to that of a future hope. The Israelites were called to rejoice because a king was coming to deliver them. This king would bring salvation to His people. He would arrive riding on a young donkey, which would not have been a symbol of power, but one of humility. This prediction was fulfilled when Jesus rode into Jerusalem a week before His death. As with many prophecies, they do not make a distinction between the first and second coming of Jesus. Once this king takes His throne, the bow and chariots will no longer be used because He will bring peace among the nations. His kingdom will be far reaching, to the ends of the earth (vs 9-10).

Though all nations of the world will be humbled, Israel will be exalted because God had made His covenant with them. All the captives will be freed as pictured by the releasing of prisoners from waterless pits. God would give them the power to overcome great armies like the one that Alexander the Great would create. His power would overwhelm their foes and Israel will be victorious (vs 11-13).

The rule of the Messiah will come with supernatural power. It will not rely upon the weapons of men, but God will send lightning and whirlwinds to assist Him in conquering the nations. God will protect His own while devouring His enemies. These natural disasters will decimate the opposition and scatter them like small sling stones are scattered by raging water. The land will be restored and the people will shine like jewels in a crown. The people will live in bounty and the land will be filled with beauty and glory (vs 14-17).

How Does this Apply to Me?

This prophecy is reminiscent of many that had been given before the fall of Jerusalem. Those prophecies were meant to reveal that there would be hope after destruction while this prophecy appears to be given to encourage the Jews to keep building because they were helping to bring a new era. One of the unique references given here was fulfilled in Matthew 21 when Jesus rode into Jerusalem. Just as so many of the other prophecies, this was meant to give hope to the children of God. The fact that this was partially fulfilled leaves us with great anticipation for more to come. One day, Jesus will return and make all things right. Those who follow Him can live with great anticipation of the future.

What two groups does God have His eye on (vs 1)?

- 1.
- 2.

What do you think this means?

How were Tyre and Sidon described (vs 2)?

What had Tyre done for itself (vs 3)?

What was God going to cause to happen (vs 4)?

What will all the Philistine nations do when they see the fall of Tyre (vs 5)?

Who was going to dwell in the land of the Philistines (vs 6)?

What would the land of the Philistines become (vs 7)?

What will not happen in the future times (vs 8)?

Why was Jerusalem called to rejoice (vs 9)?

Who was going to come (vs 9)?

Where would His kingdom be (vs 10)?

Who was going to be set free (vs 11)?

How did God say He would restore them (vs 12)?

Who were the people pictured (vs 13)?

What supernatural events will God use (vs 14-15)?

What will the people of God be like (vs 16)?

How will the new nation of Israel be different than the current one (vs 17)?

“Wanting to Bless”

Study: Zechariah 10:1-12

Reading: Jeremiah 33:1-13, Isaiah 55:1-13

Memory: Psalm 119:16

Though I went to Bible college and was a student of the Bible, I struggled to understand the love of God. It wasn't until I had children of my own that I began to understand His love in a greater way. The older my children grew and the more I experienced with them, the more I understood the love of God. As a father, one of my great desires was to do all I could to see my children succeed. When they would ask for something, I would do all I could to help make their desires happen. Even as they entered adulthood and started to leave home, I found myself wanting to do all I could to help them in their lives.

Today, we are going to read how we have a loving heavenly Father who longs to see us succeed in life. He is waiting for us to call on Him so He can pour out His blessings to us.

What Does the Bible Say?

God desired to bless His people and they were encouraged to call to Him and ask for rain. God is the source of the clouds and He is the One who causes the rain to water their fields. The false gods which had become so popular among the people before Israel was destroyed did not have the ability to do this. The leaders of these false religions would promise rain, but they would have no ability to carry out their plans. God's anger was directed first towards the leaders of these false religions and they would face a greater punishment. God cared for His flock and He wanted the leaders of the flock to care for people like He did. God wanted to make Israel to be like a majestic horse. He had great plans for Judah and described how a cornerstone, tent peg and bow will come from them. These all appear to be references to the Messiah. In other places in Scripture, Christ is referred to as the cornerstone, but it is unclear what the tent peg was a reference to. Some have suggested that it could have been the center post of the tent that held the whole tent up. The bow revealed how the Messiah would be a strong military leader who would lead all of the other leaders into battle. They would trample their foes

and overcome any opponent because God was on their side (vs 1-5).

Though they were at the weakest point they had ever been as a nation, God's plan was to give them strength. He would have compassion on them and restore them, even though they had at one time rejected Him. He desired to be their God and to give them what they needed when they called out to Him. Not only would Judah be restored, but Ephraim (Joseph) would also be restored (a reference to the northern tribes). They would once again be able to host celebrations with their families and rejoice in the land that God had given them (vs 6-7).

God pictured Himself whistling for His people to come, as a shepherd would call in His sheep. The people would repopulate the land, even though they had been scattered all over the world. They will return with their families into Israel and the surrounding regions. They will fill the land of Israel with so many people that they will need more land. The sea and the Nile River, which would have been obstacles for the return, will be overcome making it easy for the Jews to return. Israel will be made strong again and they will live lives that bring honor to God (vs 8-12).

How Does this Apply to Me?

Do you realize that God wants to bless you? Many people get the idea that God is just waiting to punish people who make mistakes, but that is not what God desires. Yes, God does punish sin, but He much more desires to reward the righteous. He wants you to call to Him so He can answer your prayer. He wants you to follow His way so He can fill your life with good things. God revealed His great plans for Israel and He had wonderful things planned for them. They were never fully able to realize the great things He desired since they chose not to follow His plan. One day, His fullness will be enjoyed on the earth when Jesus returns to rule and reign. But until then, you can still live with daily rejoicing because of the blessings He wants to pour out on your life.

Suggestions for Prayer

* *Thank God for His love towards you.*

* *Ask God to help you choose to do things His way.*

Thought for the day

What did God tell the people to ask for (vs 1)?

What did God have the power to do (vs 1)?

How does this still apply to you today?

What was the difference between God and the false teachers (vs 2)?

What happened when the leaders neglected their duties (vs 2)?

How does this danger still exist today?

What was God's attitude towards these leaders (vs 3)?

What did God say He would make His people like (vs 3)?

What are the three descriptions directed towards the Messiah in verse 4?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

What would God make the warriors of Judah like (vs 5)?

Why was God going to bring the people back to the land (vs 6)?

Why is it so important to realize that God is a God of compassion (vs 6)?

What will Israel become like (vs 7)?

What does the reference to whistling in verse 8 mean?

How are the people going to return (vs 9)?

Why would they come to Gilead and Lebanon (vs 10)?

What would not stop them from returning (vs 11)?

What would God do for His people (vs 12)?

“*Uncaring Shepherds*”

Study: Zechariah 11:1-17

Reading: Matthew 15:10-20, 1 Timothy 3:1-13

Memory: Psalm 119:16

What Does the Bible Say?

Chapter 11 opens up with a description of a great fire that would consume the mighty forests of the land. The cedars of Lebanon are mentioned many times in the Old Testament and are pictured as marvelous trees used for building. At the time there were also many cypress trees in the northern region of Israel. The region of Bashan, on the western side of the Sea of Galilee, was known for its oak trees. All these trees are pictured as being burnt, which would have been an immense tragedy. A great fire destroying all the trees would have a catastrophic effect on the people and animals who lived in the land (vs 1-3).

The people of the land who chose to reject God would become like sheep that were doomed for slaughter. They would not be led by compassionate shepherds who normally loved their flock, but the sheep would be sold to business men who were only concerned with making a profit. This was to illustrate how God would view those who chose to reject Him. This appears to be a picture of the leaders of Israel when Jesus came the first time. The religious leaders cared more about selfish gain than caring for the Jewish people (vs 4-6).

To physically illustrate this, Zechariah became a shepherd of a flock that was destined for slaughter. He took two staffs and named one “Favor” and the other he named “Union.” These depicted the favor of God on His people and how Israel and Judah were part of His family. The evil shepherds who were in charge of the flock before him were removed from their posts. Zechariah became impatient with the flock and this turned the flock against him. He no longer would care for his flock and he would leave them to their own wandering ways which was certain to bring destruction and death. He then broke the staff called “Favor,” which illustrated how God’s favor on His people would be broken. The sheep traders who were watching this offered him 30 pieces of silver for his sheep. God commanded that this silver be thrown to the potter who was in the temple. He then broke the second staff which annulled the

alliance that was between Judah and Israel (vs 7-14).

We are not given a direct interpretation of this prophecy, though certain word pictures point to some events that have happened already and some that will happen. The reference to the 30 pieces of silver thrown to the potter in the temple is a pretty clear reference to how Judas betrayed Christ for 30 pieces of silver and gave it back to the leader of the temple who then bought the potter’s field to bury Judas. Matthew 27:9 mentions how this prophecy had been fulfilled.

After this, God called Zechariah to once again become a worthless shepherd, which was to illustrate how God would raise up a leader in the land who did not care for the sheep. Instead, this shepherd would eat the sheep and destroy them for his own purpose. This shepherd would face great punishment because he chose to abandon his flock. He would lose the use of his arm and the use of his eye. Many commentators believe this is a prediction of the time when the Anti-christ will appear. (vs 15-17).

How Does this Apply to Me?

What type of leader are you? What type of leaders do you follow? Leaders were often pictured as shepherds throughout Scripture and when leaders led for their personal gain, things would get pretty bad. The picture given of the burning trees was a vivid illustration of what happens when selfish leaders are in charge. This was clearly on display at the time of Christ where the Jewish leaders rejected the Messiah and had him killed. Jesus described them as “the blind leading the blind.” (Matthew 15:14) This is why it is so important for leaders to lead following the biblical principles and for people to choose leaders who are godly men, not just people with great charisma.

Suggestions for Prayer

- * *Thank God for the godly leaders in your life.*
- * *Ask God to help you be the leader He desires you to be.*
- * *Praise God because He is the great Shepherd.*

Thought for the day

What trees were mentioned in verses 1-2?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

What was happening to the trees (vs 2)?

What was the end result of this destruction (vs 3)?

What was Zechariah told to do (vs 4)?

What were the buyers concerned about (vs 5)?

What did the shepherds not have compassion for (vs 5)?

What was this a picture of?

What happens when leaders fail to lead (vs 6)?

What did Zechariah do (vs 7)?

What did he name his staffs (vs 7)?

What happened between the sheep and their shepherd (vs 8)?

What did Zechariah say about the sheep (vs 9)?

What did he do with the staff (vs 10)? What was this a picture of?

What was he given in exchange for the sheep (vs 11-12)?

What do you think this was a picture of?

What was Zechariah told to do with the money (vs 13)? Why?

What did he do with the second staff (vs 14)? Why?

What would God give the nation (vs 16)?

What was going to happen to this shepherd (vs 17)?

Memory Verse:

Psalms 119:1 Blessed are those whose way is blameless, who walk in the law of the LORD! 2 Blessed are those who keep his testimonies, who seek him with their whole heart, 3 who also do no wrong, but walk in his ways! 4 You have commanded your precepts to be kept diligently. 5 Oh that my ways may be steadfast in keeping your statutes! 6 Then I shall not be put to shame, having my eyes fixed on all your commandments. 7 I will praise you with an upright heart, when I learn your righteous rules. 8 I will keep your statutes; do not utterly forsake me! 9 How can a young man keep his way pure? By guarding it according to your word. 10 With my whole heart I seek you; let me not wander from your commandments! 11 I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you. 12 Blessed are you, O LORD; teach me your statutes! 13 With my lips I declare all the rules of your mouth. 14 In the way of your testimonies I delight as much as in all riches. 15 I will meditate on your precepts and fix my eyes on your ways. 16 I will delight in your statutes; I will not forget your word.