

Shalom AZ Ministries

In Pursuit of Israel's Redemption



"Look Up. Listen. Then Look In."

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Devotion and Discussion Questions

Key Texts (TLV): Ps 139, 19; Heb. 4:12-13; Jer. 17:9

Have you ever been surprised by your own reaction to something? Someone says the wrong thing, plans fall apart, or conflict rises, and suddenly words or attitudes come out that you didn't realize were sitting in your heart. **When life squeezes us, what's in us is what comes out.** Our natural inclination is to trust our own counsel, yet Scripture warns us about the deceitfulness of the heart (Jer. 17:9). The question is not simply whether we managed to control our response. It is what that response reveals about what is happening inside us.

The Lord invites us into a different way of walking through life: **look up, listen, and then look in.** Look to Him rather than relying on our own understanding. Listen to what He has to say, and then examine what is actually in us in light of His Word. Heb. 4:12 describes God's Word as *"living and active,"* able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. His Word cuts past the outer layer, past the appearance we present to others, and reaches places we cannot always discern ourselves. Because He sees us as we really are, we can ask Him to transform us.

1. LOOK UP — Creation Declares His Glory (Ps. 19:2-7)

David begins Psalm 19 by looking up. *"The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky shows His handiwork"* (Ps. 19:2). Day after day, creation pours forth its testimony; night after night, it reveals knowledge. Can we count the stars? Even with our instruments, the universe exceeds our grasp. All of it points to the One who formed it. The point of these opening verses is not simply the beauty of creation. It is what creation is saying about its Creator. The heavens are continually declaring His glory.

Every sunrise reminds us of His dependability. Day after day, the created order bears witness to His faithfulness. Yet creation does not give instructions we can fully hear and heed. We can see His glory without knowing how to walk through today's conflict. Israel's neighbors sometimes worshiped the sun, moon, and stars; David directs our attention instead to the God who made them. So when circumstances press in and our thoughts grow loud, the first thing we need is to look up. Remember who He is. Remember whose hands hold all things, including us.

2. LISTEN — His Word Restores and Reorients Us (Ps. 19:8-12)

In His kindness, ADONAI has not left us with only the testimony of creation. He has given us instruction we can discern. David turns from the heavens to the Torah of ADONAI: His instruction is perfect, restoring the soul; His testimony is trustworthy, making the inexperienced wise (Ps. 19:8). His precepts are right, bringing joy to the heart, and His

mitzvot are pure, giving light to the eyes. This is gracious instruction from the One who knows us. His Word brings clarity where we are confused, exposes what needs to be sifted out, and restores what has become disordered within us.

David says these words are more desirable than gold and sweeter than honey (Ps. 19:11). Do we really treat what ADONAI says as that precious? We tend to value our own opinions, especially when someone has hurt us or we feel justified in our anger. But the question is not merely what seems right to me. It is what the Lord has said. Listening means more than hearing words; it means responding to them. His instruction warns us, enlightens us, and guides us toward what is good. We can trust Him even when His correction is uncomfortable, because His commands flow from His wisdom and love. We learn to treasure His thoughts above our own.

3. LOOK IN — Invite Him to Search Your Heart (Ps. 19:13–15; Ps. 139:1–24)

As David listens, his prayer becomes personal: *“Who can discern his errors?”* (Ps. 19:13). He asks ADONAI to cleanse hidden faults and keep willful, presumptuous sins from ruling him. Then he prays that the words of his mouth and the meditation of his heart would be acceptable before the Lord (Ps. 19:15). It is good to guard the doorway of our lips, but we must deal with the wellspring of our hearts. If I stop myself from making a cruel remark, that is good. But why was that cruel thought there? Why did criticism, resentment, or pride rise so quickly? The Lord wants to deal not only with my actions, but also with my intentions.

Psalms 139 helps us understand why we can welcome that examination. David begins by acknowledging that ADONAI has searched him and knows him. He knows when David sits and rises, discerns his thoughts from afar, and knows a word before it reaches his tongue (Ps. 139:1–4). There is nowhere to flee from His Ruach; even darkness is not dark to Him. Yet this knowledge is not presented as the cold gaze of someone looking for an excuse to condemn. The God who sees everything is the One who sheltered and knit us together in our mothers’ wombs. We are wonderfully made and precious in His sight (Ps. 139:13–16). His correction is rooted in His care. Even when David confronts wickedness around him, he ends by turning the examination inward: *“Search me, O God, and know my heart”* (Ps. 139:23). He wants the Lord to expose any offensive way in him and lead him in the everlasting way.

CONCLUSION — Let His Word Reach the Wellspring

We cannot hide from ADONAI—and we do not need to. He already knows the thoughts we struggle to explain, the wounds that shape our responses, and the motives we sometimes conceal even from ourselves. His knowledge is too wonderful for us to fully grasp. But we can trust the One who made us, loves us, and leads us. Just as a loving father gives instruction because he wants what is good for his child, our heavenly Father speaks truth for our good. His Word may expose an attitude we justified or challenge our chosen path. We need not respond defensively. We can listen because we know His heart toward us.

So make this a daily practice, especially when pressure reveals something uncomfortable. Look up and remember His glory and faithfulness. Listen—really listen—to His living Word, allowing it to cut through appearances to the intentions underneath. Then look in, not to condemn yourself or to rely on your own judgment, but to invite the Holy Spirit to show you what He sees. Ask Him to purify the place angry words come from. Let your prayer be that not only what comes out of your mouth, but also what fills your heart, would be pleasing in His presence.

Perhaps the pressure you are facing has exposed fear, bitterness, anger, pride, or a need to be in control. Maybe you have managed your outward behavior while quietly nourishing thoughts that do not reflect the character of Yeshua. Bring those things into His presence. He already knows and loves you enough to speak truth. Ask Him to show you what you have missed, to cleanse the hidden faults, and to keep willful sin from taking dominion over you. This is not about manufacturing a better appearance. It is about allowing Him to transform the heart. Take a moment and surrender the very place you have been protecting. Tell Him, “Lord, I want what You have to say to matter more to me than my own opinion. Examine my thoughts. Show me any offensive way in me, and lead me in Your everlasting way.” Allow His Spirit to bring what is inside you into alignment with the beauty and character of Messiah Yeshua.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. In Ps. 19:2–7, what does creation reveal about ADONAI, and what can it not tell us on its own?
2. According to Ps. 19:8–12, why is the Lord’s instruction more valuable than gold and sweeter than honey?
3. How does being fully known and wonderfully made in Ps. 139 change the way we receive God’s correction?
4. When you feel pressured, criticized, or misunderstood, what responses tend to come out of you, and what might they reveal about your heart?
5. Is there a thought, resentment, fear, or habit you have kept hidden behind outward self-control? What would it look like to invite ADONAI to examine and transform it this week?

CLOSING PRAYER

ADONAI, You see me and know me completely. Thank You for the wonder of Your creation and for Your Word that speaks clearly into my life. Forgive me for the times I have trusted my own counsel instead of listening to You. Search me and know my heart. Examine my anxious thoughts, cleanse the faults I cannot see, and keep pride and willful sin from ruling me. Let Your Ruach ha-Kodesh purify the wellspring of my heart, so that my thoughts, my words, and my actions reflect the character of Yeshua. Lead me in Your everlasting way. May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing in Your presence, ADONAI, my Rock and my Redeemer.

B'Shem Yeshua, In the name of Yeshua, amen.