



ShalomAZ Ministries

In Pursuit of Israel's Redemption

Look Up, Look In, Line Up Rabbi Cosmo Panzetta **Devotion and Discussion Questions**

Key Texts: Psalm 19, Psalm 139

When life squeezes you, what's really inside you comes out. You know those moments—conflict, pressure, disappointment, feeling misunderstood. In those moments, what's naturally in us is to trust our own counsel: *"I know what I'm doing. I'll follow my own heart."* But Jeremiah reminds us, *"The heart is deceitful above all things—who can know it?"* (Jeremiah 17:9, TLV). We don't even see ourselves clearly.

So what does the Lord want us to do? Not just in the crisis moments, but in the everyday, ordinary moments: to **look up**, to **hear what He has to say**, and then to **look in and line up** with His Word. Hebrews tells us that God's word doesn't just skim the surface of our behavior—it cuts to the core of our intentions. Psalm 19 and Psalm 139 show us a God who is always speaking, always seeing, always loving, and always inviting us to let Him search and transform our hearts.

1. LOOK UP: GOD IS ALWAYS SPEAKING

When the pressure hits, our default is to go inward—to our own thoughts, our own instincts, our own "wisdom." But the Lord is calling us to look **up** first. Hebrews says: *"For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword—piercing right through to a separation of soul and spirit, joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart."* (Hebrews 4:12, TLV)

Yes, that includes the written Word—Scripture, breathed out by the Spirit. But it's also every time the Lord speaks: What He speaks is *living* and *active*. When He speaks, He doesn't just give us information—He cuts past the outer layer, past what everyone else sees, and deals with our **intentions**.

Psalm 19 starts by lifting our eyes: *"The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky shows His handiwork. Day to day they pour out speech, night to night they reveal knowledge."* (Psalm 19:2–3, TLV). Creation is preaching all the time. The heavens are *measuring out* the glory of God. The rising of the sun every morning is declaring the dependability of His promises. Every day, every night, the expanse of the sky is saying, *"He is faithful. He is constant. He keeps His word."*

But there's a problem: creation speaks a language we can't fully discern. *"There is no speech, there are no words, where their voice goes unheard."* (Psalm 19:4, TLV). It's like a sermon in a language just beyond us. We know something is being said, but we need more clarity. So in His kindness, the Lord didn't just leave us with **general revelation**—He gave us His **specific word**. *"The Torah of ADONAI is perfect, restoring the soul. The testimony of ADONAI is trustworthy, making the simple wise."* (Psalm 19:8, TLV)

Creation says, "God is glorious." His Instructions – His Torah – says, "Here's what He wants. Here's who He is. Here's how to walk in His ways." So instead of driving through life thinking, *"I've got this,"* the Lord is calling us to a posture of constant looking up: "Lord, what are You saying? What does Your word say about this attitude, this reaction, this decision?"

2. LOOK IN: LET HIS WORD EXPOSE WHAT YOU CANNOT SEE

The problem isn't just that other people don't see us clearly; it's that **we** don't see ourselves clearly. We can't even fully discern what's going on inside our own hearts. Hebrews continues: *"No creature is hidden from Him, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account."* (Hebrews 4:13).

We can pull everything in—like putting on a corset to create a shape on the outside—but the Lord sees **who we really are**. He sees what's driving our reactions, the motivations under our words, the fears under our defensiveness. Psalm 19 is brutally honest about this: *"Who can discern his errors? Cleanse me of hidden faults. Also keep Your servant from willful sins... May they not have dominion over me. Then I will be blameless, free from great transgression."* (Psalm 19:13–14 [Eng. 12–13], TLV)

There are **hidden faults**—things in me I don't even see. Patterns I've lived in for so long that they feel normal. Attitudes I justify. Wounds that shape my reactions. And then there are **willful sins**—arrogant, presumptuous choices where I know better, but I push ahead anyway. David doesn't just ask for help managing his behavior; he asks for a deep inner cleansing: "Lord, the stuff I don't see—purge it. The presumptuous, arrogant choices—keep me from them. Don't let them rule me."

And then he prays what should be a daily benediction over our lives: *"May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable before You, ADONAI, my Rock and my Redeemer."* (Psalm 19:15 [Eng. 14], TLV). It's not just, "Help me not say the wrong thing." It's, "Lord, change what I *want* to say. Change the source. Deal with the well, not just the faucet."

So when you catch yourself thinking something ugly you didn't say, the goal is not to pat yourself on the back because you kept it in. The question becomes: "Lord, why is that thought in me? What's going on in my heart that produced that?" The living and active Word of God is not meant to simply help us behave; it's meant to **transform** us.

3. LINE UP: INVITE HIM TO SEARCH YOU AND LEAD THE WAY

Psalm 139 takes us even deeper. It reminds us that the One who searches us is the same One who **formed us**, who **values us**, and who **never loses sight of us**. *"ADONAI, You searched me and know me. Whenever I sit down or stand up, You know it... You discern my thinking from afar."* (Ps 139:1–2). He knows your sitting and your standing—the routine movements no one else notices. He discerns your thoughts from far away. Before a word is on your tongue, He already knows it completely (Ps 139:4). That's not meant to terrify you; it's meant to invite you to **honesty**: *"You hemmed me in behind and before, and laid Your hand upon me."* (Ps 139:5). You can't outrun Him. You can't hide in heaven or in Sheol, in the light or in the darkness (Ps 139:7–12).

And then David says: *"For You have created my inmost being; You knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise You, for I am awesomely, wonderfully made; wonderful are Your works, and my soul knows that very well."* (Psalm 139:13–14, TLV). The One who examines you is the One who **carefully wove you together**. Your embryo was seen by His eyes; your days were written in His book *before* one of them came to be (Psalm 139:16). His thoughts toward you are precious and countless—more than the grains of sand (Psalm 139:17–18).

So when He corrects you, when His word cuts—He's not trying to crush you; He's trying to **heal** you. He's the Father who says, "I love you too much to let that stay in your heart." David

feels the weight of the evil around him and even declares a fierce hatred of wickedness (Psalm 139:19–22). But then he circles back, not to his hatred of the wicked, but to his own heart before the Judge of all the earth: *“Search me, O God, and know my heart. Examine me, and know my anxious thoughts. And see if there be any offensive way within me, and lead me in the way everlasting.”* (Psalm 139:23–24, TLV). That’s the prayer of someone who has learned to **look up, look in, and line up**. “Lord, I know You see everything already. You know my fears, my anxious thoughts, the parts of me that are like fragile branches ready to snap. If there’s a way of pain, offense, or grief in me, don’t let me stay there. Lead me in Your eternal way.”

This is where the Lord is inviting us to live: Not just seeing evil “out there,” but inviting Him to uncover anything crooked “in here,” And then letting Him lead us in His way, step by step, day by day.

CONCLUSION

Our culture says, “Follow your heart.” The Scriptures say, *“The heart is deceitful above all things.”* Our instincts say, “Trust your own counsel.” The Lord says, “Look up. Listen. Let My word, which is living and active, cut through the layers and show you what’s really going on.” Today, Look up and say, “Speak, Lord.” Look in and say, “Search me, Lord.” Line up and say, “Lead me, Lord.”

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. When life “squeezes” you—stress, conflict, disappointment—what usually comes out of you first? What does that reveal about where your trust is?
2. How have you seen creation (sunrise, stars, storms, mountains, etc.) declare the glory and faithfulness of God in your own life, and yet still felt the need for God’s specific word?
3. Read Psalm 19:12–14. What might “hidden faults” look like in your life? What about “willful sins”? How can you begin praying this prayer honestly before the Lord?
4. Psalm 139 says God knows your thoughts from afar and saw you in your mother’s womb. How does knowing He both fully knows you and deeply loves you change the way you hear His correction?
5. What would it practically look like this week for you to pray daily: *“Search me, O God... lead me in the way everlasting”* and *“May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable before You”*? What specific step can you take?

CLOSING PRAYER:

ADONAI, our Rock and our Redeemer, we come before You today thanking You that Your word is *living and active*, sharper than any two-edged sword. Thank You that You see past our outer appearance, past our carefully managed behavior, and that You deal with our hearts. Lord, we confess that our own hearts are deceitful and that we often trust our own counsel more than Your word. Forgive us for leaning on our own understanding. Cleanse us of our hidden faults—the things we don’t even see in ourselves. Keep us from willful, arrogant, presumptuous sins. Let them not rule over us.

“Search me, O God, and know my heart. Examine me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way within me, and lead me in the way everlasting.” Today and every day, may the words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts be acceptable before You, ADONAI, our Rock and our Redeemer. In the name of Yeshua our Messiah, Amen.