

## The Statesman Acknowledges Our Creator's Instruction Manual

The first thing each of us does when we receive a new piece of equipment is to study the instruction manual. The reason we do this is to learn from the designer how that equipment was intended to function and how we can best achieve the results intended by the designer. The same is true for our nations. We are not the designers but rather entered into the picture long after their creation and are responsible to fulfill our stewardship in achieving the intent of the Designer. We cannot even look to the Constitution and the original intent of the founders of our nation as our guides. In reality, the design was imposed by our Creator – Almighty God. Our first step is to gain confidence that our Creator has given us an instruction manual in the form of the *Bible*. Then, we will need to study that instruction manual with the intent to apply what we learn.

**The reality that our Creator has given His instruction manual in the form of the *Bible*.** Let us begin with that first step – understanding the *Bible* as God's instruction manual for operating within His creation. There is one chapter in the Bible that stands out. It is Psalm 119, which may be studied in detail via the link: <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+119&version=HCSB>.

This chapter is best viewed as God's introduction to His instruction manual. In reality, it is a conversation between one who views himself as "Lord's servant" with our Creator. In this chapter, it emphasizes that the *Bible* is God's *instructions* 25 times, His *precepts* 21 times; furthermore, His *commands* 23 times, His *decrees* 23 times, His *statutes* 22 times – *instructions, precepts, commands, decrees, statutes* – all of which are relevant as guidelines to us in operating according to His design. Each of these concepts repeated throughout Psalm 119 – *instructions, precepts, commands, decrees, statutes* – make clear what is necessary in order to operate successfully within His Creation. Literally, it makes it abundantly clear that this book, the *Bible*, is the Creator's instruction manual. Let us briefly look at a few of our Creator's teachings in this rich chapter, speaking through His servant:

*How happy are those ...who live according to the LORD's instruction! Happy are those who keep His decrees and seek Him with all their heart (Psalm 119:1-2).*

Here is a simple motivation for understanding the need to study this manual. It is the clear expectation that those of us who operate within His creation will "keep His decrees and seek Him with all their heart". Other statements which support this, all addressed to our Creator:

*I love Your instruction (Psalm 119:113).*

*Abundant peace belongs to those who love Your instruction; nothing makes them stumble (Psalm 119:165).*

*I understand more than the elders because I obey Your precepts (Psalm 119:100).*

*LORD, ... teach me Your statutes. ... I rejoice in the way revealed by Your decrees as much as in all riches (Psalm 119:12-14).*

This makes clear the heart attitude necessary in approaching this instruction manual. We should treasure God's instructions as our greatest riches. We should view this instruction manual as our most-prized possession!

*Open my eyes so that I may contemplate wonderful things from Your instruction. I am a stranger on earth; do not hide Your commands from me (Psalm 119:18-19).*

This acknowledges that we do not have the wisdom within ourselves to operate within each area of our Lord's creation and that we need guidance that can only come from God, the Designer. This is emphasized elsewhere in the *Bible* where our Creator teaches:

*For My thoughts are not your thoughts, and your ways are not My ways. For as heaven is higher than earth, so My ways are higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts (Isaiah 55:8-9).*

I do not believe anyone responsible for affairs of State can feel secure in one's own wisdom. Hence, this argues that this chapter and the manual it refers to – the *Bible* – is essential for the one desiring to be a Statesman.

This expresses a clear recognition of the need to live within the guidelines of this manual. Clearly, God loves and cares about the well-being of His creation so much that He has given us everything necessary to fulfill His instructions.

**Approaching the Bible with the confidence that it is our Creator's instruction manual for affairs of State.** In the midst of giving instructions for His creation, our Creator gave specific instructions for operating within Government. As our Creator was establishing the institution of Government, He gave this specific directive to the Head of Government that seemingly applies to all who serve in a decision-making capacity within Government:

*And when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, he shall write for himself in a book a copy of this law, approved by the Levitical priests. And it shall be with him, and he shall read in it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the Lord his God by keeping all the words of this law and these statutes, and doing them, that his heart may not be lifted up above his brothers, and that he may not turn aside from the commandment, either to the right hand or to the left (Deuteronomy 17:18-20).*

Each governing official is to immerse oneself in God's instructions that they first write out in their own hand for their own use, and then meditate upon daily. This is fascinating in an age when traditional thinking calls for "separation of Church and State." The Head of Government, and presumably all officials operating under delegated authority from the Head of Government, are to write out the Law of God from the Bible. This group is apparently the only one that is asked to write the Law of God for their use in fulfilling their responsibilities. No other group than Government decision-makers is identified as required by our Creator to do that. Furthermore, this reminds us of just how important Government decision-makers are in God's plan and of His plan for them to be His instruments.

**Approaching our Creator's Instruction Manual.** Altogether, our Creator made clear that our own intrinsic wisdom is inadequate in navigating the complex challenges facing Government and that we need His wisdom and guidance. It is not enough to want to be obedient to God. We must recognize that our well-intentioned wisdom is inadequate, and

we must seek His wisdom – His direct guidance. Hence, we must commit ourselves to this instruction manual as our Creator’s servant expressed:

*Your word is a lamp for my feet and a light on my path (Psalm 119:105).*

*Your hands made me and formed me; give me understanding so that I can learn Your commands (Psalm 119:73).*

*The revelation of Your words brings light and gives understanding to the inexperienced (Psalm 119:130).*

As we recognize the application of the truths of this portion of the *Bible* to affairs of State, it is worthy of note that, although the author of this portion does not identify himself, analysts generally consider it be to a king – David – and one considered a Statesman. Hence, every thoughtful person must conclude that the *Bible* is our Creator’s instruction manual for every area of life, including affairs of State. Hence, let us each make the same commitment as this one whom we must admire:

*I am resolved to obey Your statutes to the very end (Psalm 119:112).*

### **CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE STATESMAN**

Do I understand the *Bible* as the instruction manual of God, the Designer and Creator, to mankind?

Do I understand myself as a human implementer on behalf of an unseen God in caring for His creation?

Am I willing to study His instruction manual to apply His instructions in my responsibilities?