

The Secret of the Lord (Psalm Xxv. 14)

by Seth Rees

The secret of the Lord is with those who fear Him, and He will show them His covenant, revealing secrets of regeneration, holiness, power, and joy.

Scripture: Psalm 25:14, Daniel 6:22, Mark 11:24, John 3:3, Acts 1:8, Romans 15:13, Philippians 4:4, James 1:2

Topics: "Spiritual Growth", "Holy Spirit"

Description

Seth Rees preaches about the secrets of the Lord that are revealed to those who fear Him, drawing parallels between the hidden treasures of the natural world and the spiritual treasures of God. He emphasizes the importance of seeking God's secrets through self-denial, diligent search, and a close walk with Him. Rees highlights the secret of the new birth, regeneration, and holiness as experiences known only to those who have encountered them through the Holy Spirit. He also discusses the secrets of faith, power, and joy that come from a deep relationship with God, leading to a life of praise and victory even in challenging circumstances.

Transcript

The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant"(Psalm xxv. 14).

The natural world is full of secrets. It is a sort of treasure house, filled with mysteries, about which man knows but little. Science is discovering more and more every year; but the secrets of God, discovered in these days by men of research, are the more ordinary secrets which, like shells, may be picked up along the seashore. They are not more than a tithe of the secrets yet to be revealed.

The best things in the natural world are hidden away. They are not lying around loose on top of the ground, to be destroyed by the plunderer's hand. They are not for "bums and soaks" and red nosed drunkards. The valuable things are put where only the deserving can find them. Our precious metals are hidden away in the earth and in the mountains, and the rocks must be struck and blasted and burned with fire in order to secure the hidden ore. Diamonds come from great depths; pearls are taken out of fathoms of water, and often they are encased in a rough shell, covered by a film, requiring the skill of an expert to perceive their value and remove the film. The beauty of a diamond is almost always a secret, brought out by great skill in shaping and polishing.

This principle is not only true in the mineral kingdom, but it is also true in the vegetable. The choicest kernels of nuts are put up in rough shells, which have to be broken. The kernel of the walnut, the exquisite

milk of the coconut, are hidden away, and challenge the energies of the industrious boy. There are secrets of science, and of art, and of invention. Nearly everything we prize in these days is of modern discovery. Our great grandfathers did not know the secrets which are patent to all today, and are of untold usefulness.

The labor of Watt gave us the steam engine; the toil of Stephenson, a railroad; the research of Edison and Bell, the telephone, -- and all these men are men who searched for God's secrets, and found them: none of them "tramps," none of them "dead beats," none of them idlers, sitting on goods-boxes whittling and spitting tobacco juice. They were men who denied themselves of money, of comfort and pleasures, denied themselves socially and domestically, and shut themselves up with the works of God, and searched out these things that you are so glad to use in everyday life. There is that man Edison, shut up with nature and discovery and invention, until you can gain an interview with the President of the United States more easily than with him. Natural secrets are shut away from everybody and everything. The man who finds them has to search after them, frequently at great cost to himself.

Down in South America they get down on their faces, and then on their sides, and then on their backs, and pick diamonds from the clefts of the mountains; and I want to say to you that just as men willing to deny themselves get the secrets of nature, so, they that deny themselves and search, find the secrets of the Spirit. God has some things that men do not find out by simply holding down the end of a pew. He has some things in the realm of divine grace that are known only to those who fear God and pay the price.

There are a great many people who think Christians are just alike in heaven; but the Bible does not teach it. All men are not the same here, and they will not be the same there; and some of you folks, if you ever go to heaven, you will go bareheaded -- you will have no crown. As certainly as the President has his cabinet, the Lord has His; as certainly as Jesus had a few disciples who stood close to Him and went with Him everywhere, to whom He revealed His secrets and told the things of His life, God has a select few to whom He tells His secrets. There are a lot of church members here who do not know anything about the things I am talking about tonight! I am not saying that God shuts you out, but you shut yourselves out. Like the tramp who sits around and never undertakes to find out the secrets of nature, there are people in the churches who live ease loving, pleasure seeking lives, and never deny themselves anything, and never get God's blessing.

God has some secrets in the spiritual realm that He is revealing to the people who are living near Him! He has some secrets that are delightful; and it is enough to make a man's mouth water to know that these things are here, and can be known if he only have energy to get at them. But they are put up in cases, and are hidden away, and folks that have nothing to do but take things as they come, never know what I am talking about tonight, viz.: the secret of the Lord.

The discovery of some secrets in the natural world has sometimes produced great joy. I remember that a Greek mathematician, when he made some great discovery in Geometry, ran into the street, crying: "I have found it! I have found it!" If a Greek mathematician could get shouting happy over a discovery in mathematics, why should you think it strange that we should get shouting happy over the discovery of some secret in the spiritual world? It is a wonder to me that people can get God's secrets and keep as still as they do about them.

I want to call your attention to some of these secrets tonight. One of them is pardon, regeneration, the new birth. The new birth is a secret none know except those who have it. Go out on the streets of Cincinnati,

and take a man who does not know regeneration, and try to explain regeneration to him so that he will understand it! Jesus Christ Himself can not do it. He tried it on Nicodemus; but Nicodemus could not understand the new birth, and no one can understand except one who has it. It is a secret that is revealed by the Holy Ghost in the heart.

The heathen world would like to know this secret -- it would like to know how to get rid of sin. Men are making long pilgrimages, they are walking on spikes, they are throwing their children into the Ganges, they are doing everything they know to get rid of their sins; but they do not find pardon; and the reason is, that they have not the Bible.

Job said, "How shall a man be just with God?" That was the question of the Old Testament, that was the question of that age. It is the question of all ages. That was the question that rose in the smoke of thousands of altars and flowed in the blood of millions of victims. That was the question: "How shall a man be just with God?" It is answered at Calvary. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, came to reveal this glorious secret to us, that we might know how to get rid of sin. You can not explain it to a man so that he can understand it -- to the most brainy, the most logical reasoner in this country -- you can not make him understand regeneration; for it is a secret revealed in the heart.

Twenty-five years ago I stood up in the old Quaker church with the conviction in my heart that I was very sinful, and I meant to say so; but I was only on my feet thirty seconds; and when I rose to my feet I was an awful sinner, and I sat down a saint. I had only confessed a sentence or two; but the heavens opened, an glory dropped into my soul, and I was saved, and every sin I ever committed was removed, and God whispered a secret to my soul that I have not got over. Folks did not understand it, church members did not understand it, preachers did not understand it. One preacher said I was "like a hotbed plant, and would soon wither"; but God whispered a secret in my soul. I doubt if there is a crowned head today that understands this stupendous secret; but I was just a plowboy, and I found it. God gave me this secret in my soul, and after all the scorching suns of twenty-five summers, and all the bleak north winds of twenty-five winters, I have not given up yet. Hallelujah!

O, if you had this secret, you would know what I am talking about. I am not talking about holiness now, I am talking about regeneration -- something to which many church members are strangers. They have joined the church and been baptized; but they do not know anything about experimental religion. But God one day saved my soul, and gave me a new name, and I knew it, and all the college professors and all the Doctors of Divinity would not be able to get it out of me. It is put in there to stay. It is a little secret which the Lord and I have together. O, if you ever had the genuine thing, you would know what I am talking about. It is not signing a pledge or joining the church. Lots of people have their names on the church book, and they had just as well be on aboard fence, so far as saving them is concerned.

Again, beloved, holiness is a secret. There never was a time in the history of the Church when so many people were debating the question of holiness as today. There are preachers everywhere discussing and opposing holiness. They fix it once, and say that the thing is settled; but for their lives they can not let it alone. by do they not preach a good straight sermon against holiness, and fix it once and for all? Just about the time a Doctor of Divinity gets it proved in his pulpit that no one can have it, one of his best old sisters tumbles in and gets it, and then he has to preach again.

The time was, in the history of the Church, when holiness was pretty much confined to the Quaker Church. That was seventy-five or a hundred years before the Methodists. (You Methodists came lagging along

behind, anyhow.) The time was, again, when holiness was confined to the Methodist Episcopal Church; that was about a hundred or seventy-five years ago; but the time has come in the last twenty-five or thirty years, when God has launched a movement that is spreading all around the world. The High Church Episcopalian and the Presbyterian and the Congregationalist and the Lutheran, are getting interested about this question of holiness.

This is one of the signs that Jesus is coming soon. God is selecting a Bride out of the churches of His Son; God's people are fast becoming a unit. I have as good friends who are stanch holiness workers in the Methodist Church as there are anywhere. I have as good, strong, wholehearted friends in the Congregational Church as there are in the Methodist, and so in a number of denominations. We have come to a place in this movement where God is not going to be shut up to a denomination, but is reaching out and extending His hand to all denominations and all classes. He is going into the jungles, and into the slums, and saving people and sanctifying them wholly.

Holiness is a secret, and no one knows it but those who have it. And you may know it, and the fellow who sits next you may know no more about it than a Hottentot. Your wife may know it, and you may congratulate yourself on the fact, and then know no more about it than a heathen in Africa. It is a secret. You can not get it by study. You can not get it by work. If you could get it by work, all our "supper folks" would have it. They would get it "baking cakes and washing dishes"; they would work themselves to skeletons but they would have it. We can not get it that way. It is a secret. It is hidden away; and even if a man is brainy he can not get it by way of his head, for it comes by way of the heart; and no man can get what I am talking about until he discounts everything above the collar bone. Do you know that holiness is something you can not understand until you get it? But they who have it understand it; don't you hear them saying "Amen"? It is the folks that have not got it that can't understand it. When you get the blessing, it will be as plain to you as high noon. You can not see in the bunghole of a barrel very well, but if you tumble into the barrel you can see out all right. And you can not see into this blessing by way of your head, but if you tumble into it with your heart, then you will understand it!

The Lord reveals it to people. God bless you, I do not take as much pains in "explaining holiness" to people as I used to. I believe our holiness people make a mistake in entering into this matter with so much reasoning. I used to take a great deal of time in defining the steps; and it maybe that sometimes folks get into it by steps, but most of them tumble in. After we get this second blessing, God reveals other secrets to us. One is the secret of faith. God whispered the secret to Abraham. Daniel knew the secret. Daniel and God had talked the matter over, and God said, "Daniel, if you will be true to me, and sleep with the lions, I will send an angel and stop their mouths." And Daniel said, "I will do it"; and God let Daniel go into the lions' den, and he stopped their mouths. He would not let you go into the lions' den; you will not be honored with a trip like that, because you will not be quiet and trust God. You would be screaming to get out, and the lions would eat you up. But God knew Daniel, and God knew Daniel would trust him, for he had "the secret of the Lord." Daniel went into the lions' den and slept like a baby, and it was the king who walked the house all night that night.

When I went to a New England city, to be pastor of a church, and have charge of two missions and five or six different corps of mission workers, they told me I would have many things to encounter that would be very difficult; and I said, "If anybody has to walk the floor and lie awake, it will be the other folks." And God kept me where He could put me to sleep every night.

When a man gets this secret he can believe for anything, and get it. I know a woman who had prayed twenty years for her husband. Sometimes she would pray at him, and sometimes about him, and sometimes for him. When she was at low ebb spiritually she was cross, and would scold and spoil all the good she had done. But one night she got desperately in earnest, and cried for the Holy Ghost to save her husband. He retired, while she staid on her knees until eleven o'clock, and then until twelve, and then until one, and then she waited and wrestled with God until the clock struck two; and then the heavens opened, and the fire came down, and she had the witness that her husband would be saved. She also retired, and her husband waking with a start, jumped up, went down on his knees, and prayed earnestly for God to help him., and by morning he was saved! When you get this experience, you can feel assured that God has your loved ones in hand. He will attend to them. Without this secret the probability is that you will tell them this, that, and the other, and never get them saved.

But you get struck with lightning yourself, and God will send conviction that will move your relatives. Would you not like to save them? This is the way to do it, -- make your own life right. You come to me to "save your unsaved children!" If the mother would learn to live as sweet a life at home, in her kitchen, as when she has company, her children would soon be converted. Some of you are so cross and hard to get along with, that no one wants your religion. God bless you, I do not wonder that your children do not want it; I do not wonder that they do not get saved. Lord, help us to get rid of inbred sin, and get saved through and through, and then we will have something that people want! There is a secret of power which the Church ought to know. Someone says, "I wish I had power. Power for what? Power to get a flaming notice in the newspaper, power to make a show, power to be somebody? That is of no account; but we do need spiritual power; and there is a secret of power that the people ought to have that will give us power every day of the year. Every time an evangelist has marvelous success, people wonder and say, Where is the secret of his power? But the secret of power is in the Holy Ghost; and if people would receive the Holy Ghost they would have power for the successful accomplishment of everything which they should do.

Before I close I want to call your attention to the fact that there is a secret of joy about which the rank and file know nothing. When you get this blessing you can follow James' injunction, "When ye fall into divers temptations, count it all joy." You can rejoice on Monday as well as on Sunday. You can rejoice when everything is against you, when you are out of a job; you can rejoice when you are out of money; you can rejoice when your friends go back on you; you can rejoice when the devil is near; you can whistle and sing and shout and laugh and praise God when there is nothing in sight to rejoice about! If you put your washing out, and the clothesline breaks, and all your week's laundry has to be washed over again, why, Hallelujah! I know a woman who shouted over just such circumstances, and exulted in her kitchen as much as on the platform before a large congregation. I am talking to you tonight about something that is intensely practical. It is something that will make a man rejoice when his meals are not ready; it is something that will make you praise God when the beefsteak is overdone, and when things do not go to suit you. You will thank God and eat the beefsteak, burnt as it is. I tell you that when something goes wrong in your home, and you go out and slam the door, and leave your wife feeling hurt, and go down the street -- you, a member of the church and on the Official Board -- you need something, and need it badly! This secret will make us live just as God wants us to live, wherever we are. What is the difference what I preach to you, anyhow, if I am not right at home? What does it matter what I may say from your platform, if my two sons do not have confidence in me? I would rather have the confidence of my two boys than all the honors that the world and the church could roll at my feet. O for something that makes us behave ourselves in our own homes!

My wife used to tell -- and I love to tell anything that my wife ever told -- my wife used to tell about a man who received this blessing out West. He had been one of these scolding church members. (Scores of people are members of church and scold terribly at home.) He got the blessing one night, and came home late, and found his children up. Ordinarily when he came home late and found them up he gave them a good scolding and sent them to bed. They began to look frightened; but he came in smiling, and he said: "Why, children, are you up yet? I thought you would be in bed." And they said: "Yes, papa, we thought we would like to sit up until you came." And he said: "Now you go down stairs and get some nuts and apples and popcorn, and we will have a good, old-fashioned, nut cracking, apple roasting, corn popping time;" and they were thunderstruck sure enough; and when they got down into the cellar the little boy said to his sister: "Sis, do you know what I think?" She said: "No, bub; what do you think?" "Well," he said, "I think pap's going to die."

Well, do you know that is the idea that people have, that if you get a blessing so that you live very good here, that you are about ready for heaven; and wives feel anxious about their husbands when they get a good spell, and mothers feel sort of good when the sick child gets cross? You say, "It is getting better." As long as it was not cross, you thought it was getting ready for heaven, and you are glad to see it cross; you say, O, the child is getting cross; it is getting better!"

But, we have a gospel that takes the crossness all out of folks, and makes them live upright all the days of their lives. People do not understand it; and some of you, if you were to get the blessing here, would behave yourself so much better that your wife would get scared and say, "John is going to die;" but the fact is that death takes place right here at the altar.

Beloved, when you get this blessing you can laugh when there is nothing to laugh about. No one else sees anything to laugh at, but you see it. Do you remember that when Israel walked with God they always had good water, and when they murmured they always lost it? The river that ran from that "smitten" rock was like Lost River in Tennessee; it would disappear at times. And onetime they murmured, and God said they would have to dig for the water. And they went to digging; but they found no water, and the Lord said: "Get around the hole and sing." Sing around an empty hole! But when they sang, the water sprang up! If you have not got salvation enough to sing over an empty hole, a dry well, you have not got the blessing of the text. What is needed is a man who can shout when there is no water in sight, who can praise God when everything looks like midnight darkness.

Any one can praise God after the devil has been defeated; but it takes a man full of salvation who can dance when he is being tempted. God has such people. I have gone to places where everything was as cold and frigid as an iceberg, and I began to praise the Lord for the revival that was coming. Folks did not see it, and they did not believe anything would come of it, and they held off to see if it was "going to go on or not;" for you know there are people who, if it does not "go" are not in it, but if it is a success they "have been in it from the beginning!" But it always goes! Glory to God! A bit of experience right here: It has been years since I have gone to any place without a revival. The last three pastorates I had, I had a revival right along. I would not be pastor of a church, if I could not have converts in July and August. The last pastorate I had we had a constant revival, and July was the greatest month we had.

I am not done with this subject, but I am going to stop. There doesn't seem to be any end to sermons anyway. If you are going to get the secret you will have to come and walk with the folks who possess it. If you are fearing an elder, or the President of the Ladies' Aid Society, or Brother B. or Sister C., you will never get this blessing; for the secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him. If you are willing to go alone,

and do God's errands, and please Him, you can have the blessing I am talking about tonight. You had better pay the price, and the Lord will give you the secret of regeneration, of power, of joy, and a whole lot of things I have not mentioned -- he will flood your life with the second blessing. Praise the Lord!

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