

# Meditations on Psalm 119

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## Delight in the Word of God Brings Blessing

Psalm 119:1,2 says, *"<sup>1</sup>Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the LORD. <sup>2</sup>Blessed are they that keep his testimonies, and that seek him with the whole heart."* What kind of blessings follow the man whose delight is in the law of the LORD, the one who delights greatly in His Word?

1. He is undefiled. He walks with integrity and without blemish. *"Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the LORD."* (verse 1)
2. He is kept from sinning, and He walks in God's ways. *"They also do no iniquity: they walk in his ways."* (verse 3)
3. He is not ashamed. *"Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect unto all thy commandments."* (verse 6)
4. He has an upright heart that can offer acceptable praise to the LORD. *"I will praise thee with uprightness of heart, when I shall have learned thy righteous judgments."* (verse 7)
5. He can have the assurance that the LORD will never forsake him. *"I will keep thy statutes: O forsake me not utterly."* (verse 8)

This God in whom the Psalmist trusted is our God too. What a joy to know that we can pray with the Psalmist, *"Thou hast commanded us to keep thy precepts diligently. O that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes!"* (verses 4 and 5) Then we would experience those wonderful blessings listed in these short verses, the blessings of the one whose delight is in the law of the LORD.

## Obedient Regard to God's Word Brings Cleansing, Direction and Power Over Sin

Psalm 119:9-11 says, *"Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word. <sup>10</sup>With my whole heart have I sought thee: O let me not wander from thy commandments. <sup>11</sup>Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee."*

To take heed means to carefully consider with obedient regard. Read God's word, listen to it, meditate on it. What does it say? What is God trying to tell me? While I do these things, I need to seek God with my whole heart and hide His word in my heart that I might not sin against Him.

In order to take heed to God's word, there are several things I must do. Verses twelve through sixteen explain, *"<sup>12</sup>Blessed art thou, O LORD: teach me thy statutes. <sup>13</sup>With my lips have I declared all the judgments of thy mouth. <sup>14</sup>I have rejoiced in the way of thy*

*testimonies, as much as in all riches. <sup>15</sup>I will meditate in thy precepts, and have respect unto thy ways. <sup>16</sup>I will delight myself in thy statutes: I will not forget thy word."*

- I need the LORD to teach me His word
- I need to declare His word, speak what it means and share it with others
- I need to rejoice in His word as much as I would rejoice in riches
- I need to meditate on God's word and have respect to God's ways. In this verse, "have respect" means "to look intently at," "to regard with pleasure," "to consider," "to regard," "to have respect to."
- I need to delight myself in God's word
- I need to not forget God's word. It is not enough to read it in the morning; get a thrilling feeling; think for a minute about God, His word, and myself; and then forget about it for the rest of the day. It needs to be the focus of my day so it can be the stay and guide of my life.

### **My Soul Should Long for God's Word**

Psalm 119:17 says, *"Deal bountifully with thy servant, that I may live, and keep thy word."* The Psalmist asked for God's blessing that he might live. Why did the Psalmist want to live? So he could keep God's word. He pleaded, *"Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law."* (verse 18)

Why did the Psalmist have such a longing for God's law? *"I am a stranger in the earth,"* he said, *"hide not thy commandments from me."* (See verse 19) He was aware that this world is not his home, and he needs God's word to get him through his time on this earth. The longing that the Psalmist had for God's word was intense, *"My soul breaketh for the longing that it hath unto thy judgments at all times."* (verse 20) The Psalmist saw what happened to the proud who took no heed to God's word. They are rebuked of God and cursed. *"Thou hast rebuked the proud that are cursed, which do err from thy commandments."* (verse 21) The Psalmist did not want to meet the same end as these proud people and entreated the Lord, *"Remove from me reproach and contempt; for I have kept thy testimonies."* (verse 22)

During the time of the Psalmist, even those in leadership rejected God's word. He voiced his concern to God, *"Princes also did sit and speak against me..."* Then he described his solace during these hard times, *"...but thy servant did meditate in thy statutes. Thy testimonies also are my delight and my counsellors."* (see verse 23 and 24) Even when all those around him rejected God's word and those in leadership despised him, the Psalmist found solace in the word of God. There he found delight and direction for life. And there I can find the same. And so can you.

## God's Word Provides Strength for the Heavy Burdened

Psalm 119:25 says, *"My soul cleaveth unto the dust: quicken thou me according to thy word."* You can almost hear the Psalmist's sigh of weariness. He is tired and feels as though he is ready to die. He has served the Lord. He has searched his heart and left it open for God to give him understanding of His word, *"<sup>26</sup>I have declared my ways, and thou heardest me: teach me thy statutes. <sup>27</sup>Make me to understand the way of thy precepts: so shall I talk of thy wondrous works."* (verses 26 and 27) And yet his soul is weary, heavy burdened. He says, *"My soul melteth for heaviness: strengthen thou me according unto thy word."* (verse 28)

One reason the Psalmist was so weary and heavy burdened is that lying was all about him. Truth was scarce. He pleaded with God, *"Remove from me the way of lying: and grant me thy law graciously."* (verse 29) The Psalmist desired the truth of God's word rather than the lies of those all around him.

In the last three verses of this section, the strength of the Psalmist seems to be renewed. His heart feels assured that the Lord will help him, and he is ready to start serving again. *"<sup>30</sup>I have chosen the way of truth: thy judgments have I laid before me. <sup>31</sup>I have stuck unto thy testimonies: O LORD, put me not to shame. <sup>32</sup>I will run the way of thy commandments, when thou shalt enlarge my heart."* (verses 30-32) Though lying was all about him, the Psalmist chose the way of truth. He set God's judgments before him and stuck to God's testimonies. He knew he would not be ashamed and that the Lord would hear his prayer and enlarge his heart; that is, that his heart might be so encouraged and enlivened that he could return to his work and run after God's word with all his heart. God will strengthen us the same way. Isn't it wonderful that we have God's word of truth and we can go to God for the same strength in our time of heavy burden? Thank You, Lord. Help me trust and lean on You.

## A Plea for Instruction

Verses 33 – 40 of Psalm 119 are a plea from the Psalmist to God for instruction. Each verse contains a specific request about the kind of instruction or help the Psalmist desires to receive. Some verses also tell a part that the Psalmist will do or voice a request for God to aid him in some other way. Let us take a look.

\* Teach me the way Your word says to go – *"Teach me, O LORD, the way of thy statutes; and I shall keep it unto the end."* (verse 33) When I have learned the right way to go, I will keep it all the way to the end.

- \* Give me understanding of Your word – *“Give me understanding, and I shall keep thy law; yea, I shall observe it with my whole heart.”* (verse 34) When You have opened my eyes to understand Your word, I will take heed to it with my whole heart.
  - \* Make me to go in the right path – *“Make me to go in the path of thy commandments; for therein do I delight.”* (verse 35) I delight to walk in the right path, the path in which Your commandments lead me.
  - \* Cause my heart to yield to Your commandments so that it does not desire things that are not mine or things that I cannot have. -- *“Incline my heart unto thy testimonies, and not to covetousness.”* (verse 36)
  - \* Keep me from looking at vain things and renew me in the right way – *“Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity; and quicken thou me in thy way.”* (verse 37)
  - \* Stablish Your word to me, let me see its fulfillment. I fear You with my whole heart. – *“Stablish thy word unto thy servant, who is devoted to thy fear.”* (verse 38)
  - \* Turn away my disgrace and keep me from being ashamed because Your judgments are good. – *“Turn away my reproach which I fear: for thy judgments are good.”* (verse 39)
- The Psalmist knew God’s word is true, and how he longed to see that play out before him and see God answer his prayers and fulfill His word. He feared a delay which would cause him to be ashamed and disgraced before those around him. He pleaded with God to turn away that reproach.
- \* Revive and restore me in Your righteousness because I have longed for Your word. – *“Behold, I have longed after thy precepts: quicken me in thy righteousness.”* (verse 40)

### **Love for and Trust and Hope in God’s Word**

The Psalmist loved God’s word. In it he hoped and trusted because he knew it was true. In this passage, he mixes his love of God’s word with prayers and pleas to God.

\* God’s word gave the Psalmist help when others tried to speak ill of him and damage his reputation. *“Let thy mercies come also unto me, O LORD, even thy salvation, according to thy word. <sup>42</sup>So shall I have wherewith to answer him that reproacheth me: for I trust in thy word.”* (Psalm 119:441,42) The Psalmist pleaded with God to save him from the trouble he was in. He knew God would hear him. God’s word gave him the answers to return to those who would malign him.

\* The Psalmist pleaded with God to help him not forget His word but to remember it so that he would speak God’s truth and obey what it said. *“<sup>43</sup>And take not the word of truth utterly out of my mouth; for I have hoped in thy judgments. <sup>44</sup>So shall I keep thy law continually for ever and ever.”* (verses 43 and 44)

\* Because of God's word, the Psalmist could walk at liberty even though turmoil was all around him. *"I will walk at liberty: for I seek thy precepts."* (verse 45)

\* God's word gave the Psalmist courage to speak God's truth, even to kings. *"I will speak of thy testimonies also before kings, and will not be ashamed."* (verse 46)

\* The Psalmist loved God's word and it was his delight and his meditation. *"<sup>47</sup>And I will delight myself in thy commandments, which I have loved. <sup>48</sup>My hands also will I lift up unto thy commandments, which I have loved; and I will meditate in thy statutes."*

## **Remember**

*"Remember the word unto thy servant, upon which thou hast caused me to hope,"* pleaded the Psalmist in Psalm 119:49. God's word was the Psalmist's comfort in trouble and it revived him when he was weary, *"This is my comfort in my affliction: for thy word hath quickened me."* (verse 50)

The Psalmist's affliction was caused by those about him who had no use for God's word. They mocked and scorned him, yet he comforted himself in the word of God. *"<sup>51</sup>The proud have had me greatly in derision: yet have I not declined from thy law. <sup>52</sup>I remembered thy judgments of old, O LORD; and have comforted myself."* (verses 51,52)

The times the Psalmist were living in were frightening times because of the evil that abounded. Yet he clung to the word of God and found the words in it to be those which made up the songs of his heart. *"<sup>53</sup>Horror hath taken hold upon me because of the wicked that forsake thy law. <sup>54</sup>Thy statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage."* (verses 53, 54)

Night may have seemed long and dreary, but God was a very present help in this time of trouble. The Psalmist remarked, *"<sup>55</sup>I have remembered thy name, O LORD, in the night, and have kept thy law. <sup>56</sup>This I had, because I kept thy precepts."* God's word had helped the Psalmist learn about God's name. He could meditate upon God and call on his name and be encouraged. The name of the LORD is a refuge for all those who trust in Him, *"The name of the LORD is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe."* (Proverbs 18:10) The word of God and His blessed name are a hiding place, a place of refuge to which the believer can flee and be comforted and at rest.

## The LORD is My Portion

Through all the difficulties, dangers, trials and fears, the Psalmist found the LORD and His word to be enough. They were his portion. God is enough for us too, and His word can sustain us. *"Thou art my portion, O LORD:"* he declared, *"I have said that I would keep thy words."* (See Psalm 119:57)

\* God's word let the Psalmist know he could entreat God to be favorable to him. *"I intreated thy favour with my whole heart: be merciful unto me according to thy word."* (verse 58)

\* God's word helped the Psalmist to keep his thought life right and to keep his mind on good things. *"<sup>59</sup>I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy testimonies. <sup>60</sup>I made haste, and delayed not to keep thy commandments."* (verses 59,60)

\* God's word was enough when the Psalmist's earthly possessions were taken away. *"<sup>61</sup>The bands of the wicked have robbed me: but I have not forgotten thy law. <sup>62</sup>At midnight I will rise to give thanks unto thee because of thy righteous judgments."* (verses 61,62) Though he had been robbed by wicked men, the Psalmist still remembered God's word and rose at midnight to give God thanks for it. He could be robbed of his earthly possessions, but he could not be robbed of his relationship with God or God's word.

\* God's word led the Psalmist to right companions. *"I am a companion of all them that fear thee, and of them that keep thy precepts."* (verse 63) Even in the midst of a wicked society that had forsaken God's law, God showed the Psalmist others who feared Him and obeyed His word. This allowed him to have good and godly companions, and they could encourage one another.

Through His word, God provided reassurance, direction for the thought life, satisfaction when earthly things were taken away, and godly companions. This portion was enough for the Psalmist. He was thankful for it and desired even more of it. *"The earth, O LORD, is full of thy mercy: teach me thy statutes."* (verse 64) While any good was hard to find in society, God was still abundant in mercy and His mercy could be seen through all the earth.

## **God is Good Even When I Am Afflicted**

*“Thou hast dealt well with thy servant,”* are the opening words of the next passage in Psalm 119. This is followed by a desire of the Psalmist to be taught good judgment and knowledge from the word of God. *“Thou hast dealt well with thy servant, O LORD, according unto thy word. <sup>66</sup>Teach me good judgment and knowledge: for I have believed thy commandments.”* (verses 65 and 66)

Affliction caused the Psalmist to be drawn to the word of God. Because of this, he expressed his conviction that God is good and does good. *“<sup>67</sup>Before I was afflicted I went astray: but now have I kept thy word. <sup>68</sup>Thou art good, and doest good; teach me thy statutes.”* (verses 67 and 68)

Affliction helped to keep the Psalmist from having a prideful heart. He said, *“<sup>69</sup>The proud have forged a lie against me: but I will keep thy precepts with my whole heart. <sup>70</sup>Their heart is as fat as grease; but I delight in thy law.”* (verses 69 and 70) The proud believe in lies and try to hurt others. Their delight is in worldly satisfaction, but the heart of the one who seeks God delights in His law.

Affliction made the word of God seem more precious and valuable to the Psalmist. *“It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes. <sup>72</sup>The law of thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver.”* (verses 71 and 72) Now that the Psalmist was afflicted and did not have the other joys and satisfactions of life, he longed after God’s word. The affliction allowed him to learn more of God’s word and caused it to be more precious to him than gold and silver.

Even when I am afflicted God is good because it is His way of turning my eyes from worldly desires and satisfactions and turning them to His word. It should cause His word to be my delight and my treasure.

## **God Made Me and Fashioned Me and He Can Provide for My Spiritual Needs**

This section of Psalm 119 begins, *“Thy hands have made me and fashioned me: give me understanding, that I may learn thy commandments.”* (verse 73) God made me and fashioned me. He knows what I need, how to give me understanding for life, and how to enlighten my eyes to understand His word. What are some of the ways in which God cares for my spiritual needs?



\* Right companions. *"They that fear thee will be glad when they see me; because I have hoped in thy word."* (verse 74) He will show me others that fear the Lord and hope in His word; and we will make each other glad.

\* Kindness and comfort when I am afflicted. *"I know, O LORD, that thy judgments are right, and that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me. Let, I pray thee, thy merciful kindness be for my comfort, according to thy word unto thy servant."* (verses 75 and 76) In His faithfulness, the Lord may allow me to be afflicted; but He will also pour out His merciful kindness to comfort me because His word has promised it.

\* Tender mercies. *"Let thy tender mercies come unto me, that I may live: for thy law is my delight."* (verse 77)

\* Defeat of my enemies. *"Let the proud be ashamed; for they dealt perversely with me without a cause: but I will meditate in thy precepts."* (verse 78)

\* Replacing of enemies with friends. *"Let those that fear thee turn unto me, and those that have known thy testimonies."* (verse 79)

\* Stability in my spiritual walk. *"Let my heart be sound in thy statutes; that I be not ashamed."* (verse 80)

Thank You, God, that You know me because You have made me and fashioned me. You are able to provide all that I need for my spiritual walk. You will not leave me alone or in need. Help me fear You and walk after Your word. For Jesus' sake, Amen.

### God's Word Sustains During Times of Weariness and Distress

As the Psalmist opens this passage, we can see his great weariness. He is heavily pressed and ready to faint. Even so, he clings to God's word for his hope. *"My soul fainteth for thy salvation: but I hope in thy word. <sup>82</sup>Mine eyes fail for thy word, saying, When wilt thou comfort me? <sup>83</sup>For I am become like a bottle in the smoke; yet do I not forget thy statutes."* (verses 81-83)

How long will these days go on! God, how long before You will do something to help me? Our own hearts often have these thoughts and feelings. They are nothing new. The Psalmist expressed the same in these verses, *"<sup>84</sup>How many are the days of thy servant? when wilt thou execute judgment on them that persecute me? <sup>85</sup>The proud have digged pits for me, which are not after thy law."* He was persecuted and had to watch his every step, and he was tired of it, ready to just give up and be done with it. But he had one

hope, *“All thy commandments are faithful: they persecute me wrongfully; help thou me. <sup>87</sup>They had almost consumed me upon earth; but I forsook not thy precepts.”* (verses 86 and 87) The Psalmist knew God’s word was faithful, and He cried to the only One who could help him. He cast himself upon the promises of God.

In verse eighty-eight, the Psalmist made this desperate plea, *“Quicken me after thy lovingkindness; so shall I keep the testimony of thy mouth.”* Quicken me – restore my life and vigor, give my energy back. Show to me Thy lovingkindness, and I will keep Your word.

This passage ends without the Psalmist receiving the answer to his desperate cries. Yet, it ends with hope, the hope that God will answer in His lovingkindness. We have this same hope, and we can come to this same God with our desperate pleas. We can remember the faithfulness of God’s word and cast ourselves upon its promises. Since God’s word is faithful, we can trust His word and obey it. We will not be ashamed when we see God answer our prayers and His work on our behalf.

### **God’s Word is Eternal, Settled and Powerful**

Psalm 119:89 says, *“For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven.”* God’s word is forever and it is settled. It always has been and always will be true and nothing can change it.

God established the earth and all that is in it. They are sustained and held together according to God’s word. *“<sup>90</sup>Thy faithfulness is unto all generations: thou hast established the earth, and it abideth. <sup>91</sup>They continue this day according to thine ordinances: for all are thy servants.”* (Psalm 119:90,91) God’s word is sufficient to hold together the earth and things that we can see.

God’s word is sufficient to hold me up and sustain me. *“<sup>92</sup>Unless thy law had been my delights, I should then have perished in mine affliction. <sup>93</sup>I will never forget thy precepts: for with them thou hast quickened me.”* (verses 92, 93) God’s word keeps the earth from falling apart, and it keeps me from perishing when hard times come. When I am ready to give up, it revives me and gives me strength to continue on.

Though surrounded by the wicked who want to destroy me, I can cry to God to keep me. *“<sup>94</sup>I am thine, save me; for I have sought thy precepts. <sup>95</sup>The wicked have waited for me to destroy me: but I will consider thy testimonies.”* (verses 94,95) My hope is in the word of God and His promise to hear my prayer.

*"I have seen an end of all perfection: but thy commandment is exceeding broad."* (verse 96) Even if it seems like there is not one good thing left in society, God's word is constant and never loses its effectiveness. Thank You, God, for Your eternal, settled and powerful word. Help me to love it and keep it so I can see its power displayed in my life and all around me. Help me rest in it, knowing that You will quicken me and will keep Your word.

### **God's Word is Sweet and Lovely**

Psalm 119:97 says, *"O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day."* The word of God was precious to this Psalmist. He loved it so much he mediated on it throughout the day. God's word is a precious possession to all those who love the Lord, a treasure to be cherished.

- It protects from the enemy. *"Thou through thy commandments hast made me wiser than mine enemies: for they are ever with me."* (verse 98) The enemies of the Lord and of God's people may think up sneaky and wiley things. They may be smart, but God's child can be wiser by getting his wisdom and direction from the commandments of God.

- It gives wisdom for life. *"I have more understanding than all my teachers: for thy testimonies are my meditation."* (verse 99) Many false things are taught today – things that sound good but are not true. They are not according to God's word. Therefore, there is no wisdom in these things. Anything that is contrary to God's word is not true. God's word gives understanding and is always right and true. The one who knows it well has more understanding than the professor with many degrees who teaches things that are contrary to the word of God.

- It prepares for eternity. *"I understand more than the ancients, because I keep thy precepts."* (verse 100) The elderly have wisdom that comes with age. They have survived many things. Their knowledge helps them get along in life. Without God's word and the knowledge of the One who wrote it, that wisdom goes no further. It cannot prepare for anything that comes after this life. God's word gives understanding for life now and preparation for the life to come, thus giving a young child of God more understanding than the elderly who have made no preparation for eternity.

- It keeps one from participating in sin. <sup>101</sup>*"I have refrained my feet from every evil way, that I might keep thy word. <sup>102</sup>I have not departed from thy judgments: for thou hast taught me."* (verses 101 and 102) A good understanding of God's word helps one to discern the right way from the wrong way. It keeps from every evil way. It also helps the child of God not to depart from what God has taught in His word.

- It satisfies. *"How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth!"* (verse 103)

- It gives discernment of truth from error. *"Through thy precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every false way."* (verse 104)

Truly the word of God is sweet and lovely, a precious possession to be treasured and utilized for life. It is enough to satisfy.

### **God's Word is a Lamp to Guide the Way and Protect from the Snare of the Enemy**

*"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."* (Psalm 119:105) During the Psalmist's day, there was much danger around. His enemies had laid traps for him, and he had to do everything with caution. God's word was a light for him to guide him in the right way and his feet in the right paths. He said, *"I have sworn, and I will perform it, that I will keep thy righteous judgments."* (verse 106)

*"<sup>107</sup>I am afflicted very much: quicken me, O LORD, according unto thy word. <sup>108</sup>Accept, I beseech thee, the freewill offerings of my mouth, O LORD, and teach me thy judgments."* (verses 107 and 108) Life had dealt very hard with the Psalmist, yet he determined to praise the LORD and continued to ask the LORD to teach him His judgments. No matter how difficult life is, God is still worthy of my praise, and He still desires to teach me His word.

*"<sup>109</sup>My soul is continually in my hand: yet do I not forget thy law. <sup>110</sup>The wicked have laid a snare for me: yet I erred not from thy precepts."* (Psalm 119:109,110) Although the Psalmist's life was in constant danger, and he had to watch every step so that he did not fall into a snare, he did not forget the law of God. He did not sin against God's word.

*"<sup>111</sup>Thy testimonies have I taken as an heritage for ever: for they are the rejoicing of my heart. <sup>112</sup>I have inclined mine heart to perform thy statutes alway, even unto the end."* (Psalm 119:111,112) The word of God was very precious to the Psalmist. Earlier in the Psalm, he mentioned that the bands of the wicked had robbed him. His earthly possessions had been taken, but they could not take away the word of God. This he held onto as his heritage forever. He set his heart on the word of God and was determined to obey it, even to the end.

God's word continues to be a light and shows the way in today's dark world. Satan is very active, and Satan's people are as well. All around they spread lies and havoc and violence. Yet, God's word never changes, and it still guides in the right way and can keep my feet upon the right path. Thank You, Lord, for this precious treasure.

### **God's Word Provides a Hiding Place, Hope and Safety**

*"I hate vain thoughts: but thy law do I love."* (Psalm 119:113) The first thing the Psalmist focuses on in this passage is the thoughts. The thoughts should not be focused on vain or empty things but on God's word. God's word should be loved and cherished because it brings hope and guides me to my hiding place. *"Thou art my hiding place and my shield: I hope in thy word."* (verse 114)

God's word is protection from evildoers and upholds me in difficulty. <sup>115</sup>*Depart from me, ye evildoers: for I will keep the commandments of my God.* <sup>116</sup>*Uphold me according unto thy word, that I may live: and let me not be ashamed of my hope."* (verses 115 and 116) The Psalmist wanted nothing to do with evildoers. He wanted them a long way from him. A good protection from evildoers is to keep God's commandments and cling to the hope found in His word. God will not leave His own to be ashamed but will come to their help in time of need. Safety can be found in Him and in obedience to His word. *"Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe: and I will have respect unto thy statutes continually."* (verse 117)

<sup>118</sup>*Thou hast trodden down all them that err from thy statutes: for their deceit is falsehood.* <sup>119</sup>*Thou puttest away all the wicked of the earth like dross: therefore I love thy testimonies."* (Psalm 119:118,119) It may seem like the wicked is winning. They may have their day, but God will judge them and put them away. He is righteous and cannot leave sin unpunished. Those who disobey His word will be judged. Therefore, God's people should love His word all the more.

*"My flesh trembleth for fear of thee; and I am afraid of thy judgments."* (verse 120) When God's people see God's judgment on the wicked, they should fear. A righteous fear of God is a healthy thing. It brings protection from the punishment the wicked are going through and it brings one under the safety of God's protection. Our hope is in God.

## **Pleading for God to Work Among a People Who Have Made Void His Law**

Psalms 119:121,122 says, *"<sup>121</sup>I have done judgment and justice: leave me not to mine oppressors. <sup>122</sup>Be surety for thy servant for good: let not the proud oppress me."* The Psalmist lived among a people that was proud and oppressed those who did right. Yet he did right anyway. Because he knew he had done right, he pleaded with God to be surety for him, that is, to be his security against loss or damage. A person who is surety is the one who will answer for another in court and pay his debt. What a Friend we have in God when we trust in Him and obey Him! He is our deliverance from trouble.

*"<sup>123</sup>Mine eyes fail for thy salvation, and for the word of thy righteousness. <sup>124</sup>Deal with thy servant according unto thy mercy, and teach me thy statutes."* (verses 123 and 124) There was nothing the Psalmist longed for more than the word of God. He pleaded with God to teach him His word and to deal with him in mercy.

*"I am thy servant; give me understanding, that I may know thy testimonies."* (verse 125) The Psalmist gave himself to the Lord to be the Lord's servant. He asked the Lord to teach him His testimonies, to show him what the Lord wanted him to do.

*"It is time for thee, LORD, to work: for they have made void thy law."* (verse 126) All about him, the Psalmist could see nothing but pride and evil. He saw a people who had violated and cast off the law of God. This grieved him, and he made his request that God would work. It hurt him to see what happens when a people is rebellious against God.

*"<sup>127</sup>Therefore I love thy commandments above gold; yea, above fine gold. <sup>128</sup>Therefore I esteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be right; and I hate every false way."* (verses 127,128) Because the word of God was so hard to find and because people disobeyed and disregarded that law and considered it of no importance, the Psalmist loved God's law all the more. He cherished it more than gold, even fine gold. He esteemed it to be right and hated falsehood.

The word of God provides our only stability in times of turmoil. While it may be disregarded and cast away by others, it should become even more precious to us. While others depend on their pride and oppression to get ahead and to wield their power, we can depend on God to be surety for us. He cares for us and is a Friend to us. When society all around us wants nothing to do with God's word, His word should become all the more precious to us. We have a Friend in God, a loving Master, an Advocate, and the word of God to teach us how to live and to sustain us in a troubled world. Thank You, God!

## God's Word Leads to Light and Deliverance

The Psalmist declared, *"Thy testimonies are wonderful: therefore doth my soul keep them."* (Psalm 119:129) God's testimonies excite wonder and admiration and are marvelous and amazing. Meditating on God's word causes one to admire God and realize how great He is. This produces a desire to keep the commandments of His word.

*"<sup>130</sup>The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple. <sup>131</sup>I opened my mouth, and panted: for I longed for thy commandments."* (verses 130, 131) God's word gives light and understanding. It provides wisdom to those who need it most. The Psalmist so desired the understanding given by God's word that he panted and longed for God's commandments.

The Psalmist pleaded with God to look upon him and show him mercy. He asked God to keep iniquity from having any control in his life. *"<sup>132</sup>Look thou upon me, and be merciful unto me, as thou usest to do unto those that love thy name. <sup>133</sup>Order my steps in thy word: and let not any iniquity have dominion over me."* (verses 132, 133) Even if sin is all around me, the word of God can still keep me from sin. God will order my steps and be merciful to me if I look to Him and love His name.

Once again, the Psalmist looked for the light of God's approval. He did not look to fit in or to get approval from man but was content to please God and have God shine upon him. *"<sup>134</sup>Deliver me from the oppression of man: so will I keep thy precepts. <sup>135</sup>Make thy face to shine upon thy servant; and teach me thy statutes."* (verses 134,135)

When the Psalmist saw others living a life of sin, it grieved him very much. It brought sorrow to him. He declared, *"Rivers of waters run down mine eyes, because they keep not thy law."* (verse 136) Does the sin around me grieve me this much? It should? Do I desire the light and favor of God when all around is the darkness of sin? I should. Lord, help me to desire Your word and Your favor and Your light and Your direction. Thank You for providing it.

## God and His Word are Righteous

*"<sup>137</sup>Righteous art thou, O LORD, and upright are thy judgments. <sup>138</sup>Thy testimonies that thou hast commanded are righteous and very faithful."* (Psalm 119:137,138) Thus begins the next section of Psalm 119. God is righteous. God's word is righteous and faithful,

*<sup>139</sup>My zeal hath consumed me, because mine enemies have forgotten thy words. <sup>140</sup>Thy word is very pure: therefore thy servant loveth it.*" (verses 139,140) The godless society around him did not discourage the Psalmist from learning and obeying God's word. In fact, it made him even more zealous and it gave the Psalmist a greater love for God's word. When we look around and see how much God's word is despised, we learn how very special and important it is. Seeing how much others hate God's word should make us love it even more and cause us to be filled with zeal to learn and obey it.

*"I am small and despised: yet do not I forget thy precepts."* (verse 141) The Psalmist held no important position in society. He was small and despised, someone who did not matter much to those around him. Yet, he clung to God's word. He was not despised or forsaken by God. Neither are we, and we also have His word for our encouragement and stay. God's righteousness endures forever, and His word is truth. *"Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and thy law is the truth."* (verse 142)

The righteousness and faithfulness of God's word bring hope in times of distress.

*<sup>143</sup>Trouble and anguish have taken hold on me: yet thy commandments are my delights.*

*<sup>144</sup>The righteousness of thy testimonies is everlasting: give me understanding, and I shall live.*" (verses 143 and 144) Distress and trouble were all around, yet there was something that brought the Psalmist delight – God's commandments. Nothing else around him may be right, but God's commandments are right. They can give understanding that will preserve life in a day of trouble and anguish.

We have this same righteous God and His word to guide us through the dark days, to bring us delight in a time when there is little joy, and to be our stay and our preservation in times of danger. This is our precious treasure which cannot be taken away from us. Thank You, God!

### **Earnestly Cry unto the LORD for He is Near**

Psalm 119:145,146 says, *"I cried with my whole heart; hear me, O LORD: I will keep thy statutes. I cried unto thee; save me, and I shall keep thy testimonies."* The Psalmist cried unto the LORD with his whole heart, "hear me, O LORD... save me." In gratefulness, he would obey the word of the Lord and keep his statutes and testimonies. When there is trouble about, this calls for strong crying and supplication with all our heart. We can cry out to the Lord to save us. Since we are assured that He will answer, we can learn and obey His word as well.

*<sup>147</sup>I prevented the dawning of the morning, and cried: I hoped in thy word. <sup>148</sup>Mine eyes prevent the night watches, that I might meditate in thy word.*" (verses 147,148) How



earnest was the Psalmist in his cries unto the Lord! This kept him awake through the night as he meditated upon and hoped in God's word. If our eyes are kept waking in the night, we can spend that time crying to the Lord and meditating upon His word. It is our hope as well.

The Psalmist cried for protection from those who had no regard for God's law. <sup>149</sup>*Hear my voice according unto thy lovingkindness: O LORD, quicken me according to thy judgment.* <sup>150</sup>*They draw nigh that follow after mischief: they are far from thy law.*" (verses 149, 150) The wicked were near to the Psalmist, but he knew that God was nearer still. The wicked sought to do mischief and were far from God's law, but the Psalmist had the hope of God's law and could meditate upon it. It was very near to him. We too can pray for protection from the wicked whose aim is to do mischief and who have no regard for the law of God. God is near to us and we should cherish His word close to our hearts as well. *"Thou art near, O LORD; and all thy commandments are truth."* (verse 151)

The wicked and their mischief will pass away, but God's word will endure forever. *"Concerning thy testimonies, I have known of old that thou hast founded them for ever."* (verse 152)

### **God and His Word Bring Deliverance, Revival and Restoration**

<sup>153</sup>*Consider mine affliction, and deliver me: for I do not forget thy law.* <sup>154</sup>*Plead my cause, and deliver me: quicken me according to thy word.*" (verses 153, 154) The Psalmist was in affliction and was afraid of his enemies. Did the Lord see? "Consider mine afflictions" he prayed to the Lord. Look at the situation I am in. "Plead my cause." I have no one to stand up and help me, so my only hope is You, Lord. Deliver me and quicken me. The word "quicken" means to nourish, revive, and restore to life. The Psalmist was praying for deliverance and for someone to revive his fainting spirit.

<sup>155</sup>*Salvation is far from the wicked: for they seek not thy statutes.* <sup>156</sup>*Great are thy tender mercies, O LORD: quicken me according to thy judgments.*" (verses 155, 156) Here the Psalmist contrasts the wicked and those that seek God and His word. The wicked have no hope of salvation. Because he loves God and His word, the Psalmist has hope of God's tender mercies and of revival and restoration. For this reason, he did not turn back from keeping God's word. *"Many are my persecutors and mine enemies; yet do I not decline from thy testimonies."* (verse 157) This hope of experiencing God's tender mercies and revival and restoration is shared by all those who fear the Lord and hear and heed His word.

*"I beheld the transgressors, and was grieved; because they kept not thy word."* (verse 158) Several times in this Psalm, the author of it expresses how grieved he is or the sorrow he feels because of the wicked who do not keep God's word. Does it make our heart heavy and sorrowful when we see the wicked disregarding the word of God? It should. It means these wicked have no hope, and often it means that the righteous are oppressed. That should make us very sad.

*"<sup>159</sup>Consider how I love thy precepts: quicken me, O LORD, according to thy lovingkindness. <sup>160</sup>Thy word is true from the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgments endureth for ever."* (verses 159, 160) Once again, the Psalmist asks for the Lord to consider him. He wanted the Lord to think on how he kept His word and loved it and how the Lord promised to revive those that do. He acknowledged that the word of God is true from the beginning and will endure forever. Therefore, he desired revival and restoration according to what had been said in God's word.

Deliverance, revival and restoration can be ours too, if we will only love and obey and hope in God's word. We have the same God as the Psalmist, and we also can cry to Him for quickening and for the receiving of His tender mercies. They are there for the asking and seeking. Thank You, God!

### **God's Word is Full of Treasures**

The Psalmist wrote, *"Princes have persecuted me without a cause: but my heart standeth in awe of thy word."* (verse 161) Why was the Psalmist in such awe of God's word? Well, it holds treasures for the one who trusts in and fears God. In this section of Psalm 119, some of these treasures are listed.

- Joy, *"I rejoice at thy word, as one that findeth great spoil."* (verse 162)
- Truth and love of truth, *"I hate and abhor lying: but thy law do I love."* (verse 163)
- Praise – a heart of praise because of the righteousness of God's word, *"Seven times a day do I praise thee because of thy righteous judgments."* (verse 164)
- Peace, *"Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them."* (verse 165)
- Hope, *"LORD, I have hoped for thy salvation, and done thy commandments."* (verse 166)

Because of all the wonderful treasures he found in God's word, the Psalmist determined to love it and keep it. *"<sup>167</sup>My soul hath kept thy testimonies; and I love them exceedingly. <sup>168</sup>I have kept thy precepts and thy testimonies: for all my ways are before thee."* (verse 167,168) The treasures in God's word are for us too – for you and for me. We also can

have joy, truth, love of truth, a heart of praise, peace and hope. These are the spoils that should make God's word dear to our hearts.

Lord, help me to dig into Your word and find the spoils You have there for me. Help me love Your word exceedingly and obey it so that I know my way can be right before You. Thank You, for giving me this great treasure!

### **A Desperate Cry and Plea to God**

This Psalm ends in an unusual way. It does not end on a note of triumph and answers and solutions. Perhaps God intended it this way to show that sometimes trials and troubles continue on, and we do not always see God's working immediately. We have to continue to cry out and to trust and to search our own hearts. We must continue to hope in His word and wait for Him to help us and deliver us. Even when life seems to hang uncertainly, God and His word can still be trusted and waited upon.

This last section of Psalm 119 begins *"Let my cry come near before thee, O LORD: give me understanding according to thy word. <sup>170</sup>Let my supplication come before thee: deliver me according to thy word."* (Psalm 119:169,170) Here the Psalmist cries out, almost as if he is saying, "Lord, don't You hear my cry. Please give me understanding. Please deliver me. I am waiting." And thus he pours out his supplication.

Mixed in with his desperate cries for help is his declaration that he will praise the Lord and speak about His word. *"<sup>171</sup>My lips shall utter praise, when thou hast taught me thy statutes. <sup>172</sup>My tongue shall speak of thy word: for all thy commandments are righteousness."* (verses 171 and 172)

Even though the Psalmist did not immediately see God's answer to prayer and his situation remained difficult, he chose to cling to God's word. God's word was still his delight. He determined to praise God if God should let him continue to live. God's word would be his help. *"<sup>173</sup>Let thine hand help me; for I have chosen thy precepts. <sup>174</sup>I have longed for thy salvation, O LORD; and thy law is my delight. <sup>175</sup>Let my soul live, and it shall praise thee; and let thy judgments help me."* (verses 173-175)

In the last verse, it seems like the Psalmist feels he is in danger of taking his eyes off the Lord. He says desperately, *"I have gone astray like a lost sheep; seek thy servant; for I do not forget thy commandments."* (verse 176) Even so, he chooses to remember God's word and to lay his problem before the Lord, knowing that the Lord will not let him go but will seek him when he goes astray.

Do things seem hard for us? Do our trials go on and on? Are we tempted to doubt the Lord? We have the same God as did the Psalmist, and we also have God's word. The answer for these times is the same as the answer for the easier times of life – God and His word. That is the place from where our deliverance and help comes. God is the one who will seek us out and bring us back if we go astray and revive us and deliver us and show us His salvation. Therefore, we should choose God's word and make it our delight because it is the source of our help. Thank You, God. Help me to trust in You even when I cannot see the end and cannot see the answer. Help me to remember that You still hear and You still care.