

Psalm 119:25-32, 33-40, 41-48 • Daleth, He & Vav (#4-6)

Introduction

[Note: Each stanza of Psalm 119 is a study in and of itself. For the purposes of leading a small group study, these three are presented together as a single study.]

It should not surprise anyone that Psalm 119 is the largest of the 929 chapters in our Bible as it is dedicated to not only explaining how Scripture is organized by its consistent use of 8 categories of God's Word, but repeatedly provides real world examples of how we are to apply every facet of God's Word to our life. The goal is not to determine what we can expect from God's Word, but that which we need to do to meet the personal shortfalls of what God's Word expects from us.

²⁵My soul cleaves to the dust;
Revive me according to Your word.
²⁶I have told of my ways, and You have answered me;
Teach me Your statutes.
²⁷Make me understand the way of Your precepts,
So I will meditate on Your wonders.
²⁸My soul weeps because of grief;
Strengthen me according to Your word.
²⁹Remove the false way from me,
And graciously grant me Your law.
³⁰I have chosen the faithful way;
I have placed Your ordinances *before me*.
³¹I cling to Your testimonies; O LORD, do not put me to shame!
³²I shall run the way of Your commandments,
For You will enlarge my heart.

[Read v.25-32] A Cure for the Blues

Q: How does the Psalm's author describe his personal condition?

- "My soul cleaves to the dust..." (v.25)
- "My soul weeps because of grief..." (v.28)

He is at a very low point both emotionally and spiritually.

Q: What is the good news regarding this according to v.26?

A: "I have told of my ways, and You have answered me". He has received a response from the Lord.

Q: What is the nature of that response? Was it to perform a miracle or invoke divine intervention?

A: Encouragement to obey God's Word regardless.

Q: What are the keywords in v.25-29 which provide a basic structure of a prayer which God will always answer?

- "Revive me" (v.25)
- "Teach me" (v.26)
- "Make me understand" (v.27)
- "Strengthen me" (v.28)
- "Remove the false way from me" (v.29)

Notice that these are all fulfilled by obedience and commitment to His Word, not by any kind of supernatural response.

Q: What is the primary benefit which is specified here for obedience to God's Word in spite of one's personal emotional state?

A: "For You will enlarge my heart". (v.32)

Application: Obedience to God's Word and ways even when one is personally and emotionally low provides the appropriate remedy where it matters most: the heart.

³³Teach me, O LORD, the way of Your statutes,
And I shall observe it to the end.
³⁴Give me understanding, that I may observe Your law
And keep it with all *my* heart.
³⁵Make me walk in the path of Your commandments,
For I delight in it.
³⁶Incline my heart to Your testimonies
And not to *dishonest* gain.
³⁷Turn away my eyes from looking at vanity,
And revive me in Your ways.
³⁸Establish Your word to Your servant,
As that which produces reverence for You.
³⁹Turn away my reproach which I dread,
For Your ordinances are good.
⁴⁰Behold, I long for Your precepts;
Revive me through Your righteousness.

[Read v.33-40] The Biblical Definition of Revival

Q: What are the related phrases in this passage which have in common the writer's desire for God's direction where His Word is concerned?

- (v.33) "*Teach me*"
- (v.34) "*Give me understanding*"
- (v.35) "*Make walk in the path*"
- (v.36) "*Incline my heart*"
- (v.38) "*Establish Your word to Your servant*"

Q: What are the desired results which reveal that this is not so much about knowledge as it is about faithfulness?

- (v.33) "*...I shall observe it to the end.*"
- (v.34) "*...that I may observe Your law...*"
- (v.34) "*...that I may...keep it with all my heart.*"
- (v.35) "*...produces reverence for You.*"

Q: What are the potential pitfalls or obstacles that the writer desires to simultaneously overcome or avoid?

- (v.36) "*Incline my heart...not to dishonest gain.*"
- (v.37) "*Turn away my eyes from looking at vanity...*"
- (v.39) "*Turn away reproach...*"

Point: Note how these items are issues of pride and the flesh which bring our attention down to this present life and living for ourselves, the diametric opposite of what takes place when we allow God's Word to take hold.

Q: What is probably the repeated keyword in these verses? What important definition is it providing within the overall context?

A: "Revive". (v.37, 40) The definition of a true "revival" is not the unsaved coming to the Lord, but the backslidden.

Application: Note how these combine to describe a lifestyle of putting God's Word into practice and not merely obtaining knowledge.

⁴¹May Your lovingkindnesses also come to me, O LORD,
Your salvation according to Your word;
⁴²So I will have an answer for him who reproaches me,
For I trust in Your word.
⁴³And do not take the word of truth utterly out of my mouth,
For I wait for Your ordinances.
⁴⁴So I will keep Your law continually, Forever and ever.
⁴⁵And I will walk at liberty,
For I seek Your precepts.
⁴⁶I will also speak of Your testimonies before kings
And shall not be ashamed.
⁴⁷I shall delight in Your commandments,
Which I love.
⁴⁸And I shall lift up my hands to Your commandments,
Which I love;
And I will meditate on Your statutes.

[Read v.41-48] The Cycle of the Word in the Saved

Q: What is the dual nature of the working of God's Word where the believer is concerned in v.41-43?

A: In one's personal relationship with Christ it is grace and salvation, but where earthly relationships are concerned they are equally critical.

Q: How would this relate to the statement, "For I will wait for Your ordinances" in v.43?

A: An ordinance is what we call "case law", the application of God's Word in situations which are not specifically, word-for-word addressed in Scripture. It is referring to a believer waiting for illumination from the Holy Spirit where God's Word is concerned in order to convey the right answer in terms of application of God's Word for a particular situation or person.

Q: What is the list of actions which characterize someone who, as specified in v.42, is biblically trusting in God's Word?

1. "I wait" (v.43)
2. "I will keep" (v.44)
3. "I will walk" (v.45)
4. "I will also speak...and not be ashamed" (v.46)
5. "I shall delight" (v.47)
6. "I shall lift up my hands" (v.48)
7. "I will meditate" (v.48)

Point: These provide a cycle covering not only our personal, private relationship with Christ, but our public testimony and witness of Him. At the heart of each one is an aspect of God's Word: "the word of truth", "Your law", "Your precepts", "Your testimonies", "Your commandments" (twice) and "Your statutes".

Q: What is significant about that which is repeated?

A: "Your commandments, which I love" (v.47, 48) is directly connected to the opening verse's identification of "lovingkindnesses" (OT term for grace) and "salvation". Biblical commandments are the requirements for a covenant relationship with God.

Application: The work of salvation can never be separated from the working of God's Word either within us personally or through us to others.

Overall Application

Q: In each of these examples, what condition is being addressed?

- (v.25-32) God's Word is essential when the heart needs restoration.
- (v.33-40) God's Word is essential when one's spiritual walk needs restoration.
- (v.41-48) God's Word is essential when one's soul needs restoration.

The answer is often not exclusively produced by a prayer request for divine intervention or a supernatural "fix", but often in combination with the Word where they have already been addressed.