

# Psalm 119:73-80, 81-88, 89-96 • Yodh, Kaph & Lamedh (#10-12)

## 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.

<sup>73</sup>Your hands made me and fashioned me;  
Give me understanding, that I may learn Your commandments.  
<sup>74</sup>May those who fear You see me and be glad,  
Because I wait for Your word.  
<sup>75</sup>I know, O LORD, that Your judgments are righteous,  
And that in faithfulness You have afflicted me  
<sup>76</sup>O may Your lovingkindness comfort me,  
According to Your word to Your servant.  
<sup>77</sup>May Your compassion come to me that I may live,  
For Your law is my delight.  
<sup>78</sup>May the arrogant be ashamed, for they subvert me with a lie;  
But I shall meditate on Your precepts.  
<sup>79</sup>May those who fear You turn to me,  
Even those who know Your testimonies.  
<sup>80</sup>May my heart be blameless in Your statutes,  
So that I will not be ashamed.

## [Read v.73-80] A Dual Working in Others

### Q: According to v.73, for what purpose were we created?

A: That we should obtain understanding through, and obedience to, God's Word.

### Q: In the context of these verses, who are the main targets of a believer's obedience to God's Word?

A: To other believers:

- "those who fear You" (v.74 & 79)
- "those who know Your testimonies" (v.79)

...and to non-believers:

- "May the arrogant be ashamed" (v.76)

### Q: What are the attributes of God being emphasized in the course of being an example and witness to both believer and non-believer alike?

A: "Righteous" (v.75), "lovingkindness" (v.76), and "compassion" (v.77). It is an equal application of truth and justice with grace and mercy.

### Q: What is the stark difference presented in v.78?

A: Whereas the unsaved "subvert me with a lie", the response is to "meditate on Your precepts", which are those things which only believers put into practice after coming into a personal relationship with God. In other words, the first reaction is not revenge, but self-examination, just as Jesus teaches. (Mt. 7:1-5)

### Q: What is the proper result of such a self-examination?

A: According to the closing verse, it is a blameless heart so to avoid the shame of misbehavior to either believers or unbelievers. One's witness remains intact.

**Application:** *There is a dual working of God's Word through us to build up others in the Body of Christ, and at the same time bear witness to those who have yet to accept Christ as their personal Savior. Our obedience to God's Word and ways simultaneously works on both.*

<sup>81</sup>My soul languishes for Your salvation;  
I wait for Your word.  
<sup>82</sup>My eyes fail *with longing* for Your word,  
While I say, “When will You comfort me?”  
<sup>83</sup>Though I have become like a wineskin in the smoke,  
I do not forget Your statutes.  
<sup>84</sup>How many are the days of Your servant?  
When will You execute judgment on those who persecute me?  
<sup>85</sup>The arrogant have dug pits for me, *Men* who are not in accord with Your law.  
<sup>86</sup>All Your commandments are faithful; They have persecuted me with a lie; help me!  
<sup>87</sup>They almost destroyed me on earth, But as for me, I did not forsake Your precepts.  
<sup>88</sup>Revive me according to Your lovingkindness,  
So that I may keep the testimony of Your mouth.

### ***[Read v.81-88] When Will Justice Come?***

**Q: What is this believer’s spiritual condition according to v.81-82?**

A: “My soul languishes” (v.81) and “My eyes fail” (v.82)

**Q: According to v.83, what is the source of this angst?**

A: “...those who persecute me”.

**Q: What, exactly, are they doing?**

A: “The arrogant have dug pits for me” (v.85)—the way of describing in that time and culture traps being set.

**Q: How do we know that this is speaking of traps of a spiritual nature?**

A: Because in the same verse they are described as, “Men who are not in accord with Your law”, meaning they are operating outside and against it. This is further verified in v.86 when their persecution is identified in the form of “a lie”.

**Q: Does the author ask for supernatural intervention or imprecatory judgment upon his persecutors?**

A: Although “They almost destroyed me on earth”, (v.87) what is requested is be sustained as a faithful example of God’s precepts—that which is required of believer’s alone, and His testimony—both the consequences and benefits of His Word as stated by God personally.

***Application:*** Persecution of believers has always resulted in not just refining and strengthening the faith and walk of believer’s, but in having a multiplying effectiveness where the opportunities to share the Gospel with unbelievers is concerned. There is unlimited time in eternity for justice, but only a short window in this life to avoid it.

<sup>89</sup>Forever, O LORD,  
Your word is settled in heaven.  
<sup>90</sup>Your faithfulness *continues*  
throughout all generations;  
You established the earth, and it  
stands.  
<sup>91</sup>They stand this day according to Your  
ordinances,  
For all things are Your servants.  
<sup>92</sup>If Your law had not been my delight,  
Then I would have perished in my  
affliction.  
<sup>93</sup>I will never forget Your precepts,  
For by them You have revived me.  
<sup>94</sup>I am Yours, save me;  
For I have sought Your precepts.  
<sup>95</sup>The wicked wait for me to destroy  
me;  
I shall diligently consider Your  
testimonies.  
<sup>96</sup>I have seen a limit to all perfection;  
Your commandment is exceedingly  
broad.

## **[Read v.89-96] Eternal Protection**

### **Q: What might be a very daunting contrast and comparison in these verses?**

A: The eternal faithfulness of God's Word extending both into eternity past and future (v.89-90) and our absolute dependence on it to first revive and sustain us.

### **Q: Why might the latter half of v.91 be telling us about an aspect of God's greater plan where we are concerned?**

A: The reference to, "For all things are Your servants" indicates that His intention for Creation is the same for us, that everything is created to ultimately worship and serve Him.

### **Q: Therefore, how does the believer personally proceed where God's Word is concerned?**

A: He commits to it in every conceivable way because "Your word is settled in heaven", (v.89) whereas when it comes to the temporal things of this life, "I have seen a limit to all perfection". (v.96)

### **Q: How does this contrast to both our personal nature's working on earth and that of unbelievers?**

A: Left to our own devices, we would perish in our affliction (v.92) having never recovered from it through God's Word (v.93), and if left up to "the wicked"—those willfully acting contrarily to God's Word and ways, they would destroy us.

### **Q: What is the closing verse describing?**

A: The Hebrew word "broad" is being contrasted with that of "limit". It is a way of stating that earthly perfection is finite and can only extend so far, but God's Word is limitless.

**Application:** *In this life we have the choice of obedience to the eternal nature of God's Word, which not only established Creation and extends to eternity past, but to our eternity future, or remain with the limitations of earthly perfection, which is actually no perfection at all.*

## **Overall Application**

### **Q: What appears to be a common, underlying theme in these teachings?**

A: The contrast of the temporal—this life, and the eternal—the next life.

### **Q: Why do things in this life matter where eternity is concerned? Aren't we all destined for death anyway?**

A: Our soul is actually immortal and will not cease just because our life on this planet ends.

**Application** *How we live here determines where we live there. And as it turns out, it's not just how we live individually in and of ourselves, but how we live with others.*