

# Psalm 119: 145-152, 153-160 • Qoph & Resh (#19-20)

## 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>145</sup>I cried with all my heart; answer me,  
O LORD!  
I will observe Your statutes.  
<sup>146</sup>I cried to You; save me  
And I shall keep Your testimonies.  
<sup>147</sup>I rise before dawn and cry for help;  
I wait for Your words.  
<sup>148</sup>My eyes anticipate the night  
watches,  
That I may meditate on Your word.  
<sup>149</sup>Hear my voice according to Your  
lovingkindness;  
Revive me, O LORD, according to Your  
ordinances.  
<sup>150</sup>Those who follow after wickedness  
draw near;  
They are far from Your law.  
<sup>151</sup>You are near, O LORD,  
And all Your commandments are truth.  
<sup>152</sup>Of old I have known from Your  
testimonies  
That You have founded them forever.

## [Read v.145-152] In the Meantime

**Q: In these opening verses, what is the list of actions which the writer has taken?**

- (v.145) "I cried with all my heart, answer me, O Lord!"
- (v.146) "I cried to You, save me..."
- (v.147) "I rise before dawn and cry for help..."

**Q: What seems to be the cause of this angst?**

A: "Those who follow after wickedness draw near". (v.150) It is not just an issue of dealing with those who may not believe, but those whose personal behavior and practices are completely opposed to those established by God's Word and ways, what is meant by their pursuing "wickedness".

**Q: How would this relate to the assertion, "My eyes anticipate the night watches"?**  
(v.148)

A: It is a way of stating that he has been looking for and waiting for an answer around the clock, not just temporarily engaged. It is a poetic way of describing both patience and endurance.

**Q: But in the meantime, what has been and continues to be his response?**

- (v.145) "...I will observe Your statutes".
- (v.146) "...I shall keep Your testimonies".
- (v.147) "...I wait for Your words".
- (v.148) "...I...meditate on Your word".

**Q: In what context does the writer expect the response will come?**

- (v.149) "Hear my voice according to Your lovingkindness". It is first and foremost a response rooted in God's grace and mercy.
- (v.149) "Revive me, O Lord, according to Your ordinances". He will find that he has properly applied God's Word (the meaning of "ordinances") to his particular situation by remaining faithful to the Word through the entire situation, even while awaiting a final response.

- (v.152) "*Of old I have known from Your testimonies that You have founded them [Your commandments] forever.*" Faith in the foundation of God's Word serves to justify our need for His Word to be equally enforced in the present circumstances.

**Q: What might be ironic about the statement in v.150? How does it contrast to the writer's own situation?**

A: Because of non-compliance with God's Word, the wicked are "*far from Your law*". But while in this case the petitioner feels his own distance from God, he is actually drawn close because of consistent faithfulness to His Word even in the absence of a definitive resolution by earthly standards. In spiritual things as well as earthly, appearances can be deceiving.

**Application:** *What is the correct response to every earthly situation where God's Word is concerned?*

### **[Read v.153-160] Revive Me**

**Q: What is the repeated request which provides the overall context? How is this to be accomplished?**

- (v.154) "...Revive me according to Your word".
- (v.156) "...Revive me according to Your ordinances".
- (v.159) "...Revive me, O Lord, according to Your lovingkindness" as resulting from, "*Consider how I love Your precepts*".

**Application:** *When seeking a personal revival or restoration, these are probably the three most important aspects of God's Word—"Your word", "Your ordinances" and "Your precepts", because they are not revisiting the basic requirements of a covenant relationship, but addressing the deeper aspects which come after. They are foundational to a continuing and deepening relationship, whereas "commandments" and "law" are the entry level requirements. We have already "entered" once, the issue is now returning to what we already know and continuing in faithfulness to what subsequently follows.*

**Q: What is requested as part of the overall process to be revived?**

- (v.153) "*Look upon my affliction and rescue me...*"
- (v.154) "*Plead my cause and redeem me...*"

The request is for Christ our Advocate to "*rescue*" and "*redeem*", terms Scripture often associates with salvation.

*"Even now, behold, my witness is in heaven,  
And my advocate is on high. — Job 16:19*

*My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world. — 1 John 2:1-2*

<sup>153</sup>Look upon my affliction and rescue me,  
For I do not forget Your law.  
<sup>154</sup>Plead my cause and redeem me;  
Revive me according to Your word.  
<sup>155</sup>Salvation is far from the wicked,  
For they do not seek Your statutes.  
<sup>156</sup>Great are Your mercies, O LORD;  
Revive me according to Your ordinances.  
<sup>157</sup>Many are my persecutors and my adversaries,  
Yet I do not turn aside from Your testimonies.  
<sup>158</sup>I behold the treacherous and loathe them,  
Because they do not keep Your word.  
<sup>159</sup>Consider how I love Your precepts;  
Revive me, O LORD, according to Your lovingkindness.  
<sup>160</sup>The sum of Your word is truth,  
And every one of Your righteous ordinances is everlasting.

**Q: Is there an indication in the text of how salvation relates to both the righteous and the wicked?**

A: "Salvation is far from the wicked, for they do not seek Your statutes". (v.155) Obedience to God's Word and ways is directly connected to both.

**Q: Is a source for his "affliction" (v.153) and need for the Lord to "Plead my cause" (v.154) provided?**

A: In v.157 they are specifically identified as "my persecutors and my adversaries". They are coming from earthly antagonists.

**Q: In this situation, how does he personally respond while awaiting God's resolution to these things?**

A: "...Yet I do not turn aside from Your testimonies". (v.157) In spite of the circumstances, the chief response is to faithfully keep God's Word.

**Q: Why is this especially a difficult thing to do?**

A: "I behold the treacherous and loathe them, because they do not keep Your word". (v.158) They are not only refusing to adhere to the same standard where God's Word is concerned, but they engage in the perversion of their own word by means of perpetrating treachery, a Hebrew word which is closely aligned with the meaning of deceit. (Hebrew "mirmah", Strong's #4820)

**Q: How does the concluding thought contrast to the treachery of the wicked?**

A: "The sum of Your word is truth" accepts God's Word as absolute even in spite of the personal circumstances, and "...every one of Your righteous ordinances is everlasting" is a way of stating that in spite of the temporal situation, the result is unalterably permanent when in compliance with God's Word.

**Application:** While we are free to express our feelings, it cannot be automatically assumed that God will answer by altering or changing our emotions, which are subject to unpredictable shifts when His Word is not. As with most things in life, it is not a test of our feelings but a test of faith, especially when it comes to trusting God's already provided Word.

## Overall Application

**Q: What do these teachings have in common?**

A: They are very personal appeals to address very intense, personal issues.

**Q: What is common to each which is diametrically opposite of the world's wisdom in such situations where we are personally concerned?**

A: Whereas all worldly approaches advocate some kind of remedy to make us feel good as quick as possible, God's way is to continue in trust and obedience to His Word in spite of our emotions, even if they don't immediately change.

**Q: What is common to most false teachings which reveals their design to undermine God's Word in our life?**

A: They attempt to get us to fixate on this life at the expense of the next.

**Application:** Even when we go to Christ in times of the worst emotional despair, we still need to do so in combination with His Word.