

Psalm 119 Series Part 6

I have done justice and righteousness;
Do not leave me to my oppressors.
¹²² Be surety^l for Your servant for good;
Do not let the proud oppress me.
¹²³ My eyes fail *from seeking* Your salvation
And Your righteous word.
¹²⁴ Deal with Your servant according to Your mercy,
And teach me Your statutes.
¹²⁵ I *am* Your servant;
Give me understanding,
That I may know Your testimonies.
¹²⁶ *It is time for You* to act, O LORD,
For they have ^lregarded Your law as void.
¹²⁷ Therefore I love Your commandments
More than gold, yes, than fine gold!
¹²⁸ Therefore all *Your precepts concerning all things*
I consider *to be* right;
I hate every false way.
¹²⁹ Your testimonies are wonderful;
Therefore my soul keeps them.
¹³⁰ The entrance of Your words gives light;
It gives understanding to the simple.
¹³¹ I opened my mouth and panted,
For I longed for Your commandments.
¹³² Look upon me and be merciful to me,
As Your custom *is* toward those who love Your name.
¹³³ Direct my steps by Your word,
And let no iniquity have dominion over me.
¹³⁴ Redeem me from the oppression of man,
That I may keep Your precepts.
¹³⁵ Make Your face shine upon Your servant,
And teach me Your statutes.
¹³⁶ Rivers of water run down from my eyes,
Because *men* do not keep Your law.
¹³⁷ Righteous *are* You, O LORD,
And upright *are* Your judgments.
¹³⁸ Your testimonies, *which* You have commanded,
Are righteous and very faithful.
¹³⁹ My zeal has ^lconsumed me,
Because my enemies have forgotten Your words.
¹⁴⁰ Your word *is* very pure;

Therefore Your servant loves it.

¹⁴¹ I *am* small and despised,

Yet I do not forget Your precepts.

¹⁴² Your righteousness *is* an everlasting righteousness,

And Your law *is* truth.

¹⁴³ Trouble and anguish have overtaken me,

Yet Your commandments *are* my delights.

¹⁴⁴ The righteousness of Your testimonies *is* everlasting;

Give me understanding, and I shall live.

Introduction

We are now coming near the end of our series. There is only one more message that can be preached in this series.

It has been an encouraging journey through this Psalm.

It has also been challenging because it has directed all our attention to God's word and its application.

Whatever problem we might have, God's word has a solution to our anxiety.

The next passage that we will study covers three more letters of the Hebrew Alphabet.

These letters are "Ayin", "Pe" and "Tsadde."

1. Hebrew letter Ayin – v. 121-128. – Theme is " Godly Assurance"

For the first time in this Psalm the words "**oppressors**" and "**oppress**" appear in this Psalm. This word describes the abuse of power and authority.

It means taking advantage of the underprivileged by either violence or deceit.

God commanded His people, the Jewish nation not to oppress one another.

(see Lev.25: v. 14, 17, & Deut. 24: v. 5-22.) This commanded also included the strangers in their land. (Exodus 22: v. 2, 23:9)

Often God's people suffer oppression, while the guilty go free.

In Muslim countries throughout the world, many Christians suffer persecution, torture and suffer starvation. This is very sad.

When this happens, we need to remember what the God of the Bible does for His people in these difficult situations.

God is the surety for His people – v. 121-122.

The N.I.V. Bible does not use the word "surety", but the King James and the New American Standard Bible does use this word.

Therefore it is really important that we understand this word.

In these days a person became surety when he or she pledged to pay another person's debt, or to fulfil a promise.

You will remember the story about Joseph and his brothers in Genesis Chapter 37-45.

When Jacob refused to allow his youngest son Benjamin to go to Egypt for food with his brothers, it was Judah who willingly became surety for his youngest brother.

(Genesis 43: v. 1-10, and 44: v. 18-34.)

To become surety for a friend's debts is forbidden in scripture because you might end up with a burden that is too big for you.

(Prov. 11: v.15, 17:18, 22: v. 26-27.)

However the very good news is that the Son of God, **JESUS**, became surety for those who have trusted in Him.

Quote Hebrews 7 : v. 22. In N.K.J.

²² by so much more Jesus has become a ^[E]surety of a better covenant.

By His death on the cross Jesus has paid our sin debt for us.

Jesus is alive today and He has a ministry of intercession for us from Heaven.

Jesus is our living surety.

As long as Jesus lives our Salvation is secure.

Hebrews Chapter 7 : v. 16 says that Jesus lives by the power of an endless life.

The Psalmist was assured that no matter what happened to him, **God was his surety.**

If we are in the family of God, and trusting in Jesus, then **JESUS HIMSELF** has taken the responsibility of our Salvation.

Jesus will **NEVER fail us, He is our surety.**

God is our master & we are his servant – v. 123-125.

Whenever people attack us, they also attack the God whom we serve.

We know this from **Acts Chapter 9: v. 1-5.**

Then Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest

² and asked letters from him to the synagogues of Damascus, so that if he found any who were of the Way, whether men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem.³ As he journeyed he came near Damascus, and suddenly a light shone around him from heaven.

⁴ Then he fell to the ground, and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?"⁵ And he said, "Who are You, Lord?"

Three times the Psalmist makes the point that he is God's servant.

God cares for His servants.

God doesn't always prevent us from being oppressed, but God always has a good reason for allowing it to happen.

We don't always get to find this out at the time. It can be many years later.

One Christian writer said this:

" God's servants do not live by explanations: they live by promises."

God is the final judge – v. 126-128.

In this section the Psalmist is saying that it is time for God to act. (v. 126)

He said this because the people had regarded God's word as void.

This is exactly what is happening in our world today.

Many nations and peoples have rejected the God of the Bible and His word.

Therefore God is going to judge the nations and the peoples of this world.

The lead up to the second coming of Jesus is not a blessed time for anybody.

Except of course to true believers in Jesus, who know that God will act in judgement.

However much injustice comes our way, God will eventually judge these people, and bless us for all eternity in Heaven.

The Psalmist says in v. 127 that he loves God's word more than gold.

Gold couldn't buy his Salvation, and Gold couldn't buy his happiness.

However God's word was eternal, it gave light towards Salvation, it gave peace and happiness into the lives of those who trusted in God's word.

The challenge for us today is "What are we trusting in ?"

Is it in Jesus, and God's word, the Bible, or is it in the things that we possess, and the things of this world.?

Quote 1 John 2: v. 15-17 in the N.K.J.

¹⁵ Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶ For all that *is* in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world. ¹⁷ And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.

2. Hebrew letter "Pe" – v. 129-136 – A Chain reaction(linking together like a chain)

This section begins in v.129 declaring that God's word is wonderful and it ends in v. 136 with the writer weeping and crying because arrogant people disobey God's word.

Just as love and hate,(v. 127 -128) and joy and affliction can exist in the same heart, (111, 107), so can wonder and the burden of tears of anguish, exist in one heart too.

When we begin to see the beauty of God's creation and the beauty of God's word in the Bible, then we also begin to understand the ugliness of sin.

We also realise that what the world has to offer outside of God is cheap and nothing compared to God's beauty.

This section describes a spiritual chain reaction in the heart of the Psalmist.

It is also a reaction that can happen in our own hearts too.

Here is the chain reaction of the Psalmist.

Wonder leads to obedience – v. 129.

The chain starts here with the wonder of God's word that leads to obedience.

The Psalmist declares that he has discovered that God's word is so wonderful that he must obey its teaching.

In fact, although the Bible is one book, it is also a collection of 66 books.

It was written over a period of 1,5000 years, which covered 40 generations.

It was written by more that 40 authors who came from every walk of life.

This included kings, peasants, philosophers, fishermen, poets, statemen, and scholars.

The Bible was written in different places and at different times, and on three continents, Asia, Africa and Europe.

It was written in three languages, Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek.

It covers every topic of life for all generations, past, present and future.

And yet there is absolute unity of thought and mind.

The reason for this is that the author of the Bible was God Himself. (2 Tim. 3: v. 16)

God influence all of the writers so that they would record what He wanted to say.

In spite of the age of the Bible, when ancient manuscripts were found in caves in Israel in 1947, which were dated 100 years after Jesus Christ lived, they were the same as the oldest manuscripts that we have today which are dated 900 years after Jesus Christ.

The wonder of God is revealed in the Bible, when we get it firmly fixed into our hearts and minds, then obedience is the only way forward.

Lack of obedience to God in your life, is because of a lack of understanding about God's word in your heart.!!!

Obedience leads to understanding – v. 130.

This is the next link in the chain. The word of God opens up when we obey its teaching. It brings spiritual light and understanding.

Even simple non academic people like me can have understanding through God’s word.

Understanding leads to a deeper desire for more of God. – v. 131

The Psalmist is saying here that just as a thirsty person gasps for water, so the child of God is thirsty for spiritual food.

Quote Job 23: v. 12 in the N.K.J.

I have not departed from the commandment of His lips;

I have treasured the words of His mouth

More than my necessary *food*.

The problem that we have today is when we loose our desire for spiritual food, then become vulnerable to the substitutes the world has to offer.

These substitutes don’t satisfy our souls. (See Isaiah 55: v. 1-2)

A deeper desire for God leads to a real love for Him. – v.132

To love God’s word is the same as loving God. For God’s word reveals all that He is.

Quote John 14: v. 21 in the N.K.J.

²¹ He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and [†]manifest Myself to him.”

A love for God leads to guidance and freedom – v. 133-134.

When we experience God’s love in our hearts, we keep His commandments.

(Quote John 14: v.15 in the N.K.J.)

¹⁵ “If you love Me, keep My commandments.

Then obedience to His commandments sets us free from the slavery of sin.

(Romans 6)

In the N.K.J. in v.133 the Psalmist says “let no iniquity have dominion over me”

If we are not a Christian, we think that we have control over our lives and we do what pleases us.

However the opposite is true. We are actually controlled by satan and sin.

We don’t realise it but it is true.

However when we become a Christian we are set free from the power of sin and satan and we are free to follow Jesus and God’s word.

We are free to do the right things that bless our hearts and souls.

We are then directed by God’s word and have great freedom to serve our creator.

Freedom in Christ then brings us God’s blessing.

v. 135-136.

This is the final link in the chain.

In v. 135 the Psalmist asks God to shine His face upon him.

The Bible teaches us that when God hides His face from His people then He is disciplining them.

(Quote Psalm 13: v. 1 in N.K.J.)

How long, O LORD? Will You forget me forever?
How long will You hide Your face from me?

(Also note Psalm 80: v. 3-7)

Restore us, O God;
Cause Your face to shine,
And we shall be saved!⁴ O LORD God of hosts,
How long will You be angry
Against the prayer of Your people?
⁵ You have fed them with the bread of tears,
And given them tears to drink in great measure.
⁶ You have made us a strife to our neighbors,
And our enemies laugh among themselves.
⁷ Restore us, O God of hosts;
Cause Your face to shine,
And we shall be saved!

However the shining face of God is a sign of His blessing.

Quote Numbers 6: v. 24-26 in the N.K.J. (the Priestly Blessing)

“The LORD bless you and keep you;
²⁵ The LORD make His face shine upon you,
And be gracious to you;
²⁶ The LORD lift up His countenance upon you,
And give you peace.” ’

Although there is great blessing from God in our lives when we seek to follow Him. There is also a burden in our lives.

The Psalmist describes this burden in graphic terms. He says;

“ Rivers of water run down from my eyes, because men do not keep your law”

Even though we can know blessing in our own lives, we can have burdens for lost people, especially our family, and people we know well.

Living in a family with people who don’t know Jesus can be a difficult thing.

I know in Japan that many Christians have parents, wives or husbands, that don’t know Jesus.

This is a burden that brings us to tears when we realise that they going to a lost eternity.

However we are encouraged by Psalm 126 v. 6 that gives us hope when we weep for lost souls, whether they are our close family or not.

I will never forget at my graduation service at Bible College in 1987 that Professor Verna Wright preached on Psalm 126. I remember at the time that I had not experienced very much of weeping for lost souls to be saved, even though it was my heart’s desire.

However several months later I was involved in a mission in a nearby town with two other Christian workers.

I was due to preach that night as a I was preparing, I couldn’t help crying, and felt a very heavy burden for two lost souls who attended the mission every night.

They thought that they were Christians because they had attended Church for most of their life. They were good people.

Not only was I brought to a river of tears but I also starting singing a song that I didn't know. It was called **"Be in time"**

I couldn't understand why I was singing this song, I didn't know it and had never heard it before.

I decided to investigate the song in an old Faith Mission song book and discovered it was there.

The Chorus goes like this:

Be in time, Be in time

While the voice of Jesus calls you, be in time.

If in sin you longer wait

You might find no open gate

And your cry might just be too late

Be in time.

I chose the song to close the meeting, and noticed that there was a lady with rivers of tears flowing down her face.

Later that night she put her faith and trust in Jesus and found peace with God.

I discovered later that her father used to sing the song to her as a little child.

He used to sing "Be in time" to his little daughter. It took about 60 years to bear fruit, but God came and saved this lady, and used this song.

About 10 minutes later, her husband trusted Jesus.

I was there at the time and after his prayer, his face really shone with the beauty of Jesus.

Be encouraged today. If you have a burden for lost souls, try tears from the holy Spirit, and one day you will joyfully rejoice in the Salvation of the lost.

Maybe today you are watching this service on the internet or in person in Osaka International Church and you are not a Christian.

May I say with the song writer, **Be in time, put your faith and trust in Jesus NOW.**
" While the voice of Jesus calls you, be in time"

3. **Hebrew letter "Tsadde" – v. 137-144. – "In God we trust"**

In 1864 the words "**In God we trust**" first appeared on a 2 cent coin in the U.S.A. It was as a result of the American Civil War.

Later the words appeared on other coins and later on Bank notes.

It was adopted as the slogan of America.

However that is not the situation in America today.

Most leaders in America are trying to push God out of the way and bring in Godless laws and glorify sin.

However those of us who trust in God, will never be disappointed and will never be put to shame. We still trust in God.

The main message of this section is that we can trust in God and His word.

The Bible teaches that the Spirit of God uses the word of God to implant faith into our hearts.

(Quote Romans 10: v.17 in N.K.J.)

¹⁷ So then faith *comes* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

The more we read and obey God's word, the stronger our faith becomes.

Some people have **NO FAITH.** – Mark 4:40.

Some people have a **LITTLE FAITH**. – Matthew 8: v. 26, 14:31.

A few people have **GREAT FAITH**. – Matthew 8: v. 10, 15:28.

Like a mustard seed, faith has a life in it. (Mustard seed is the smallest seed)

If it is **planted and cultivated**, it will grow and bear fruit. – Matthew 17: v.20.

The message of this section is to **encourage you to have FAITH in God's word**.

The Psalmist gives us four reasons to have faith in God's word.

God's word is trustworthy, no matter what people do or say. – v. 137-141.

In v. 139 we are told that the Psalmist has worn himself out trying to convince people to trust in God's word.

However the people ignored the Psalmist and they also ignored God's word.

The Psalmist must have felt that his ministry had failed, even though he himself had been faithful to God's word.

It doesn't matter how many people attack God's word or try and make out that it is not relevant for today, God's word is still trustworthy.

In his book, Grace – Amazing Grace, British author, Brian Edwards gives us an amazing example of how much guidance for modern living is packed into one chapter in the old Testament.

In Deuteronomy Chapter 22, it deals with lost property, behaviour towards your neighbour, cross dressing, ecology, health and safety, agriculture, horticulture, marriage relationships, adultery, and rape.

Taking the Bible as a whole, there is nothing that you will encounter in life that the Bible doesn't teach about or will give helpful advice about living in this life in any age.

Yes we can trust the Bible, even when everybody else is not trusting it.

God's word is trustworthy, no matter how you feel. – v. 142 – 143.

We all have feelings. Sometimes we might feel depressed when things are not going well in our jobs or our home life. At other times we might feel happy and joyful because something very positive has come our way in life.

Our feelings come and go according to our circumstances at the time.

However we can't let our feelings control how we feel about God's word.

Our feelings may change, but God's word never changes.

The Psalmist says that trouble and anguish have overtaken him, but he is still delighting in God's word.

The New Living Translations puts it this way.

" As pressure and stress bear down on me, I find joy in your commands."

Some people in Japan have very stressful jobs and live very stressful lives.

Some people have very stressful family situations, but the Psalmist says that God's word can still give us joy.

The reason is that joy is dependent on the condition of your heart, and not on the circumstances of your life.

God's word is trustworthy, no matter how long you live. – v. 144.

A Christian once said that it is **not the length of your life, but the depth of your life that counts**.

You can live a short life, but have great depth and quality during that life.

Lady Jane Grey died at the age of 16 years old. (1557 – 1554)

She was known as the nine day Queen of England.

She was an amazing student of the Bible, learning Latin and Greek at a young age.

On February the 12th 1554, her husband was beheaded for no other reason than his protestant faith.

When Lady Jane Grey saw his body being carried away, she said these words:

“ Oh Guildford, Guildford, ... that is nothing compared to the feast that you and I shall this day, partake of in Paradise.”

Before Lady Jane Grey was executed, she said to the watching crowd, these words...

“ I look to be saved by no other means but by the mercy of God in the blood of His only Son, Jesus Christ.’

Although that took place in England over 400 years ago, this young ladies life is eternal in the Heavens.

What ever life God gives us to live, whether it is short or long, we need to live it for the glory of God and not for ourselves.

Whether we live or whether we die God’s word is eternal in the Heavens.

Jesus had a relatively short life. He spent 33 years on this earth.

His public ministry was only three years.

However He accomplished a work that is eternal.

Do you know and love Jesus as your own personal saviour?

If you do, feed on God’s word every day and you will be blest.

If you don’t know Jesus personally yet, then today is the day, you need to meet Him.

If you come to Jesus, He will not turn you away.

However you need to come to Jesus, acknowledging your sin, and asking for His forgiveness.

Jesus knows your heart and He knows mine. He knows everything that has happened in your life. In spite of that Jesus wants you to come to Him today.

Will you come to Jesus today?

Amen.