

Psalm 119

week 15, v. 77-78

Review the requests made to God, the giver of all things.

v. 73 give me understanding

v. 76 give me comfort

v. 77 give me mercy

Ps 119:77 May Thy compassion come to me that I may live, for Thy law is my delight.

compassion <racham> tender love, mercy

KJV – tender mercies

According to the following verses, what do we learn about God's mercy?

Ps 40:11 Thou, O LORD, wilt not withhold Thy compassion from me; Thy lovingkindness and Thy truth will continually preserve me. [guards]

Ps 69:16 Answer me, O LORD, for Thy lovingkindness is good; According to the greatness of Thy compassion, turn to me, [abundant]

La 3:22 It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. (KJV) [there is no end]

Da 9:9 "To the Lord our God belong compassion and forgiveness, for we have rebelled against Him; [it is His to give]

Do we need God's mercy? Where would we be without it?

"that I may live" <chayah> to live, to revive, keep, make alive, give life, nourish, preserve, quicken, recover, repair, restore, save, be whole.

God's mercy is the source of our life. It revives us (makes us alive again – we were once dead in our sin).

Without pardoning mercy the sinner remains under the sentence of eternal punishment; and without experiencing the tender compassion of God, the believer has little enjoyment of life here, or hope of eternal life hereafter; but they who delight in the law of God will surely at last rejoice in his tender mercies.

Thomas Scott

To delight in the word when it rebukes us, is proof that we are profiting under it. ... we shall find that David here seeks another sort of mercy than he sought before. For first he sought mercy to forgive his sins; then he sought mercy to comfort him in his troubles; now he seeks mercy to live, and sin no more. Treasury of David

God's mercy not only enables us to live, but to live *for* Him.

The word delight in this verse means enjoyment, pleasure. Think about the things you enjoy. Those who know you can probably name a few of those things because you speak about them and spend time doing them. **Is God's word in that list of things you enjoy? In fact, is the Word at the top of the list?**

Moving forward to the next verse. We read that David is the victim of false accusations by those who are against him.

Ps 119:78 *May the arrogant be ashamed, for they subvert me with a lie; [But] I shall meditate on Thy precepts.*

Let's look at two groups of people: 1) those who maliciously attempt to harm another's reputation and 2) those whose character is falsely accused.

arrogant <zed> presumptuous, proud.

To be presumptuous means you boldly assume something about another based on facts that are unproven. In other words, you may conclude something with only a small amount of evidence to support your conclusion.

Are all overweight people lazy? Are all those who drive expensive cars wealthy?

Someone who is proud feels the need to prove their own self-worth. In this case, they think they know something but they are misdirected. Their treatment and talk of David has the ability to sabotage what he is truly about. **Who can best stop them?**

Where does your value come from? Where does your significance come from?

Think! If our worth comes from the opinions and actions of others towards us we are apt to be greatly disappointed. We would be trying to regulate and influence other's perceptions of us constantly. Our time spent worrying about false representation is futile.

What is David's reaction to those who are against him?

"I shall meditate on Thy precepts".

He occupies himself with the truths of God.

What does it mean to 'meditate' on God's truths?

to ponder, converse with oneself, commune, muse, pray

Meditation here is the idea of 'chewing over' something; of reflecting on something, thinking of it over and over again; thinking deeply about a subject.

1Ch 16:9 Sing to Him, sing praises to Him; Speak of all His wonders.

Ps 77:6 I will remember my song in the night; I will meditate with my heart; And my spirit ponders.

Ps 77:12 I will meditate on all Thy work, And muse on Thy deeds. [chew over, mull]

Ps 119:23 Even though princes sit and talk against me, Thy servant meditates on Thy statutes.

Meditating on God's truths is more than just occasional reading or hearing. You can quickly admire the beauty of a flower by glancing at it but when you really take the time to study it – the number and shape of petals, the different color hues towards the center or tips of the petals, the perfume, the intricate design – then you really appreciate what you see. It is the same with God's word. Do you study it with the expectation of learning more?

If we are busy thinking deeply about God and His truths, what time do we have for trying to control another's opinion or reaction?

How is meditating on God's precepts a perfect tool to fight the proud?

If we are right before God then we have no need to worry over what others may say against us. Does arguing with those who misunderstand you help? What has been your experience?

Shame is for the proud, for it is a shameful thing to be proud. Shame is not for the holy, for there is nothing in holiness to be ashamed of. ... He would leave the proud in God's hands, and give himself up to holy studies and contemplations. To obey the divine precepts we have need to know them, and think much of them. Hence this persecuted saint felt that meditation must be his chief employment. He would study the law of God and not the law of retaliation. The proud are not worth a thought. The worst injury they can do us

is to take us away from our devotions; let us baffle them by keeping all the closer to our God when they are most malicious in their onslaughts. Treasury of David

Application Questions

What does God's compassion towards us look like? Refer to Ps 40:11; Ps 69:16; Lamentations 3:22 and Daniel 9:9. How have you specifically seen God's mercy in your own life?

Do you delight in God's word? How do your priorities and life show proof of your answer? Do other people and things come before God in your life? You may need to ask God for wisdom in rearranging some things or sacrificing some things in order to place Him first.

Have you ever been the victim of false accusation or misunderstanding? How did you respond? What is David's example of response in Ps 119:78?

What does it mean to be arrogant or proud? We see two groups of people in Ps 119:78 – those who are proud and accuse falsely, and those whose character is

falsely accused. Have you ever been a part of the first group? Do you need to consider your words or actions more carefully?

What does it mean to meditate on God's truths? (Ps 77:6; Ps 77:12). What does this look like in your life? What are you learning as you contemplate God's word? Is Truth changing you?