

20-Revive Us Who Love Your Word.docx

Psalms 119:153-160

To know Him and Make Him Known

In this section [Resh the 20th letter in the Hebrew alphabet] the psalmist draws still nearer to God in prayer, and gives reasons why the Lord should answer him. With boldness he pleads his intimate connection with the Lord's Word as why he should be answered. The special blessing that he seeks is personal revival, for which he cries to the Lord again and again.

The theme of revival has appeared previously in verses 25–32. In fact it recurs throughout Psalm 119 (vv. 37, 40, 44, 88, 107, 149). The prayer for revival is voiced in this stanza in verses 154, 156, and 159. The psalmist suffers affliction (v. 153). He is dogged by the wicked (v. 155), persecutors, enemies (v. 157), and treacherous people (v. 158). His crises cause him to beseech God to step in and renew him in the Spirit of the Lord (CIT). [Williams, Donald. The Preacher's Commentary Series, Vol. 14: Psalms 73-150. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Inc, 1989, S. 378.]

1) **REVIVE ME BECAUSE OF MY CIRCUMSTANCES, 153-154**

- a) The psalmist again calls on God to **deliver** him because he had not forgotten His Word (vv. 153-154).
- b) Verse 153 opens with a **plea** that God respond to the psalmist's affliction by rescuing him. "Look upon my affliction and rescue me, for I do not forget Your law."
- c) The writer's presents his case before God for divine arbitration.
- d) He is **bold** to ask because he has not **forgotten** God's Word.
- e) His affliction would not drive him away from God's Word nor could it lead him to act contrary to His divine commands.
- f) It is this very law which has assured him that God is his deliverer [rescuer, lit., "to extricate"].
- g) His obedience to God's law indicates that he takes his relationship with God seriously and thus can expect God to take His part in their covenant relationship seriously also.
- h) Jesus said, "If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you" (John 15:7).
- i) One of the secrets of prayer is to pray the Scriptures. James says, "You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss (4:2, 3).
- j) Many of our prayers are not answered because we don't pray in accordance with Scripture.
- k) If you want an effective prayer life, pray the **Word**.
- l) Having asked to be **delivered**, the prayer in verse 154 indicates a way it could be accomplished. "Plead my cause and redeem me; Revive me according to Your Word.
- m) The psalmist asks God to be his **advocate**, to plead his cause.
- n) If this happens, not only will he be justified before his enemies, but he will be redeemed from the bondage of his affliction.
- o) He then asks God to keep His promise and, "Revive me according to Your Word."
- p) Revive me is the key phrase in this section (vv.154, 156, & 159).
- q) It could mean "keep me alive, make me alive, give me life, reawaken me, or lift me up and keep me going."

- r) The psalmist knows how the Spirit of God has lift him up before and prays that God will make him so alive again.
- s) Notice he pleads the Word.
- t) The Lord will perform His promises.

2) REVIVE ME BECAUSE OF MY ENEMIES, 155-158

- a) Verse 155 proclaims that salvation is **not** available to the wicked. "Salvation is far from the wicked, For they do not seek Your statutes."
- b) The psalmist distances himself "from the wicked."
- c) Salvation, he asserts, is far from them because they do not **seek** God's Word.
- d) The reason salvation is **not** available to the wicked is because they will **not** seek nor respond to God's Word or statutes.
- e) The wicked are those who do not think the law of God is **worth** enquiring after, but **disregard** it in the way they live and the way they believe.
- f) By their perseverance in evil they distance themselves further and father from God.
- g) The results is that God's salvation is **far** from them.
- h) They may talk about being saved, but they cannot know it or they would not remain wicked.
- i) The psalmist affirms in verse 156 that God's compassion toward him was great. "Great are Your mercies, O Lord; Revive me according to Your ordinances."
- j) Despite his faithfulness before God, he does not ask for God to answer because of his own merit but because of God's mercies.
- k) God in His mercy does not give us what we deserve instead by His grace He grants what we do not deserve, salvation and deliverance.
- l) Compassion is in the plural "compassions" which indicates intensive especially when great or many augments it.
- m) Based upon God's covenant commitment to him, he prays that God would "revive" or give him true life.
- n) God alone can revive us but to the Lord and giver of life the work is possible, and He delights to bring it to fruition.
- o) If we plead God's **Word** we will find many reasons to ask God to **revive** us.
- p) He lamented that he had many enemies who did not obey God's Word in verse 157-158.
- q) In verse 157 we are reminded that the godly disciple **cannot** be loved where his Master and His Word are **hated**. "Many are my persecutors and my adversaries, Yet I do not turn aside from Your testimonies.
- r) Again, the psalmist's mind moves to the crisis surrounding him which is caused by people.
- s) These "persecutors and adversaries" are those who actually attack him, or secretly despise him are many.
- t) They will not influence him though because he refuses to turn aside from God's "testimonies."
- u) It is these very testimonies that have given him a true knowledge of God and his moral compass.
- v) The psalmist continues to distinguish himself from the **wicked** in verse 158. "I behold the treacherous and loathe them, because they do not keep Your Word."
- w) The psalmist is not like these evil and disobedient people.

- x) He states the reason he is so much different from the treacherous is because he keeps God's Word and they don't keep God's Word.
- y) The treacherous are lead by their own reasoning or the reasoning of natural man and the psalmist is lead by the Word of God.
- z) Therefore they were becoming more and more distinct.

3) REVIVE ME BECAUSE I LOVE YOUR WORD, 159-160

- a) In contrast to his treacherous enemies the psalmist **loved** God's Word and wanted to **live** it out.
- b) Thus, he boldly profess his love for the Word and then asks God to revive him in verse 159. "Consider how I love Your precepts; Revive me, O Lord, according to Your lovingkindness.
- c) He prays again the third time, using the same words, "Revive me."
- d) He was stunned by assaults, languishing under their incessant malice.
- e) What he wanted was revival, restoration, renewal; therefore he pleaded for more life.
- f) His love for God's Word or precepts enables him to **boldly** pray and he asks God to take his love into consideration.
- g) Now notice the full prayer, "Revive me, O Lord, according to Your loving-kindness."
- h) His confidence in God's new work in his life though is not based upon his obedience to God but upon God's faithfulness to His lovingkindness or 'covenant-love.'
- i) Whenever God acts afresh in our lives, it is by His grace.
- j) In fact, the irony of revival is that it usually comes in the darkest hour.
- k) **ILL--For example, when the Evangelical Awakening in England struck in the eighteenth century, the church was depleted by deism and the country by gin. Then, because of the prayers of a few, God moved, and the course of history was changed through the preaching of George Whitefield and John Wesley. It is God's "lovingkindness" that will change us again.**
- l) The psalmist concludes with a key to **revival** in verse 160. "The sum of Your Word is truth, And every one of Your righteous ordinances is everlasting."
- m) "The sum of your Word is truth" means all of it can be trusted.
- n) The totality of God's written revelation is not just true-it is truth.
- o) A half-hearted **faith** and a half-hearted **preaching** will never bring revival.
- p) We must believe the totality of God's revelation, which is both true and eternal.
- q) The Bible has been through the shredder because of destructive criticism for most people today.
- r) Weak in authority, the church endures with a weak faith.
- s) **ILL--Billy Graham struggled with the question of biblical authority before his career-changing Los Angeles crusade years ago. Finally, he got down on his knees, spread the Bible before him, and prayed, "Lord, I take this book as Your inspired word by faith." From that prayer, he arose with a new sense of power and became the most famous evangelist of our generation.**
- t) Such renewed commitment today will bring renewed faith and spark the revival for which we pray.

IN CLOSING,

To love the Word is to obey it, and to obey it is to receive life from it. The Bible is not a magic book that conveys divine life to anyone who picks it up and reads it. God's living Word

communicates His life and power to those who read it, meditate on it, and obey it because they love God and His Word. When Jesus raised the dead, it was through speaking the Word (Luke 7:11-17; 8:40-56; John 11:38-44; see John 5:24), and His Word gives us life today when we find ourselves in the dust (v. 25). May each and ever one of us pray "Revive me, for I trust Your Word." [Wiersbe, Warren. The Bible Exposition Commentary. Joshua-Esther. David Cook. 2003. Colorado Springs, CO. p. 331].

So let "revive me" be our prayer also. Because God is love He will give us life; because He is kind he will again kindle the heavenly flame within us.

Part of the unspoken code among the settlers of the American West was that a man always kept his word. That is the reason why Andrew Garcia made a 1,300 mile trek in 1879 to pay a debt. In September of the previous year he had bought supplies in Bozeman, Montana, to hunt buffalo. The 10 pack-mules, ammunition, food, and gear cost him \$300 more than he had so a merchant loaned him the rest. He promised to pay it back by January 1.

The winter snows came early that year, however, and Garcia couldn't get back to Bozeman. His travels took him through Colorado and, down into New Mexico: Finally, a year later, he headed back to Bozeman. "Don't bother," his buddies told him. But Garcia believed in keeping his word, so he returned and paid the debt.

Followers of Christ should also be known as people of integrity. If, we say we'll help with a Sunday school class, or assist in the nursery, or spend time with a family member, or complete a job as agreed, do we keep our word even if something better comes along? Are we true to our word?

God's promises are never broken (v.160), and what He does, He does in truth (Ps.33:4). One who values God's word will keep his own word. May our promises be as true as His Word.