

# Psalm 119: For The Love Of Scripture! Psalm 119:81-88

## Psalm 119:81-88

### **Psalm 119:81**

*(KJV) CAPH. My soul fainteth for thy salvation: but I hope in thy word.*

*(NIV) My soul faints with longing for your salvation, but I have put my hope in your word.*

Our passage this week begins with the eleventh letter of the Hebrew alphabet, *caph*, which means “spoon” or “crown.” If you were to take a piece of straight pipe and bend it in two equidistant places in the same direction you would hold in your hands the letter *caph*. The letter may appear with or without a *dagesh*, or dot, in the center, which determines how the letter will be pronounced. The emphasis in this letter is two-fold, representing both the recognition of and submission to God as crowned and worthy King, and the bending - as a pipe or a spoon - of our will unto God. So, the images and meanings of this letter work together and give context to the psalmist’s emphasis on not only God’s Word itself, but obedience to it. Remember that Scripture also teaches that without the supernatural enabling of the Holy Ghost, we will not bend, will not submit to God’s law. However, with the power of the Holy Ghost, we can now choose to obey God’s Word:

### **James 1:21-25**

*Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you. Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like someone who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. But whoever looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues in it—not forgetting what they have heard, but doing it—they will be blessed in what they do.*

### **Hebrews 3:7-13**

*Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness: When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years. Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do alway err in their heart; and they have not known my ways. So I swear in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest.) Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.*

Please note, beloved, that this passage is not referring to a departure from God, but from God’s *rest*. Here again, context is everything!

So our hope in and obedience to God’s Word is simply the fruit of our relationship with God, revealed to us through the Holy Ghost. Because God is our crowned King, Father, and Lord, we willingly bend, we submit to His perfect Word.

Think again of the letter *caph*. Hallelujah!

Our dear psalmist, in this week's text, demonstrates once again the intimacy we can have with God through His Word.

Let's look at this verse again:

**Psalm 119:81**

*(KJV) CAPH. My soul fainteth for thy salvation: but I hope in thy word.*

*(NIV) My soul faints with longing for your salvation, but I have put my hope in your word.*

In light of the psalmist's afflictions at the hands of mockers, His crying out to God here is understandable. How many believers - and even unbelievers - call out for God to rescue them when their circumstances cannot be assuaged by worldly means? I was saved in Christ by such a shallow motive, even my fear! Hey, but God used my fear to force my hand and I cried out for divine rescue for the first time in my life! God is so merciful!

**Romans 10:13** *For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.*

The psalmist, as we have read over and over, never hesitates to cry out to God. He literally holds God to the promises in His Word to deliver, to rescue, to save. In this verse, he has once again hoped in God and His Word.

Dear Christian, we can do the same!

**Psalm 119:82**

*(KJV) Mine eyes fail for thy word, saying, When wilt thou comfort me?*

*(NIV) My eyes fail, looking for your promise; I say, "When will you comfort me?"*

Ask God the hard questions. Do it! He has broad enough shoulders to handle emotion and conviction from the deepest depths of our hearts. You may find it strange, or you may find it comforting, that the Bible is replete with real people going through real hard things, and expressing raw, hard emotion to their God. Our psalmist here joins the choir of desperate voices throughout Scripture crying out "Why Lord? When Lord? How Lord?" So, my beloved in Jesus, pray in real time in your real life to your God Who deals in the real!

**Habakkuk 1:2-4**

*How long, LORD, must I call for help, but you do not listen? Or cry out to you, "Violence!" but you do not save? Why do you make me look at injustice? Why do you tolerate wrongdoing? Destruction and violence are before me; there is strife, and conflict abounds. Therefore the law is paralyzed, and justice never prevails. The wicked hem in the righteous, so that justice is perverted.*

**Psalm 13:1-4 For the director of music. A psalm of David.**

*How long, LORD? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me? How long must I wrestle with my thoughts and day after day have sorrow in my heart? How long will my enemy triumph over me? Look on me and answer, LORD my God. Give light to my eyes, or I will sleep in death, and my enemy will say, "I have overcome him," and my foes will rejoice when I fall.*

**Mark 14:32-36**

*They went to a place called Gethsemane, and Jesus said to his disciples, "Sit here while I pray." He took Peter, James and John along with him, and he began to be deeply distressed and troubled. "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death," he said to them. "Stay here and keep watch." Going a little farther, he fell to the ground and prayed that if possible the hour might pass from him. "Abba, Father," he said, "everything is possible for you. Take this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will."*

We would do well to join hands and hearts with Habakkuk, King David, Jesus and the psalmist in Psalm 119, and hold God to His Word. He hears our honest heart cry, and He is a God of His Word!

Beloved, from the depths of Your heart, hold Him to His Word!

**Psalm 119:83**

*(KJV) For I am become like a bottle in the smoke; yet do I not forget thy statutes.*

*(NIV) Though I am like a wineskin in the smoke, I do not forget your decrees.*

The word picture here of a drying wine skin in smoke is fitting - the psalmist is feeling empty spiritually and shrivelled up with sorrow. But he knows to put his faith and trust in God's Word, not in his physical state or emotions.

And we ourselves ought not look to circumstances for evidence of God's presence in our circumstances:

**Habakkuk 3:17-19**

*Though the fig tree does not bud and there are no grapes on the vines, though the olive crop fails and the fields produce no food, though there are no sheep in the pen and no cattle in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will be joyful in God my Savior. The Sovereign LORD is my strength; he makes my feet like the feet of a deer, he enables me to tread on the heights. For the director of music. On my stringed instruments.*

Remember that He is worthy, according to His own testimony in His Word, and He has revealed Himself to us through the Holy Spirit. Beloved, that is all we need to know. Our only response then is to worship Him!

**John 4:23-24**

*Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth."*

**Psalm 119:84**

*(KJV) How many are the days of thy servant? when wilt thou execute judgment on them that persecute me?*

*(NIV) How long must your servant wait? When will you punish my persecutors?*

More raw emotion and honest questions from our psalmist. How long, Lord? When, Lord? Have you cried out to Him in this way recently? I know I have! But be encouraged:

**Isaiah 40:31**

*But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.*

**Psalm 119:85**

*(KJV) The proud have digged pits for me, which are not after thy law.*

*(NIV) The arrogant dig pits to trap me, contrary to your law.*

If you have ever unexpectedly stepped into a hole in the sidewalk, or driven into an unseen pothole in the road, you probably know that the shock of an unseen snare brings with it painful consequences - whether that be a twisted ankle, or an expensive car repair! While these earthly obstacles and snares are not necessarily placed there to trip us up, there is a type of snare that the psalmist refers to here called an *shiychah*, or *pitfall*, that is 100% of the time intentionally planted to cripple our walk with God, and ultimately to cause us to fall. Satan uses those who “are not after [His] law” to set the traps, many times themselves not aware of how they are being used by the Father of Lies. To avoid such pitfalls, we need to keep on the full armour of God - yes, every piece!

**Ephesians 6:10-20**

*Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints; And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.*

And to seal our spiritual armour, we need to pray in the Spirit without ceasing. (1 Thessalonians 5:17; Ephesians 6:18)

**Jude 1:24-25**

*Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.*

**Psalms 119:86**

*(KJV) All thy commandments are faithful: they persecute me wrongfully; help thou me.*

*(NIV) All your commands are trustworthy; help me, for I am being persecuted without cause.*

Persecution? Yes! Our Teacher Jesus expected and endured it and taught us to do the same (Matthew 10:24). The psalmist here is being wrongfully accused. Yet another affliction allowed by God to keep this believer close to Himself, and to His Word.

\*STUDY POINT: Write down all the passages from the New Testament where Jesus was wrongfully accused.

\*QUESTION FOR MEDITATION: Recall a time when *you* were wrongly accused. Did you defend yourself against a human accuser, or fight with prayer and Scripture with God, knowing that He promised to avenge you? (Romans 12:17-21)

*Help thou me.* This is what I remember praying as I finally surrendered to God on my knees in the washroom of my workplace in 1999. Never underestimate the power of this simple prayer!

*Oh, great God in heaven, how many are crying out to you at this very moment - "help me!" Some are crying alone in their rooms, some are crying inside in their hearts, some have become so hardened to suffering, they can no longer cry at all. But Your Word teaches that "whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." This is your invitation to salvation, Lord to all who are listening and watching this. For those who know Jesus as Lord and Saviour, You are a Strong Tower Whom we run to and are safe. Hallelujah! Hear all our cries and help each one in need, in trial or in trouble. In Jesus' name. Amen.*

### **Psalm 119:87**

*(KJV) They had almost consumed me upon earth; but I forsook not thy precepts.*

*(NIV) They almost wiped me from the earth, but I have not forsaken your precepts.*

Dear believer, this is how it feels when the enemy bears down on us, doesn't it? It feels like the end, like it's over for us. Oh, but how many times, how many times, how *many* times it felt that way but because God was on our side - IT WASN'T OVER!

### **Psalm 124:1-8 A song of ascents. Of David.**

*If the LORD had not been on our side—let Israel say—if the LORD had not been on our side when people attacked us, they would have swallowed us alive when their anger flared against us; the flood would have engulfed us, the torrent would have swept over us, the raging waters would have swept us away. Praise be to the LORD, who has not let us be torn by their teeth. We have escaped like a bird from the fowler's snare; the snare has been broken, and we have escaped. Our help is in the name of the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth.*

### **Psalm 34:19**

*Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the LORD delivereth him out of them all.*

Praise God!

### **Psalm 119:88**

*(KJV) Quicken me after thy lovingkindness; so shall I keep the testimony of thy mouth.*

*(NIV) In your unfailing love preserve my life, that I may obey the statutes of your mouth.*

What is the psalmist requesting of God? *Lord, revive me in Your love!*

God truly wants a love relationship with you. Do you believe that right now? He wants you to love and obey His Word as you love and obey Him, and bear much fruit for His glory!

***John 15:7-10***

*If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples. As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love. If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.*

Amen.

- Reverend Darren McClelland