

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Psalms: God's Nurture Of The Inner Man In The Life Of Faith

CXIX: Appreciating And Applying Scripture For Every Spiritual Need, Psalm 119

I. Teth - God's Use Of Abusive Foes To Deepen Our Knowledge And Appreciation Of Scripture (Psalm 119:65-72)

I. Introduction

- A. Psalm 119 is about the profitable use of God's written Scriptures, with the psalm being formed as an acrostic where each section contains a Hebrew letter that begins each of the eight verses in its respective section.
- B. Section "Teth" in Psalm 119:65-72 explains how God uses abusive foes we face to deepen our knowledge of and appreciation of Scripture, and we study this section for insight and application (as follows):

II. God's Use Of Abusive Foes To Deepen Our Knowledge And Appreciation Of Scripture, Psa. 119:65-72.

- A. The verse numbering system in the Hebrew text matches that of the English Bible (Kittel, Bib. Heb., p. 1082), so we stay with the English Bible's numbering system for this lesson.
- B. We thus translate Psalm 119:65-72 (as follows):
 - 1. "You have dealt wholesome good (*tob*, *Ibid.*; H. A. W., Theol. Wrdbk. of the O. T., 1980, v. I, p. 345-346) with Your servant, O Jahweh, according to Your Word," Psalm 119:65.
 - 2. "Teach me wholesome good (*tob* again, cf. v. 65) discernment (*ta'am*, *Ibid.*, Kittel; *Ibid.*, H. A. W., p. 816) and knowledge, because I believe in Your commands," Psalm 119:66.
 - 3. "Before I was afflicted, I myself (emph. pron.) went astray [spiritually], but now (emph. position) I keep Your Word," Psalm 119:67.
 - 4. "You (emph. pron.) are wholesome good (*tob* again, cf. v. 65, 66) and (You) do wholesome good; teach me Your decrees," Psalm 119:68.
 - 5. "The insolent have smeared me with lies, but I myself (emph. pron.) will keep Your precepts with all of my heart," Psalm 119:69.
 - 6. "Their hearts are unfeeling as fat [insensitive], but I myself (emph. pron.) delight in Your law," v. 70.
 - 7. "It is wholesome good (*tob* again, cf. v. 65, 66, 68) for me to be afflicted in order that (*lema'an*, *Ibid.*, Kittel; B. D. B., A Heb. and Eng. Lex. of the O. T., p. 775) I might learn Your decrees," Psalm 119:71.
 - 8. "More wholesome good (*tob* again, cf. v. 65, 66, 68, 71) to me is the law from Your mouth than thousands of pieces of gold and silver," Psalm 119:72.
- C. We consider significant observations regarding this psalm (as follows):
 - 1. The psalmist expressed very positive confidences regarding the Scriptures (v. 65-66, 68): (a) God had dealt wholesome good in keeping His Word to him (v. 65), the word "good" (*tob*) being used in Genesis 1 to describe the wholesome goodness of the creative order. (b) Indeed, the psalmist expressed such confidence in God's written Word that he asked God to teach him good discernment and knowledge from it, v. 66. (c) He also expressed his appreciation for God's Person and work, that both He and His deeds are as wholesome as was the created order of Genesis 1 (v. 68).
 - 2. Just why and how the author had come to this view of God and His Word was the result of God's allowing the psalmist to be badly mistreated by foes that drove him deeper into Scripture and thus to mine its rich truths to a greater degree for great blessing. This truth is explained in verses 67, 69-72 (as follows): (a) the psalmist admitted he was not always as appreciative of God and His Word, for it took being afflicted to drive him to this appreciation, v. 67. (b) The affliction was the psalmist's suffering abuse at the hands of slanderous, insensitive, godless foes, v. 69-70. (c) However, the **result** of his facing such abuse had driven the psalmist to the correct use of Scripture to find balm for his suffering, v. 67 with 70b. (d) In **using** Scripture **correctly**, God had given the psalmist rich blessings via greater insight, v. 71. (e) Ultimately, the psalmist had come to appreciate God's truth in Scripture more than great wealth in gold and silver, v. 72.

Lesson: *God permitted abusive people to afflict the psalmist to drive him to use Scripture to a deeper level than he would have otherwise done, enhancing his blessing from the Lord due to his greater discernment and knowledge. As a result, the psalmist came to appreciate God and His written Word more than great wealth in gold and silver.*

Application: *If we face abusive people who afflict us, may we dive into Scripture for the balm of its insight. We will find God uses our suffering to open our hearts and minds to know greater depths of rich truth in discernment and knowledge that will greatly bless, and cause us to appreciate Him and His Word above all other valuables.*