

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

M. Mem - God's Path To Superior Wisdom And Insight

(Psalm 119:97-104)

I. Introduction

- A. Psalm 119 tells of the profitable use of God's written Word, the Scriptures, and the psalm is formed as an acrostic where each section has a Hebrew letter that begins each of the eight verses in its respective section.
- B. Section "Mem" in Psalm 119:97-104 explains how the believer may gain superior wisdom and insight in life, and we view this section for our instruction and edification (as follows):

II. God's Path To Superior Wisdom And Insight, Psalm 119:97-104.

- A. The verse numbering system in the Hebrew text matches that of the English Bible (Kittel, Bib. Heb., p. 1083), so we stay with the English Bible's numbering system for this lesson.
- B. We thus translate Psalm 119:97-104 (as follows):
 1. "O how I love Your law; all day long it itself (emph. pron.) is (the object of) my meditation," v. 97.
 2. "Through Your commandments You have made me wiser than my enemy, because he (emph. pron.) is ever with me," Psalm 119:98.
 3. "I have more insight than all my teachers because Your statutes are (the object of) my meditation," v. 99.
 4. "I have demonstrated myself to have greater understanding than the elders (the psalmist's cultural superiors, leaders), for I observe Your precepts," Psalm 119:100.
 5. "I have restrained my feet from every evil path to the end that I might keep Your Word," Psalm 119:101.
 6. "I have not turned aside from Your judgments because You (emph. pron.) have directed me," v. 102.
 7. "How sweet to my palate are Your words, sweeter than honey to my mouth," Psalm 119:103.
 8. "I have demonstrated myself to have great understanding from Your precepts; therefore, I hate every fraudulent, wrong path," Psalm 119:104.
- C. We consider significant observations regarding this psalm (as follows):
 1. The psalmist testifies he possesses wisdom that is superior to his teachers and elders, v. 97-100: (a) He expresses his appreciation of and constant use of Scripture, v. 97: (i) he tells God of his love for Scripture (v. 97a) and (ii) reveals how he continually meditates on it (v. 97b). (b) The reasons for such activities are based on the psalmist's use of Scripture for his good, v. 98-100: (i) The psalmist's use of God's commands gives him a competitive edge over his evil enemy, a *necessity* since he is *always confronted* by him, v. 98. (ii) The psalmist's meditation on Scripture has produced insight that exceeds that of his teachers, v. 99. (iii) His observation of Scripture has become so effective that his wisdom and insight gained by observing the Word demonstrates itself as superior even to that of the elders who are in leadership over him, v. 100.
 2. Following this testimony, the psalmist explains his profitable use of Scripture that we too might gain his superior wisdom and insight (as follows): (a) He had decided at some point in time to avoid sinning by heeding Scripture, v. 101. (b) As God became his instructor through thus applying Scripture, the psalmist kept himself from committing acts of sin, v. 102. (c) The results of these steps were the divine blessings of superior wisdom and insight: (i) The psalmist found real joy in simply doing what was biblically upright, v. 103. (ii) Also, he demonstrated himself to be superior in wisdom and insight in relating to other people, v. 104a. (iii) In finding both joy in heeding God and of possessing superior wisdom and insight, the psalmist was even more motivated to hate every nonbiblical pathway in life, v. 104b. (iv) This motivation would have enhanced his drive to meditate all the more on Scripture!
 3. [Note: "wisdom," is alignment to God's fixed moral order (Bruce. K. Waltke, "The Book of Proverbs and Ancient Wisdom Literature," Bib. Sac., 136:543, p. 221-238), so one's having to face and overcome evil foes by aligning to God's fixed moral order expressed in His Word of necessity leads to greater wisdom!]

Lesson: *The psalmist's superior wisdom and insight was caused by his discernment of good and evil becoming enhanced by always having to apply Scripture to offset constant enmity by an evil foe, 1 Cor. 2:6-15; Heb. 5:11-14.*

Application: *(1) If God lets us continually face evil foes, He is doing us a favor as it drives us to keep on applying Scripture to handle the trial, thus enhancing our growth in wisdom and insight. (2) It is thus to our advantage to meditate on Scripture before we face evil foes that we be ready to counter confusion and hurt when we face them!*