

## 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**

#### **O. Samech - Provision For Handling Persecution For Biblical Separation**

**(Psalm 119:113-120)**

#### **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 "Samech" in Psalm 119:112-120 explains how Scripture equips the believer to handle persecution faced that is the reaction for one's heeding biblical separation (as follows):

#### **II. Provision For Handling Persecution For Biblical Separation, Psalm 119:113-120.**

- A. The verse numbering system in the Hebrew text matches that of the English Bible (Kittel, Bib. Heb., p. 1084), so we stay with the English Bible's numbering system for this lesson.
- B. We thus translate Psalm 119:113-120 (as follows):
  1. "I have an aversion (*sane*, Ibid.; B. D. B., A Heb. and Eng. Lex. of the O. T., p. 971; H. A. W., Theol. Wrdbk. of the O. T., 1980, v. II, p. 879-880) for divided, half-hearted [in commitment to God, His truth] men (*se'ep*, Ibid., B. D. B., p. 704), but I love Your Law," Psalm 119:113.
  2. "You (emph. pron.) are my Hiding-place Shelter (*seter*, Ibid., p., 712) and my Personal Hand-held Warrior's Shield (*magen*, Ibid., p. 171; Roland deVaux, Ancient Israel: Vol. 1, Social Institutions, 1961, p. 244-245); I have put my hope in Your Word," Psalm 119:114.
  3. "Depart from me, you evildoers, that I might keep the commandments of my Elohim," Psalm 119:115.
  4. "Sustain me according to Your Word and I will live, shame me not in my [exercise of] hope," v. 116.
  5. "Uphold, sustain (*sa'ad*, Ibid., B. D. B., p. 703) me, and I will be delivered, and I will always have regard for Your decrees," Psalm 119:117.
  6. "You toss aside all who stray from Your decrees, because of the vanity of their deceit," Psalm 119:118.
  7. "All the wicked of the earth You exterminate as dross; because of this, I love Your statutes," v. 119.
  8. "From awed dread of You my flesh bristles up, and I respect Your verdicts," Psalm 119:120.
- C. We consider significant observations regarding this psalm (as follows):
  1. The psalmist observed that his love of God's Word and thus his obedience of it coincides with his aversion to those who are not fully committed to God and His truth so as fully to heed it, Psalm 119:113.
  2. This aversion creates a relationship break between the psalmist and the ungodly, so the ungodly persecute the psalmist out of hatred, what Psalm 119:114-120 reveals is sufficiently handled by the godly: (a) God nurtures the godly by His Word, countering the sufferings experienced by being hatefully persecuted (implied), v. 114, 116-117 (John 15:18-22): (i) God gives those who heed Scripture protection from ungodly persecutors, v. 114. (ii) He gives the godly survival in crises faced from ungodly foes, v. 116. (iii) God provides the godly deliverance in such crises, v. 117. (iv) In view of these blessings, the psalmist can afford to practice Biblical separation from the ungodly in obeying Scripture, v. 115. (b) God then works to encourage the upright amid their trials experienced from parting fellowship with the ungodly, v. 118-120: (i) God in time neutralizes and will destroy all who depart from His Word, v. 118-119a. (ii) This fact has a two-fold edification for the psalmist in reference to his relationships with others, v. 119b-120: (+) When he sees God dealing judgment out on those who are opposed to his godliness, he experiences relief and appreciates Scripture's reliability all the more, v. 119b. (+) When he sees the severity of God's judgment on the ungodly, he dreads God's punishment for sin, so he respects Scripture all the more and continues to live uprightly apart from sinning in relationship separation from the ungodly, v. 120.

***Lesson:*** *The psalmist's adherence to trusting and obeying Scripture created a break in his relationship with the ungodly that resulted in the ungodly persecuting the psalmist. However, God offset the persecution by protecting the godly from his foes and reminding him in Scripture of everyone's final solemn accountability to God.*

***Application:*** *(1) We must obey Scripture to avoid God's severe discipline. (2) However, doing so WILL cause us to break fellowship with the ungodly (John 15:18-22), resulting in our being persecuted by them (2 Timothy 3:12). (3) Nevertheless, as we stay focused on Scripture, God protects us from the effects of hateful persecution we face, making it worthwhile for us to keep heeding His Word and thus practicing Biblical separation from the ungodly.*