

PSALMS: DIARIES OF GODLY OLD TESTAMENT SAINTS

Psalm One Hundred And Nineteen (Caph) - Dealing With Prolonged, Exhaustive Trials (Psalm 119:81-88)

I. Introduction

- A. When the believer experiences a prolonged, exhausting trial, he may come to ask the following questions: "Am I to conclude from this difficult, long trial that I am in sin, or not? Am I to think I am being faithless or not? How can I **tell**, and what should I **do** about it?"
- B. Psalm 119:81-88, section "Caph" supplies answers to these questions and offers guidance as follows:

II. Dealing With Prolonged, Exhaustive Trials, Psalm 119:81-88.

- A. The psalmist describes his state of being exhausted due to a prolonged trial, Ps. 119:81-84.
 1. He is exhausted though he has still retained hope in God's Word, Ps. 119:81.
 2. His **hope** is beginning to wane as he wonders **when** God will ever comfort him, Ps. 119:82.
 3. Even the psalmist's self esteem is low, but he latches onto the claims of Scripture anyway, Ps. 119:83.
 4. In this position, the psalmist cries out for help to the Lord, fearing he might soon die, Ps. 119:84.
- B. Opposite this distress, the way toward a solution to the drain of the trial is offered in Ps. 119:85-86:
 1. Unlike his proud opponents who are fueling his difficulties, the psalmist is humble, Ps. 119:85a.
 2. Unlike his enemies who do not operate by the directives of God's Word, the psalmist lives in accord with Scripture, Ps. 119:85b with 81b, 83b.
 3. Unlike his enemies who persecute him without cause, the psalmist has just cause for his actions, v. 86a.
 4. Based upon these facts, the suffering psalmist confidently calls unto the Lord, expecting help, 119:86b.
- C. The psalmist then realizes the solution to his dilemma, Ps. 119:87-88:
 1. In the face of destruction from the trial, the psalmist **still** does not forsake God's Word **because** of the approach offered in Ps. 119:85-86, or section "B" above, Ps. 119:87.
 2. Accordingly, he anticipates God's loyal love (**chesed**) to him and to His promise to preserve him in the final analysis, and he will **continue** to keep God's Word, Ps. 119:88.

Lesson: *If we are exhausted from a prolonged trial, we (1) CANNOT expect God to come to our aid if we are (a) proud, (b) live independently of Scripture's guidance or (c) have no Biblical cause for our actions. Conversely, (2) we will SURVIVE such a trial if we (a) KNOW we are humble, (b) if we LEAN on Scripture for every move we make and (3) hold to BIBLICAL reasons for all we believe and do. That is because we are CONFIDENT that God will INEVITABLY help us! THIS CONFIDENCE IS BUILT ON AN ASSURANCE THAT GOD WANTS TO PROTECT HIS INTERESTS IN OUR DOING HIS WILL IN LIFE!*

Application: *(1) A clear conscience as we align our attitudes, actions and plans with what we know SCRIPTURE says is the best dose of encouragement anyone can have when experiencing draining, prolonged trials. Lack of such a clear conscience wanes one's confidence that GOD will ever help him, and THAT drains him of any motivation to keep going! Thus, keep a clear conscience with God at all times! (2) However, (a) it is not good enough JUST to have a clear conscience, for many IGNORANTLY operate and think outside of God's will: thus, make sure that EVERY thought, EVERY plan and EVERY motive we have is DICTATED by a CLEAR Biblical passage. This way we can be SURE that our pathway MUST be upheld by the Lord! (b) Note: if a QUESTION arises about a certain belief, act or attitude we have as we OURSELVES may not be SURE of the Scripture's teaching, GOD will hold us responsible to SEEK help from knowledgeable believers! Failure to be SURE when we have such doubts will be devastating to our CONFIDENCE, and we will miss God's blessing if we act OUTSIDE of His will and KNEW we MIGHT not be IN His will while we acted, compare Luke 19:20-26.*