

PSALMS: DIARIES OF GODLY OLD TESTAMENT SAINTS

Psalm One Hundred And Nineteen (Resh) - Scripture's Value To Believers Facing LEGAL Challenges (Psalm 119:153-160)

I. Introduction

- A. Though it may not happen but once in many years, when the believer ends up in a legal court battle in his dealings with others in life, the experience can be fearful and even threatening.
- B. God's Word is a valuable resource for those in legal challenges as Psalm 119:153-160 describes:

II. Scripture's Value To Believers Facing LEGAL Challenges, Psalm 119:153-160.

- A. The psalmist described a troubling legal court battle he faced in Psalm 119:153-154.
- B. However, he was encouraged by considering how he related to the God of Scripture opposite how his legal opponents poorly related to that God:
 - 1. As for the psalmist, he recalled (v. 153b), believed (v. 154b), sought out (v. 155b implied), adhered to (v. 157b), heeded (v. 158b implied) and loved (v. 159a) God's Word.
 - 2. Opposite this approach to Scripture, his many (v. 157a) legal opponents did not seek out Scripture's insight on life's matters (v. 155b) or obey it in his actions (v. 158b).
- C. The result of these differing orientations toward Scripture produced differing ways of relating to opponents in the case of the psalmist and his legal opponents:
 - 1. The opponents of the psalmist afflicted him (v. 153a), doggedly pursued him in great numbers (v. 157a) and dealt treacherously with the psalmist (v. 158a).
 - 2. Opposite this way of relating to opponents, the psalmist was exhausted over what his opponents were doing to him, so he asked God for help (v. 154b, 156b, 159b).
- D. Consequently, God sided with the psalmist's case against the efforts of his legal opponents:
 - 1. On the one hand, the psalmist knew he could expect the following blessings from God:
 - a. He could expect God to have compassion for him, Ps. 119:156a.
 - b. He could expect this compassion to lead God to plead his cause as a defense attorney, Ps. 119:154a.
 - c. He could expect God to work as a Sovereign Judge and Jury in his behalf, Ps. 119:156b.
 - d. He could expect those decisions to be true and eternally binding, Ps. 119:160.
 - 2. On the other hand, the opponents of the psalmist could expect trouble from God:
 - a. The psalmist's opponents would be bound for judgment as God loathed their cause and acts, v. 158.
 - b. They would find God far from helping them in the legal challenge against the psalmist, Ps. 119:155a.

Lesson: Exposing one's self to Scripture and submitting to its teaching in his life enables the godly to gain God's approval and control of the legal challenges he faces. One who OBEYS God hides his life's actions in GOD'S WILL so that any CHALLENGE to his actions in a court of law is a challenge against GOD'S WILL for him! In other words, if one seeks truly adequate legal protection, he should START by heeding the WORD of GOD so that by grace and without price he retains the best legal Attorney around, the Lord Jesus Christ (1 John 2:2)!

Application: (1) Recall that this psalm directly applies to the dispensation of the Law when one's earthly welfare was ALWAYS tied to his obeying the Law, Deut. 28:1-68. HOWEVER, believers in the CHURCH ERA who are UPRIGHT may be ALLOWED by GOD TO SUFFER INJUSTICES for purposes of GLORIFYING GOD, cf. Acts 14:19-22. Thus, for application in the CHURCH era, (a) God GENERALLY protects and provides for believers in court battles so that they end up with favorable decisions providing they OBEY His Word; (b) however, it may occasionally be God's will for the upright believer to be allowed to suffer an unjust court decision (cf. 1 Cor. 6:1, 7b). In such a time, he must YIELD to that unjust court decision as part of the permissive will of God, viewing the judge as a minister of God's (Rom. 13:1-2) and trust God to supply all he and his dependents need in the process to keep doing God's will, 1 Pet. 4:16, 19.