

PSALM 119.153-160

psalm
God's Word 119

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A Scriptorium Study from The Fellowship of Ailbe

Psalm 119.153-160

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Introduction to Psalm 119.153-160

Nine times throughout Psalm 119 the psalmist cries out for God to revive Him. Three of those occasions are here, in this 7 (*resh*) stanza. It's safe to say, I think, that the longer our psalmist labored over this magnificent poem, the more acutely aware he became of his own need for reviving grace.

It's against the backdrop of God's unfailing Word that the psalmist realizes his need for revival. God must do this for Him. Revival is a work of God's grace. Yet we must seek it, open our soul to receive it, and go forth into our day believing we have been revived and ready to draw on revival's grace and power.

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We hope you find this study of Psalm 119 instructive and helpful to equip you for your walk with and work for the Lord. Thank you for joining us.

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1 Grace for Your Time of Need

Pray Psalm 119.153, 154.

Consider my affliction and deliver me,
For I do not forget Your law.
Plead my cause and redeem me;
Revive me according to Your word.

Sing Psalm 119.153, 154.

(Regent Square: *Angels from the Realms of Glory*)

Lord, look down on my affliction, see my wounded, weary soul!
Plead my cause, redeem and save; deliver me and make me whole!
O revive us! O revive us! Let Your Word our lives control!

Read Psalm 119.153-160; meditate on verses 153, 154.

Preparation

1. What did the psalmist want God to do?
2. What seems to have been the circumstances in which he sought this?

Meditation

Here at the beginning of the γ (*resh*) stanza of Psalm 119, our psalmist seems to have been in distress. He was afflicted and in need of an advocate. We can imagine that it was the usual suspects – mockers, scorners, the wicked – who were giving him a hard time (cf. vv. 155, 157, 158). He would have preferred not to have these people breathing down his neck, but he understood that in this world those who believe in the Lord will have tribulation (Jn. 16.33).

What to do? He turned to the Lord in prayer, calling on Him to “consider” his affliction, “plead” his cause, and “redeem” and “revive” him. Note that he did not imprecate for the Lord to bust the chops of his foes. There will always be foes. The way to thrive in the face of them is not to break them down but to rise above them. And this requires grace, which, happily, our Father has in abundance for all who come seeking it (Heb. 4.16).

All the different supplications of these two verses are seeking forms of grace. For God even to “consider” us is amazing enough (cf. Ps. 8.5-8). That He would advocate for us, arguing in our defense, is equally remarkable (cf. 1 Jn. 2.1, 2). To “redeem” us from our sins – who can fathom the enormity of grace that entails? And to “revive” us day by day? God never tires of extending His grace to us. The more of it we seek, the more we will receive, and the more we will have to extend to others, that praise and thanks may rise to God (2 Cor. 4.15).

And note the *bona fides* our psalmist pleaded as testimony to his faith: He did not forget the Law of God (v. 153), and he desired to be revived only in line with the teaching of God’s Word (v. 154). He doubtless knew that it might be the will of God for him to suffer affliction (Phil. 1.29), but he was willing to receive whatever God sent his way, as long as it came gift-wrapped in grace.

Treasures Old and New: Matthew 13.52; Psalm 119.162.

The distressed psalmist was, indeed, in need of an advocate. As Job lamented about God, “For He is not a man, as I am, that I may answer Him, and that we should go to court together. Nor is there any mediator between us, who may lay his hand on us both” (Job 9.32, 33).

But now there is! Jesus Christ is that Someone Who mediates between God and man. Years ago, in a Bible study under the teaching of Pat Hunter, she—wanting to use a visual to drive this truth home—stood between two of us, and placed her hands on each of our shoulders, representing the Daysman (KJV), the umpire, the arbiter, betwixt. The reconciler between God and man. Over forty years later, it is still vivid in my memory.

Jesus, when handed the book of Isaiah to read in the synagogue, chose the passage proclaiming this about Himself: “The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted; to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed; to proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD” (Lk. 4.18, 19; Is. 61.1, 2).

In our time of need for grace – our need for an Advocate, Daysman, and Umpire Savior, to stand between our sinful selves and the Holy God – Jesus Christ was provided. “But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. And not only that, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation” (Rom. 5.8-11). God considered our plight and redeemed, delivered, and revived us so that we will not forget His Law, will stay fixed in His Word and will share this grace with our Personal Mission Field.

*O, the love that drew salvation's plan!
O, the grace that brought it down to man!
O, the mighty gulf that God did span
At Calvary!
Mercy there was great, and grace was free;
Pardon there was multiplied to me;
There my burdened soul found liberty,
At Calvary.
(Newell/Towner, 1895)*

For reflection

1. In our day and our culture, much of the affliction and oppression we experience is spiritual, and is wrought by spiritual forces of wickedness. What forms should you expect that to take?
2. How can remembering God's Word help us to stand firm against oppressors?
3. What has Jesus done to reconcile you to God? How do you experience that reconciliation?

The closer we cleave to the word of God, both as our rule and as our stay, the more assurance we have of deliverance. Christ is the Advocate of his people, their Redeemer. Those who were quickened by his Spirit and grace, when they were dead in trespasses and sins, often need to have the work of grace revived in them, according to the word of promise. Matthew Henry (1662-1714), Commentary on Psalm 119.153, 154

Pray Psalm 119.160.

Take a few moments to thank God for “the entirety” of His Word – the Law, the histories, the wisdom literature, the prophets, the gospels, Acts, the epistles, and Revelation. Find one thing in each section to give thanks for as you pray.

Psalm 119.153-160

Sing Psalm 119.160.

(Regent Square: *Angels from the Realms of Glory*)

All Your Word is true and all Your righteous judgments will endure.

I will look to You and walk within Your Law forevermore.

O revive us! O revive us by Your Word so strong and sure.

2 Proof of Salvation

Pray Psalm 119.155.

Salvation is far from the wicked,
For they do not seek Your statutes.

Sing Psalm 119.155, 156.

(Regent Square: *Angels from the Realms of Glory*)

They who do not seek Your statutes saving grace shall never know.
For Your tender mercy, Jesus, I will to Your judgments go.
O revive us! O revive us! Let Your grace and mercy flow!

Read Psalm 119.153-160; meditate on verse 155.

Preparation

1. Who does not seek the Lord's statutes?
2. What does that say about them?

Meditation

Can we know whether we are saved? Is it possible to be assured of salvation? To be confident in the Lord that we are redeemed, forgiven, born again, and on the path of sanctification and glory?

Surely every believer will affirm that we may know we are saved. But how? Merely because we prayed some prayer or went forward in a meeting? Or go to church? Sing in the choir? Read our Bibles?

These, of course, may be important indicators of salvation. But look again at what our psalmist says: Salvation continues to elude those who do not seek the statutes – the Law, the Word – of God. The Hebrew verb *דָּרַשׁ* (*darash*) is rather more richly nuanced than what the translation “seek” implies. It means to “resort to”, “read repeatedly”, “search out”, “pursue”, and even “practice”. They know they are saved who diligently pursue greater depths of understanding and obedience, seeking the knowledge of the Lord and His will by resorting to all His Word, including His Law. They do not seek God's Law in order to *be* saved but *because they are* saved and thus eagerly seek to know Him Who has saved them.

If we have no heart for God's Law, little delight in His Word, and not much evidence of consistent good works (Heb. 6.9), then we have little to show as proof that we are saved. We may insist that we are saved and hope it is true, but here is the true measure of those in whom God has wrought a saving work: They seek Him in His Word. They want to know Jesus. They want to glorify the Father. They want to be filled with the Spirit. They want to live according to His statutes. So they pursue Him daily in His Word, delighting in all His revelation and being transformed increasingly into His likeness (2 Cor. 3.12-18).

Salvation is far from those who do not seek God's Law. But it is the near, dear, and cherished possession of those who seek more of it in all His Word.

Treasures Old and New: Matthew 13.52; Psalm 119.162

If salvation is far from the wicked because they do not seek God's Word, then it only makes sense that those who seek God's Word because they love Him, are close to Him. As Psalm 119.41 says, “Let Your mercies come also to me, O LORD—Your salvation according to Your word.”

It is a bafflement that some Christians do not ravenously seek God's Word. If we are honest with ourselves, we must acknowledge that the people we love we long to be with, and we strive to do so. The things we like to do, we do as much as we can. Even daily nourishment is sought because we hunger and thirst for it. Can

you imagine not caring one way or the other about spending time with your beloved or with your children? Or your friends? In fact, you do not seek, resort to, search out, or pursue them at all. Or at best, your relationships with them are ho hum, oh well, or whatever. Where is the proof of our love?

A habit is formed by doing something repeatedly; and reading and meditating in God's word will become a habit the more we do it. And the more we read, the more we want to meditate and pray; then we're hooked. We are caught up in an eternal love relationship with the Creator of the world that we just cannot seem to get enough of. "Your words were found, and I ate them, and Your word was to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart; for I am called by Your name, O LORD God of hosts" (Jer. 15.16). "Set your hearts on the words...all the words of this law. For it is not a futile thing for you, because it is your life..." (Deut. 32.46, 47).

"I love the LORD, because He has heard my voice and my supplications. Because He has inclined His ear to me, therefore I will call upon Him as long as I live" (Ps. 116.1, 2).

"And this is eternal life [salvation], that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent" (Jn. 17.3).

"Salvation is far from those who do not seek God's Law. But it is the near, dear, and cherished possession of those who seek more of it in all His Word." There is the proof of our love.

For reflection

1. How would you describe your own attitude toward the Word of God? Do you hunger for it? Delight in it? Cherish the time you have with it?
2. What are some things that can distract us from loving God and His Word? How can we tell when we are being distracted?
3. What can believers do to help one another love the Word of God more deeply?

The wicked not only do not God's statutes, but they do not even seek them. They flatter themselves that they are going to heaven; but the longer they persist in sin, the further it is from them. Matthew Henry (1662-1714), *Commentary on Psalm 119.155*

Pray Psalm 119.159, 160.

Tell the Lord what you love about His Word. Be specific. Talk with Him about your favorite books of the Bible, favorite writers, cherished passages or truths, and precious promises. Rejoice before Him in His Word.

Sing Psalm 119.159, 160.

(Regent Square: *Angels from the Realms of Glory*)

Lord, consider how I love the precepts of Your holy Word!

All Your Word is truth forever, and your judgments, righteous Lord.

O revive us! O revive us by Your kindness, loving Lord!

3 That's Living

Pray Psalm 119.156.

Great *are* Your tender mercies, O LORD;
Revive me according to Your judgments.

Sing Psalm 119.155, 156.

(Regent Square: *Angels from the Realms of Glory*)

They who do not seek Your statutes saving grace shall never know.
For Your tender mercy, Jesus, I will to Your judgments go.
O revive us! O revive us! Let Your grace and mercy flow!

Read Psalm 119.153-160; meditate on verse 156.

Preparation

1. For what did the psalmist pray?
2. On what grounds did he seek this?

Meditation

The Hebrew word “revive” is literally, “cause me to live.” But what does it mean to live? Is living merely a biological phenomenon – heart rate, brain waves, digestion, respiration, mobility, and so forth? Or is there more to living than mere materiality?

In Biblical terms, living is indeed a bodily function. But the believer doesn't want merely to live physically. We want to live in a particular manner, according to the judgments of God. God knows better than we do about everything. Whatever He judges about life, relationships, morality, work, culture – everything – is what will be good and very good (Gen. 1.31). So this is how the believer wants to live, to have the entirety of our material existence lined up with, drawing nurture from, being shaped by, and expressing whatever God judges to be good.

And for this, we must turn to His Law and all His Word (Rom. 7.12; 2 Tim. 3.16, 17).

But on what basis can we even do that? Only on His tender mercies! Oh, see how good and loving God is, friends! Not only does He provide all we need to know true, full, abundant, and eternal life; and not only does He stand ready to bring us into more of that life day by day; but His mercies are so many and so great that they continuously overcome our failings and frailties to increase and enlarge us into Jesus. For He has hidden our lives in Himself, that we may, by His mercies and His Word, continue to increase in Jesus more and more (Col. 3.3; 2 Cor. 3.12-18).

Yeah. That's living. And that's worth praying for more of every day.

Treasures Old and New: Matthew 13.52; Psalm 119.162

To increase daily in our likeness of Jesus should be the goal of every believer. After all, real life is only to be found in Him; and in pleasing our heavenly Father. And the only way that we can please Him is through believing in His Son (Jn. 14.6) and following His judgments.

Much displeasure is brought to God by our disobedience, and much delight by our obedience.:

“Those who are of a perverse heart are an abomination to the LORD, but the blameless in their ways are His delight” (Prov. 11.20).

“Lying lips are an abomination to the LORD, but those who deal truthfully are His delight” (Prov. 12.22).

“The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD, but the prayer of the upright is His delight”

(Prov. 15.8).

The tender mercies of the LORD are great. They are overwhelming. They exceed all expectation. To dwell in His tender mercies, to stay within the boundaries where His love can reach and bless us, we must live according to His Law. Only there is real life to be found. (Ps. 119.156; Jude 21 TLB; Deut. 32.46, 47).

“Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!
How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out!” (Rom. 11.33).

As Moses said to the children of Israel, he says to us, as well: “Therefore be careful to observe them [the judgments of God]; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples who will hear all these statutes, and say, ‘Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.’ For what great nation is there that has God so near to it, as the LORD our God is to us, for whatever reason we may call upon Him? And what great nation is there that has such statutes and righteous judgments as are in all this law which I set before you this day?” (Deut. 4.6-8).

“The LORD is gracious and full of compassion, slow to anger and great in mercy.
The LORD is good to all, and His tender mercies are over all His works” (Ps. 145.8, 9).

“That’s Living!”

*Trust and obey, for there’s no other way
To be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey.*
(Sammis/Towner, 1887)

For reflection

1. What’s the difference between God’s mercy and God’s grace? Why do we need both in all our times of need?
2. Why can we have confidence in the face of God’s judgments (Rom. 8.1)?
3. Why do we need to pray that God will revive us – cause us to live?

If we imagine that God makes his promises because he is bound to do it, or because we have deserved it, doubting or mistrust will steal upon our minds, which will shut the gate against our prayers. But if we are thoroughly persuaded that the sole cause by which God is moved to promise us salvation is the mercy inherent in his own nature, we will approach him without hesitation or doubt, because he has bound himself to us of his own accord. John Calvin (1506-1564), *Commentary on Psalm 119.156*

Pray Psalm 119.153, 154

Pray that God will revive you with a greater measure of His salvation and more power of His Spirit for everything you do today.

Sing Psalm 119.153, 154.

(Regent Square: *Angels from the Realms of Glory*)

Lord, look down on my affliction, see my wounded, weary soul!
Plead my cause, redeem and save; deliver me and make me whole!
O revive us! O revive us! Let Your Word our lives control!

4 Balancing Act

Pray Psalm 119.157, 158.

Many are my persecutors and my enemies,
Yet I do not turn from Your testimonies.
I see the treacherous, and am disgusted,
Because they do not keep Your word.

Sing Psalm 119.157, 158.

(Angel's Story: Angels from the Realms of Glory)

Many foes and persecutors from Your Word have turned away.
Though they threaten to undo me, yet Your truth will I obey.
O revive us! O revive us, Lord, our Rock, our Strength, our Stay.

Read Psalm 119.153-160; meditate on verses 157, 158.

Preparation

1. How did the psalmist feel about those who are “treacherous”?
2. Where did he turn?

Meditation

There will always be people who don't like us. They don't like what we believe and stand for, and they don't like that we won't endorse or approve their lawless behavior. They may try to make our lives uncomfortable or even difficult. Or worse.

What to do? First, don't suppose that in this world we should not have tribulation (Jn. 16.33). Very often afflictions will come from people in our family, at our workplace, in our school, or in our community – people we can't avoid. We need to learn the right way to respond to such situations.

And that means not backing away from our convictions in the hope of easing their threats or chiding. We must rather turn even more fervently to cling to the Word of God in the face of those who mock and scorn us because we do (v. 157). Mockers come and go; the Word of our God stands forever.

Moreover, we must love and do good to those who abuse us (Matt. 5.43-48). We must not approve their behavior, and we must not conceal our disgust with their treachery against God and His Word. This is a tough balancing act: love the sinner, loathe the sin. Jesus did it for us, and in His power and Name we can do it for others.

No wonder the psalmist prays three times in this stanza, “Revive me!”

Treasures Old and New: Matthew 13.52; Psalm 119.162

There are a lot of people who persecute me for my beliefs: people in my family, church, workplace, even so-called friends. I guess they could even be called enemies. But can they shake my faith in God? No, never! They cannot make me turn from God's testimonies. So, then I look around and I observe others who I would deem treacherous. They are treacherous towards anyone who disagrees with their ungodly behavior. And why would they be considered ungodly? Because they do not keep God's Word (Ps. 119.157, 158 – my paraphrase).

Even though I'm persecuted and have enemies, I still have not forgotten God, nor have I gone against anything in His covenant. My heart has not turned back from my decision to follow Him; and the path I follow in life is His way. If I had forgotten the name of God or His laws, or decided to live in a

way that seemed as if I was following another god, wouldn't God know that? Well, yes, He would. Because He knows the secrets of my heart (Ps. 44.17, 18, 20, my paraphrase).

Paul, when confronted with his persecutors and enemies, and knowing their desire to put him in chains and cause him many tribulations, said, "But none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God" (Acts 20.24). I long to have that same attitude. One that declares that the only thing that matters is to glorify God by following Him. Determinedly—for the there and then, here and now.

"Moreover," as Samuel said to those not following God's decrees, "as for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the LORD in ceasing to pray for you; but I will teach you the good and the right way. Only fear the LORD, and serve Him in truth with all your heart; for consider what great things He has done for you" (1Sam.12.23, 24).

In my Personal Mission Field, Lord, help me to love and do good to those who don't follow Your law; never confusing love with a need to approve of their treacherous behavior against You (Ps. 51.4).

And most importantly:

"Jesus did it for us, and in His power and Name we can do it for others."

This is the Balancing Act that pleases God.

For reflection

1. How does God use persecution and affliction in our lives?
2. How should we respond when others seek to oppress or afflict us?
3. How can believers encourage one another when affliction comes?

A man, steady in the way of his duty, though he may have many enemies, needs to fear none. Those that hate sin truly, hate it as sin, as a transgression of the law of God, and a breaking of his word. Matthew Henry (1662-1714), Commentary on Psalm 119.157, 158

Pray Psalm 119.153, 154.

What temptations, testings, trials, or troubles can you anticipate in the day ahead. Give them all the Lord, and call on Him for grace to meet all your needs.

Sing Psalm 119.153, 154.

(Angel's Story: Angels from the Realms of Glory)

Lord, look down on my affliction, see my wounded, weary soul!
Plead my cause, redeem and save; deliver me and make me whole!
O revive us! O revive us! Let Your Word our lives control!

5 What God Sees

Pray Psalm 119.159.

Consider how I love Your precepts;
Revive me, O LORD, according to Your lovingkindness.

Sing Psalm 119.159.

(Angel's Story: *Angels from the Realms of Glory*)

Lord, consider how I love the precepts of Your holy Word!
All Your Word is truth forever, and your judgments, righteous Lord.
O revive us! O revive us by Your kindness, loving Lord!

Read Psalm 119.153-160; meditate on verses 159.

Preparation

1. What did the psalmist seek from the Lord?
2. What was his attitude toward God's Word?

Meditation

Here's the great thing about God: He's always watching us!

Here's the scary thing about God: He's always watching us!

The verb "consider" in our text is literally "see". The psalmist says, "See how I love Your precepts." Now of course, God looks on the heart where He can "see" whether it's true that we love His Word. But He also looks on our outward life; and since true faith is both inward assurance and outward evidence (Heb. 11.1), God is looking for indicators that love for His Word is both internally grounded and outwardly visible.

And we know that, both inwardly and outwardly, our love for the Word of God needs improvement. The psalmist knew this, too, so he wisely called on God to "revive" him, that is, to grant him more of the great salvation of the Lord and, thus, more love for God's Word.

It's great and scary to know that God sees us inside and out. But we know what He's looking for: evidence! He wants to see our soul pulsing with delight in the Scriptures, and to note the evidence of Scripture's power for love issuing in all our words and deeds. When we want this as much as God does, we'll be right where we're supposed to be.

Completely happy and fulfilled (Ps. 119.1-3).

Treasures Old and New: Matthew 13.52; Psalm 119.162

Most Saturday mornings in years gone by, the whole Moore family cleaned house. Kevin, Kristy, Ashley, and Casey all had to do a deep clean of their rooms (well, you know, Legos off the floor, clean sheets, beds made, floors vacuumed) and keep the shared bathroom clean enough that just in case tetanus shots weren't up to date there wouldn't be a problem.

And in order to do anything else on their day off, the room had to get an OK. And that's when the tiny struggles began because, shocker, they didn't buckle right down and get busy with the work at hand. There might have even been just a little dawdling involved.

"Come see my room. What do you think? Consider how clean it is." My favorite excuse was Ashley's when her space got a thumbs down. "Well, I just need to put the finishing touches on it."

Are we really bold enough to say to God, “Consider how I love Your precepts?”
“Come see, God, how I spend quality time in Your Word.” “Observe how diligently I read Your Law.”
“See how I follow Your commands!” Do you think we will get the OK from God? A thumbs up from Him?
Or are we dawdling a bit with really getting down to business with God’s Word? Do you think we might even
have to say, “I just need to put on the finishing touches”?

Truly, I miss those Saturday rituals and the time we had together as a family. And why do I miss that time so
much? Well, because I love those children so much.

That is the same reason we can say to God, even in our imperfections, “Consider how I love Your precepts.”
Because then in the same breath we say, “Revive us, according to Your lovingkindness.”

We know we are loved by Him. We know that He wants us revived even more than we want it. And we know
that we are forgiven for our many shortcomings. “For thus says the High and Lofty One who inhabits
eternity, whose name is Holy; ‘I dwell in the high and holy place, with him who has a contrite and humble
spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones’ (Is. 57.15).

We are overwhelmed with His love and salvation: “I will mention the lovingkindnesses of the LORD and the
praises of the LORD, according to all that the LORD has bestowed on us...” (Is. 63.7).

Even when we are still “putting the finishing touches” on the working out of our own salvation with fear and
trembling (Phil.2.12), we can rest assured of God’s eternal love for us. What God sees first when He looks at
us is Jesus, and our redemption through Him. But then He sees us with eyes of love, loving Him back as best
we can. “We love Him because He first loved us” (1 Jn. 4.19).

So, let’s get busy, and clean our rooms, so we’ll be ready to go out into our Personal Mission Field and share
this reviving love with those who need to hear it!

For reflection

1. Why is it important to bear in mind that God sees us at all times?
2. Why do we need to remember that He sees us in Jesus?
3. Outline a daily regimen for making sure that your “room is clean” before the Lord always.

*He encourages himself from the consolatory consideration, that God, when he sees his own people sore pressed, comes forward,
seasonably to afford them succor. John Calvin (1509-1564), Commentary on Psalm 119.151*

Pray Psalm 119.160.

All Scripture is inspired and true. Wait in silence before the Lord. Ask Him to show any areas of Scripture
you have neglected or any with which you need to become more familiar. Thank Him.

Sing Psalm 119.160.

(Angel’s Story: *Angels from the Realms of Glory*)

All Your Word is true and all Your righteous judgments will endure.

I will look to You and walk within Your Law forevermore.

O revive us! O revive us by Your Word so strong and sure.

6 All Scripture

Pray Psalm 119.160.

The entirety of Your word *is* truth,
And every one of Your righteous judgments *endures* forever.

Sing Psalm 119.160.

(Angel's Story: *Angels from the Realms of Glory*)

All Your Word is true and all Your righteous judgments will endure.

I will look to You and walk within Your Law forevermore.

O revive us! O revive us by Your Word so strong and sure.

Psalm 119.153-160; meditate on verse 160.

Preparation

1. What did the psalmist say about God's Word?

2. How much of God's Word did he include in this?

Meditation

Our text reads literally, "From the beginning of Your Word: truth." From the time God began to speak His Word, He spoke the truth. Hence, "The entirety" of His Word is true and reliable. Or, as Paul wrote, "All Scripture...is breathed by God and profitable..." because it is true (2 Tim. 3.16).

All Scripture. Not just those parts with which you might be familiar or find precious for one reason or another. To neglect any of God's Word is to deprive ourselves of truth which can profit us for teaching, reproof, correction, training in righteousness, and good works.

And we need not worry that God might change His mind. All Scripture is for all time. Forever. This is because it partakes of the very essence of God Himself, His righteousness. As God neither changes nor can fail, likewise His judgments reflect His very nature. The Law of God is holy and righteous and good (Rom. 7.12), and it always will be.

All of Scripture, for all time, for all the righteousness we need to partake of the divine essence (2 Pet. 1.4). His Word is profitable, indeed.

Treasures Old and New: Matthew 13.52; Psalm 119.162

"All Scripture...To neglect any of God's Word is to deprive ourselves of truth which can profit us for teaching, reproof, correction, training in righteousness, and good works."

King Saul and his son Jonathan, according to 1 Samuel 13, irritated the Philistines by attacking one of their garrisons. It doesn't tell us why they felt it necessary to do so, they just did. Anyway, the prophet Samuel was supposed to show up at a certain time to bring a burnt offering and peace offerings to the LORD. Saul's soldiers were getting restless and scattering from him so he thought it would be a great idea if he himself offered the burnt offering. Turns out, as soon as he had finished doing this travesty, Samuel showed up and of course asked, "What have you done?" So, Saul offered a variety of weak excuses with lots of equivocation, and then ended his monologue with, "Therefore I felt compelled..."

He felt "compelled" to do what he wanted to do when he wanted to do it because he wanted to do it that way. This neglect of God's Word is what lost him his kingship.

Was he uninformed about God's Word? I daresay, he knew God's Word. Maybe even the entirety of it. But

he neglected to follow the truth of the Word that he knew. And this changed the course of the rest of his life.

“Your righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and Your law is truth” (Ps. 119.142).

“You are near, O LORD, and all Your commandments are truth” (Ps. 119.151).

“The entirety of Your word is truth, and every one of Your righteous judgments endures forever” (Ps. 119.160).

If we know the Ten Commandments (Ex. 20.1-17), and we know what Jesus said about that Law (Matt. 22.37-40), then we know the enduring truth of God’s righteous judgments (Ps. 119.160). All of them. We are knowledgeably informed of God’s truth and His desire for us to be correct and corrected in His righteousness. We are without excuse. “For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse” (Rom. 1.20).

There is, therefore, no disobedience that we are “compelled” to do. We must never neglect any of His truth for our own purposes; no matter how justified we might feel. As with Saul, it makes a difference in the work we can do in our Personal Mission Field.

John guides us into truthful and useful living: “We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one. And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us an understanding, that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life. Little children, keep yourselves from idols” (1 Jn. 5.19-21). And keep yourselves in all Scripture: to do it (Ps. 119.112).

For reflection

1. What can you do to make sure you are gaining the benefit God intends from *all* His Word?
2. What should you do when you feel “compelled” to do something other than what God’s Word requires?
3. What can you do to encourage your fellow believers to have more confidence in the Word of God?

Let us then retain this sense, That from the time when God began to speak he has always been faithful to his promises, and has never disappointed the hope of his people; and that the course of this faithfulness has been so uniform, that from the beginning even to the end his word is true and faithful. John Calvin (1509-1564), *Commentary on Psalm 119.160*

Pray Psalm 119.159.

Tell God how much you love His Word. And why. Ask Him to keep His Word lively in your soul throughout the day ahead.

Sing Psalm 119.159.

(Angel’s Story: *Angels from the Realms of Glory*)

Lord, consider how I love the precepts of Your holy Word!

All Your Word is truth forever, and your judgments, righteous Lord.

O revive us! O revive us by Your kindness, loving Lord!

7 Revive Us!

Pray Psalm 119.154, 156, 159.

Plead my cause and redeem me;
Revive me according to Your word...
Great are Your tender mercies, O LORD;
Revive me according to Your judgments...
Consider how I love Your precepts;
Revive me, O LORD, according to Your lovingkindness.

Sing Psalm 119.153-159.

(Angel's Story: *Angels from the Realms of Glory*)

Lord, look down on my affliction, see my wounded, weary soul!
Plead my cause, redeem and save; deliver me and make me whole!
O revive us! O revive us! Let Your Word our lives control!

They who do not seek Your statutes saving grace shall never know.
For Your tender mercy, Jesus, I will to Your judgments go.
O revive us! O revive us! Let Your grace and mercy flow!

Many foes and persecutors from Your Word have turned away.
Though they threaten to undo me, yet Your truth will I obey.
O revive us! O revive us, Lord, our Rock our Strength, our Stay.

Lord, consider how I love the precepts of Your holy Word!
All Your Word is truth forever, and your judgments, righteous Lord.
O revive us! O revive us by Your kindness, loving Lord!

Read Psalm 119.153-160; meditate on verses 154, 156, 159.

Preparation

1. What did the psalmist want God to do for him?
2. What would be the basis for that?

Meditation

Nine times throughout Psalm 119 the psalmist cries out for God to revive Him. Three of those occasions are here, in this 7 (*resh*) stanza. It's safe to say, I think, that the longer our psalmist labored over this magnificent poem, the more acutely aware he became of his own need for reviving grace.

Indeed, these heartfelt cries for revival in verses 154, 156, 159 strike me as the denouement of this entire psalm. Themes we've seen to this point throughout the psalm – affliction, salvation, the wicked, and of course, God's Law – recur here and are all swallowed up by and resolved in the utter reliability, truthfulness, and perdurability of the Word of God (v. 160). We can almost sense a sigh of relief at the end of this stanza in this confident, even defiant, testimony of faith in God and His Word. From this point of urgent pleading, the psalm begins to wind down to a surprising, even anticlimactic end.

It's against the backdrop of God's unfailing Word that the psalmist realizes his need for revival. He longs to be more fully and consistently in the shelter of God's Word (v. 154), to know the judgments of God for all aspects of life (v. 156), and to increase in the lovingkindness of God for working his Personal Mission Field (v. 159). God must do this for Him. Revival is a work of God's grace. Yet we must seek it, open our soul to receive it, and go forth into our day believing we have been revived and ready to draw on revival's grace and

power.

Let it be your daily cry: “Revive me!”

Treasures Old and New: Matthew 13.52; Psalm 119.162

“Revive me according to Your lovingkindness, so that I may keep the testimony of Your mouth” (Ps. 119.88).

The precursor to revival is repentance. And God’s lovingkindness woos us to repent when we feel safe in His love. But repentance must result in our sincere intention and effort henceforth to keep God’s Law.

Previously unbeknownst to me, another way our children used to “clean” on Saturdays was just revealed by Kristy, who informed me after reading Friday’s *Scriptorium*, that she used to just turn on the vacuum and let it run for 10 minutes. Mind you, not moving it around; just letting us hear the noise of perceived activity. I must admit, it made me laugh. Now. But I’m not sure how amused I would have been at the time.

Really though, isn’t that the best example yet for insincere repentance? We make all the outward signs and noise of spirituality but there is no actual remorse or turning from our sin to be thoroughly cleaned and revived.

Since the entirety of God’s Word is enduringly true, and it is the quintessential definition of perdurability—the state or quality of being enduring, long-lasting, having everlastingness, and extremely durable; and since “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever” (Heb. 13.8); and God has always, and will always, hate sin; and we have all sinned, and the payment for that is death (Rom. 3.23; 6.23); wouldn’t it make sense for us to be truly repentant of our sins, turn from them, and then do the good works that God has prepared for us to do? (Eph. 2.10) And yes, “the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom. 6.23), but we have been given this incredible gift so that we keep and do God’s Laws (Ps. 119.88). This is the whole of salvation.

Our Personal Mission Field needs us to turn on the vacuum of repentance and do the cleaning up and turning away from sin, so that our lives will daily be *Revived!* and useful in the Kingdom work set out for us. We dare not just make “spiritual noise” like sounding brass and clanging cymbals. (1 Cor. 13.1)

We must be thoroughly revived!

For reflection

1. How would you explain what the psalmist means by being revived?
2. What is repentance? How is repentance related to God’s Law? To revival?
3. What might be some of the effects of revival in a believer’s Personal Mission Field?

Those who were quickened by his Spirit and grace, when they were dead in trespasses and sins, often need to have the work of grace revived in them, according to the word of promise... The psalmist begs for God’s reviving, quickening grace. Matthew Henry (1662-1714), Commentary on Psalm 119.154, 156

Pray Psalm 119.160.

Pray that God will show you from His Word specific areas of your life where you need to be revived. Call on Him to direct your steps for revival today.

Sing Psalm 119.160.

(Angel’s Story: Angels from the Realms of Glory)

All Your Word is true and all Your righteous judgments will endure.

Psalm 119.153-160

I will look to You and walk within Your Law forevermore.
O revive us! O revive us by Your Word so strong and sure.

Questions for Reflection or Discussion

1. What is revival? Why do we need to seek it daily?
2. What conditions in your daily life and your Personal Mission Field make revival especially necessary?
3. How does God's Word factor into our seeking and realizing revival?
4. What do we mean by saying that revival is a work of grace?
5. What's the most important lesson you've learned from this part of our study of Psalm 119?

For prayer:

The Fellowship of Ailbe

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Thank you.