

Heartfelt Meditation & Hatred of Evil

Psalm 119:113-120

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Introduction: The people of God have always had enemies in this world. This section of Psalm 119 (:113-120) gives an account of dealing with our enemies & an assurance of depending upon our God in this life. The verses each start with a word beginning with the 15th letter of the Hebrew alphabet, “*samech*”. Warren Wiersbe suggests we find 4 assurances here which assures us of how to “face the enemy with courage & win the battle: God protects His people (:113-115); God upholds the obedient (:116-117); God rejects the wicked (:118-119); & God alone should be feared (:120).” I see also 4 divisions of this section by noting: the psalmist’s proclamations, his prayers, his pronouncements, & his perspective. Might we take heart in the battles of this life with confidence in the Lord’s provision & His protection.

I. The **proclamations** of the psalmist (:113-115)

A. “*I hate...*” (:113) > [preterite verb – “I have hated & still hate”]

1. “*Vain thoughts... I love Thy law*” – A love of good is reflected in a hatred of evil (cf. Psalm 97:10). “How can one be regarded as prepared or preparing for heaven, whose mind is a receptacle for worldly, carnal, proud, spiteful, impure, roving thoughts?” (Plumer).
2. “Both wicked men & wicked thoughts of every grade are odious to the pious. But they have a different affection for the law. They love it” (Plumer). Illustrate: Jimmy Carter.

Application: See II Corinthians 10:5 & consider Matthew 16:15-23.

B. “*I hope...*” (:114) > [a confident, trustful expectation]

1. “*My hiding place & my shield*” – The hiding place is for meditation (kept *from* danger); the shield is for protection (preservation *in* danger).
2. “This world never understands the secret preservation of God’s people. The hand that holds them cannot be perceived by our senses, yet is omnipotent” (Plumer),

Summary: “Those who depend on God’s promise shall have the benefit of His power & be taken under His special protection” (Henry).

C. “*I will keep (hold)...*” (:115) >

1. “*Depart...ye evildoers*” – To be free from their corrupting influence. Compare & contrast I Corinthians 15:33 with Psalm 119:63. And see Matthew 7:23.
2. “He would be rid of their presence, that they may no longer hinder him from keeping the law, by evil example or even by actual persecution” (Kirkpatrick).

Summary: “God’s law is our pleasure when the God of the law is our God” (Spurgeon).

II. The **prayers** of the psalmist (:116-117)

A. “*Uphold me...*” (:116) >

1. The word “*uphold*” means to sustain or to establish.
2. The word “*ashamed*” means disappointed or confounded. The psalmist prays the he not “be put to shame by the failure of his hope of deliverance” (Kirkpatrick).

B. “*Hold Thou me up...*” (:117) >

1. A different word (“*hold*”) than in verse 116. The word here means to comfort or refresh.
2. “If we are enabled thus to regard God’s Word continually, it is because we are upheld always” (Plumer).

III. The **pronouncements** of the psalmist (:118-119)

A. The wicked are "trodden down" (:118) >

1. "*Their deceit is falsehood*" – "The principles with which they deceive themselves & mislead others are false & baseless, therefore God rejects them" (Kirkpatrick).
Illustration: The unsaved today?
2. "Proud persecutors trample upon His people, but, sooner or later, Jehovah will trample upon them" (Plumer).

B. The wicked are tried '*like dross*' (:119) >

1. "*Thou puttest away...*" – "God removes the wicked, as a refiner of metals throws away the dross" (Kirkpatrick).
2. "*Puttest*" is in the preterite – "God has always been acting thus, is doing so still, & will preeminently do so in the last day" (Plumer).

IV. The **perspective** of the psalmist (:120)

A. The fear of the Lord >

1. "*Trembleth*" – "Shudders for awe of Thee, literally, of the hair standing on end with fright" (Kirkpatrick). See Job 4:15.
2. The Book of Proverbs defines & demonstrates "*the fear of the Lord.*"

B. The judgments of the Lord >

1. The acts of judgments upon the wicked?
2. The laws & ordinances by which the wicked are punished?

Summary: "The contemplation of the doom of the wicked has always had an effect upon the benevolent nature of good men" (Plumer). See Jude :22-23.

Conclusion: This Psalm begins with a reminder that man's thoughts are vanity but God's thoughts are verity. Plumer warns: "It is the entertainment of vain thoughts which affords proof of a heart not right with God." A holy love is complemented by a reverent fear. Do we hate evil thoughts, not so much in others, but in ourselves? "The more we love the law of the God, the more we shall get the mastery of our vain thoughts, the more hateful they will be to us, as being contrary to the whole law, & the more watchful we shall be against them, lest they draw us from that which we love" (Henry). The psalmist also reminds us that we are able to stand as the Lord holds us & we are able to go forward as the Lord carries us. Plumer concludes: "Let our faith & hope attain the measure of full assurance. Let our fear of God mightily move us. Let our love be all sacrificing. Let our jealousy over our own hearts be extreme. Let our consciences maintain the utmost tenderness." How about your thoughtful meditation & hatred of evil tonight?