

Oh, How I Love Your Law!

The 119th Psalm is known for its length and description of God's Law. Almost every verse in this Psalm describes or mentions the word of God. In this article I want to concentrate specifically on verses 97- 105.

As one looks at these verses key words stand out in each verse.

"Oh, how I love your law! It is my meditation all the day long" (verse 97, emphasis mine, D.T.). That which we love we think about for hours on end; a young man that is in love with a young woman will think about her. Letters written between the two will be read, re-read, and cherished. Those who love God's law will want to know more and more about it. They will meditate on its meaning and application in their lives. A person that does not want to study their Bible and learn more about God's word does not really love Him.

"You, through Your commandments make me wiser than my enemies" (verse 98). The Bible reveals to us the mind and will of God. His law guides us on the pathway of righteousness and true wisdom. There are two ways of looking at life; one is doing what we think best and the second is doing what God says is best. We see people hurting themselves, homes being devastated by unfaithfulness and a lack of love. God plainly warns us of the consequences of sin. "Can a man take fire to his bosom, And his clothes not be burned? Can one walk on hot coals, And his feet not be seared? So is he who goes in to his neighbor's wife; Whoever touches her shall not be innocent." (Proverbs 6:27-29) Those who scoff at God's Law will bring destruction upon themselves. I don't know if the Psalmist is thinking specifically about living in this world or if he is thinking of facing God in judgment. Keeping God's commandments will make prepare us for the time when we will stand before the judgment seat of Christ, 2 Corinthians 5.10. However, it helps us to live a better life here and to go to heaven.

"I have more understanding that all my teachers, For Your testimonies are my meditation" (verse 99). It is one thing to know something it is better to understand what you know. Philip asked the Ethiopian Eunuch if he

understood what he was reading, Acts 8.30. In response the Eunuch said, "How can I, unless someone guides me?" (Verse 31). There are a lot of college professors out there that knows what the Bible says but they do not understand it. They mock it, criticize it, and undermine its teachings. The student that understands it is better than the person that has it memorized.

"I understand more than the ancients, Because I keep Your precepts" (Verse 100). A person is not made wise due to age but obedience. There are a lot of older people who have not learned very much in their life. They are still making the same mistakes they made when they were children. On the other hand, there are young people who show great understanding. Their understanding is not due to their own intellect but their acceptance of and reliance on God's word to answer their questions. They know it is better not to wear immodest clothing, drink alcohol, engage in sex outside of marriage, and to abstain from other worldly things. Through obedience one learns why those things just mentioned are bad. They are bad because they are sinful and will cause our soul to be lost and they are bad because they hurt us and those around us.

"I have restrained my feet from every evil way, That I may deep Your word" (Verse 101). One can look at God's word as being both restrictive and enabling. The Law of Moses contained a lot of "Thou shall not's" in which they were told what not to do. A person seeking to please God must learn that they are not allowed to do whatever they want. God does not fellowship those in sin. At the same time, not sinning is not the same thing as serving God. I am afraid many have defined Christianity as a religion of "Thou shall not's" while forgetting to do what has been commanded. We are commanded to worship, remember the Lord's death on the first day of the week, stimulate one another to good works, and so on.

"I have not departed from Your judgments, For You Yourself have taught me" (Verse 102). It is good to see people committed to doing God's will. They do not let things discourage them but take consolation in God's power, they do not blame God for their problems but see Him as the solution, they do not quit but endure to the end.

"How sweet are Your words to my taste, Sweeter than honey to my mouth" (Verse 103). I have a sweet tooth. I like and eat almost anything that has sugar in it. Do you think God's word is sweet or bitter? Are you indifferent to it or motivated by it? This goes back to the idea expressed in verse 99.

"Through Your precepts I get understanding, Therefore I hate every false way" (Verse 104). Once again, we see understanding connected to God's commands. When we truly understand the consequences of sin, we will hate it. Unfortunately, many make fun of sin or minimize its consequences. Efforts have been made to rename fornication and adultery to "living together" or "hooking up." Homosexuality is now "gay" or "alternative lifestyle." Using such politically correct terms will not change its repulsiveness to God. Those living such a lifestyle will be lost for eternity. Therefore, we should hate the sin and those advocating such.

""Your word is a lamp to my feet, And a light to my path" (Verse 105). I remember being out on the farm at night time when it was pitch black. One has to walk very carefully or they will trip over a rock, or stumble over a tree root, or fall because of a sudden dip in the path. A little light can reveal the rock, tree stump, or dip in the path. Too many Bibles are gathering dust and being neglected. As we walk down the pathway of life, we need to use the Bible to protect and help us.

Of all the books this world has ever know, none has been more widely circulated and ridiculed. In some parts of this world having a Bible can cause one to be cast into prison. In some Arab countries converting to Christianity can be grounds for death. In other parts of the world the Bible is accepted and neglected. It is used as a symbol but not as a standard of living. To those that meditate, understand, and allow it to light their path; it is their road map to heaven. - Dennis Tucker