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| <p>33) <u>Teach me</u>, O Lord, the way
of Your statutes, And I
shall observe it to the end.</p> <p>34) <u>Give me understanding</u>,
that I may observe Your law
And keep it with all my heart.</p> <p>35) <u>Make me walk</u> in the path of
Your commandments, For
I delight in it.</p> <p>36) <u>Incline</u> my heart to Your
testimonies And not to
dishonest gain.</p> | <p>37) <u>Turn</u> away my eyes from
looking at vanity, And
revive me in Your ways.</p> <p>38) <u>Establish</u> Your word to Your
servant, As that which
produces reverence for You.</p> <p>39) <u>Turn away</u> my reproach
which I dread, For Your
ordinances are good.</p> <p>40) <u>Behold</u>, I long for Your
precepts; Revive me through
Your righteousness.</p> |
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We come now to our fifth section of Psalm 119, which is the fifth letter of the Hebrew alphabet which is the letter “h.” Every word in this section begins with a word that starts with the letter “h.” Every underlined word in your notes begins the verse and every one of those underlined words in Hebrew start with a word that begins with the letter “h.”

Now the reason for this is that this Psalm is designed to exalt the Word of God. That is the purpose. There are 22 letters in the Hebrew alphabet and there are 22 sections, representing each letter to show the importance of the Word of God. Now each section has a specific point to make about the written Word of God. Last time, we saw that the written Word of God can bring a person completely out of depression. The man whose soul is in the dust can be raised up out of the dust by the Word of God.

This section is designed to teach another key point, which is this:

A DEEP KNOWLEDGE OF GOD’S WRITTEN WORD PRODUCES WONDERFUL THINGS IN A PERSON’S LIFE; BUT IN ORDER FOR THIS TO HAPPEN, GOD MUST GRANT IT.

If there is one thing to be learned from this great Psalm, it is that growing deep in knowledge of God’s Word is not an automatic guarantee for every believer. Becoming a wise, skilled person of the Word is a blessed grant from the Sovereign God and one of the key prerequisites for God granting this blessing is prayer. One must be willing to ask God for the privilege of understanding His Word.

Now there are eight specific requests that are made in this Psalm that clearly show the importance of asking God to grant us the ability to understand His Word:

REQUEST #1 – The request for God to teach him the Scriptures. **119:33**

If we are going to develop for God in a deep understanding of His Word, we must be conscious of our own ignorance. Then in view of this consciousness, we must ask God to give us and teach us His Word.

God is the best and ultimate teacher of His Word. In fact, Elihu said, “Behold God is exalted in His power; who is a teacher like Him?” (Job 36:22). The word for “teach” used here is one that refers to getting instruction from God.

When one reads the 119th Psalm, one cannot help but be impressed with the number of times the writer asks God to instruct him: 119:12, 26, 33, 64, 68, 108. Now we know that God instructs His people through men who accurately communicate His Word. So learning the Word of God means we must listen to the Word of God being accurately taught.

For example, in the O.T. economy it was the job of the Levitical priests to carefully teach God’s Word (Deut. 24:8). We know in the N.T. economy God gives different gifts to the church and one of those gifts is the ability to teach His Word (Eph. 4:11; James 3:1).

We make the assumption that one, who is praying to God to understand the Word, will be one who will avail himself of God-ordained teachers who will teach the Word. I am convinced that when one is really asking God to grant understanding of the Word, the believer will recognize when he is being taught by a true teacher of God. The Scriptures will come to life and truth will ring in the heart and mind. Now to grow deep in understanding of the Word, God needs to grant this which is what the writer asks God to do.

Now the reason why the writer wanted to accurately understand the Word of God was so that he could observe it until the end of his life.

That word “observe” means to enclose something within. To store up or treasure instruction so it is safe. This carries with it the idea of carefully watching, observing and guarding the Word of God (William Gesenius, *Hebrew Lexicon*, p. 74, 563). So this writer wanted God to give him knowledge and growth of His Word until the end of his life.

If a person is dedicated to understanding and protecting the Word of God in his life, he will end life and be rewarded by God.

REQUEST #2 – The request for God to sovereignly give him understanding. **119:34**

The writer asks God to give him an understanding of His Word so that he could observe it and keep it. He did not want to know God’s Word just so he could memorize some Biblical facts. He wanted to know God’s Word so he could properly obey it.

Now carefully notice that he wanted to obey it with “all” his heart. He wanted to know the whole counsel of God so he could keep and guard it with his whole heart. He did not want partial knowledge; he wanted full knowledge so that he could fully apply it in his heart.

The most stable, blessed and happy people will be those who have a passion to understand God’s Word.

REQUEST #3 – The request for God to sovereignly direct his walk. **119:35**

The writer wanted to walk on the right path in life. The right path is the way that conforms to the Word of God. The word “path” refers to a visible, well known, well-worn path. The Word of God reveals the path on which one should walk. One can visibly look to the Word and see the path on which one should walk and this writer wanted God to make him walk on those paths.

Now he asks God to “make” him walk on that path. The reason why he wanted God to do this was because this is where joy and delight and happiness in life are found.

No one will ever be happier than when he is living life in conformity to the Word of God. We will find our greatest delight and happiness in living life by walking on God’s well-known revealed paths, which is found in His Word.

Now do not overlook what is said in this verse—delight and joy and happiness are found by walking in accordance with the Word of God.

REQUEST #4 – The request for God to sovereignly direct his heart. **119:36**

Here is something most people do not realize; if God does not direct your heart, you will end up loving yourself and worthless things and you will miss out on the greatest life you could have had. Our hearts are naturally wicked and deceitful. If left to ourselves, this will work itself out in a variety of ways.

However, according to **verse 32**, God can enlarge a heart and according to **verse 36** God can incline a heart. What this writer wanted was that his heart would be inclined to the Word of God in every area of life, including business areas of life. This writer wanted a heart that was focused on the principles of God’s Word even in business matters.

This verse is eye-opening. God is the One who can change the bent of our heart. God is the one who can actually cause a heart to be inclined to His Word. The actual inclination of the heart of a person is that which is controlled by the sovereignty of God.

Now one of the things that the heart needs to be directed away from is gain that is dishonest or unjust. In other words, the heart is typically drawn to accumulating wealth, through any possible means. The heart is deceitful and tends to be drawn away from God and His Word.

This writer never wanted that. He wanted his heart focused on the Word of God to the end of his life. The supreme goal of most people is a love of money. This writer did not want that for his life. He wanted his supreme goal to be understanding and applying God's Word.

To love the Word so that one walks in God's ways requires a work of God. To have a heart that loves the Word to the point that it wants to walk in God's ways requires a work of God.

The key to having a heart that is continually drawn to the true, pure ways of God is God Himself. Wise believers ask God to control their hearts and minds. Wise believers ask God to incline their hearts to His Word and ways.

REQUEST #5 – The request for God to sovereignly direct his eyes. **119:37**

The heart is often led astray by the eyes. Eyes are naturally attracted to worthless things. Only God can redirect the focus.

Now it is clear from this verse that the eyes of a normal, sinful human have a tendency to look at and go after vain things. Vain things are empty things, things that lead to nothing. The Hebrew word "vain" refers to those things that are vain and empty materially and morally. The New English Translation says of this request "make my eyes pass by from looking at what is worthless" (*NET Bible*, fnt. 5, p. 1050).

The natural tendency of a human is to focus his eyes and gaze on vain and empty and worthless, evil and vile things. So the writer asks God to develop his focus so that he would focus on the Word of God; he did not want to waste his life focused on things that were worthless. He wanted to invest his life understanding the Scriptures. One commentator said he wanted God to "make my eyes pass by evil and not notice it."

Now the writer wanted God to "revive" him by means of His Word and will. What the grammar means is "Revive me by your word." So I would understand that to mean that he needed reviving because obviously his eyes had focused on vain things. He knew that the reviving would come through God's Word.

This world has a vain and distorted and worthless view of everything. It will try to get you to focus on things that will end up leading you nowhere. What we need to do is ask God to continue to direct our minds and hearts and even our eyes, so that we will remain focused on His precious Word.

REQUEST #6 – The request for God to produce a reverence for His Word and for God. **119:38**

This is an extremely important verse of Scripture. No one can be wise in God's estimation until one has a reverence for God and the thing that produces this is the Word of God.

Reverencing God and His Word is a critical factor of wisdom. In fact, it is the beginning or starting point of wisdom (Prov. 1:7; 9:10).

Now people who are on the right path of life love the Word and reverence God. When the writer says “Establish” your Word, he uses a Hebrew word that means to make your word firm and fast in his life (William Gesenius, *Hebrew Lexicon*, p. 727).

The writer is asking God to make His Word firmly established in his heart and mind because this is what produces a reverence for God and it is a reverence for God that is the key to everything.

Now implied in this verse is the fact that those who are servants who have a passion for God’s Word will discover that God produces a reverence for Him by that focus. The deeper one’s grasp of God’s Word, the deeper one’s reverence will be for God.

Surface level, shallow knowledge of God’s Word will never produce a proper reverence for God. When God is doing a personal work in one’s heart and mind, it will produce a reverence for God.

REQUEST #7 – The request for God to turn away his reproach. **119:39**

Godly people dread the shame of wandering away from God. They fear it. Don’t miss this.

Do you see what this writer dreaded? He dreaded being a reproach to God. He wanted his life to not be a life that would end in rebuke.

Now the key to not having a life that ends in rebuke is to have a life focused on the written Word of God. The “ordinances of God are good.” They will lead one to a good name and good life.

REQUEST #8 – The request for God to use His Word to revive him. **119:40**

This is certainly a theme we see time and time again in this Psalm; **revival comes through a focus on the written Word of God.**

When one is low or one has failed or one is a reproach, there is a way out, the Word of God.

Now the written Word of God is the one thing that can bring wonderful blessings to your life and your world to the end of your life. But to have this focus, God must give it to each of us. Wise is the believer who asks God to always give him a passion for His Word and truth in his heart.