

(Kaph)

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| <p>81) My soul <u>languishes</u>
for Your salvation;
I wait for Your word.</p> <p>82) My eyes <u>fail</u> with longing
for Your word, While I say,
“When will You comfort me?”</p> <p>83) <u>Though</u> I have become like a
wineskin in the smoke, I do
not forget Your statutes.</p> <p>84) <u>How many</u> are the days of
Your servant? When will
You execute judgment on
those who persecute me?</p> | <p>85) The arrogant have <u>dug</u> pits
for me, Men who are not
in accord with Your law.</p> <p>86) <u>All</u> Your commandments
are faithful; They have persecuted
me with a lie; help me!</p> <p>87) They <u>almost</u> destroyed me on earth,
But as for me, I did not forsake
Your precepts.</p> <p>88) Revive me according to Your
<u>lovingkindness</u>, So that I may
keep the testimony of Your mouth.</p> |
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We come now to the half-way point of the Hebrew alphabet. There are 22 letters in the Hebrew alphabet and this is Hebrew letter 11.

Psalm 119 is a Psalm that is designed to magnify the written Word of God. We don't even know who actually wrote this Psalm, probably because the whole point is to elevate God's Word and not the man who wrote it.

There are 22 eight verse sections that are written in the order of the Hebrew alphabet. This is the “kaph” or “k” section in which each word of this section begins with a word that starts with the letter “k.”

For example, the first word of the Hebrew text in **verse 81** is “languishes.” The actual Hebrew word is “kalitha.” The first word in **verse 82** is “fail.” The actual Hebrew word is “kalu.” Now the reason for this precision is to show the importance of the written Word of God.

What is interesting is that by the time we get to the end of the 119th Psalm, it is clear that the writer's problems have not completely gone away (119:161; 119:169-176). **One thing that the trouble did for the writer was it drove him to the written Scriptures.** He obviously is talking to God; but he is also carefully studying God's Word.

Now as we mentioned, this is the middle of the Psalm and it appears that this is the deepest, darkest and most depressing time in the Psalm. The writer was in trouble and he needed revival. In fact, Charles Spurgeon said that this eight verse section is the darkest part of the entire Psalm. But there is a profound lesson to see and learn:

WHEN WE ARE EXPERIENCING DARK AND DEPRESSING TIMES BECAUSE ARROGANT PEOPLE HAVE WRONGED US, OUR COMFORT WILL COME BY FOCUSING ON GOD'S WRITTEN WORD AND BY TALKING TO GOD.

This seems so basic; but it is so profound. When we are depressed we need to focus more on God's written Word and talk to God more.

Enemies can make things miserable for us. But enemies cannot take away our commitment to carefully understand God's written Word, nor can they stop our prayers to God. Now in this Psalm there are four key parts to this eight verse section:

PART #1 – The writer describes his dark condition to God.

The writer was deeply depressed. His circumstances were dismal and he was despairing because things were so dark. What we find him doing is honestly talking to God about himself and his situation.

There are four descriptions that he gives of himself:

Description #1 - He had a soul that languished. **119:81**

That word “languish” means that his soul was at its end. He was totally spent and totally exhausted (William Gesenius, *Hebrew Lexicon*, p. 398). The writer was at his wits end and he longed for the deliverance and salvation of God. His soul longed for and “pined for” the delivering salvation of God.

Now there are different kinds of salvation that are needed. Of course all need the salvation from sin. All need to be saved from its penalty and power. But there is also salvation from sorrow and sadness and salvation from various situations. This is what the writer had in mind here.

Notice where the deliverance and salvation is needed; it is needed in the soul. No counselor; no psychiatrist; no psychologist can deliver a person from the gloom and darkness from a soul. Only God can do that.

The other day I left my house early in the morning to drive to my office. It was dark and foggy. In fact, I could not see much beyond the front of my car. It didn't matter if my headlights were on high beam or low beam, I could not see. Well coming down 8th street just beyond “U” Avenue the fog disappeared and I could see as clear as could be. It was like a whole new world.

That is what this writer longed for in his soul. This was dark and gloomy and foggy and he wanted God to lift the fog so his soul would experience great joy and clear focus again.

Description #2 - He had eyes that failed. **119:82**

The writer was tired. His eyes were tired. He had read and read God's Word and he had waited for God to intervene, but to this point it had not happened. The words here describe the fact that he had read God's Word to the point that his eyes were shutting down and he was having a hard time seeing. He was tired, very tired.

Ever been there? Ever been to the point where your eyes are just tired or worn out by reading the Bible? Frankly, most don't spend that much time in the Bible, but this writer did.

Description #3 - He had a spirituality that was dry and burned up. **119:83**

The Hebrew word "wineskin" refers to a leather container that was made from animal skins, which contained wine.

The metaphorical picture of becoming "like a wineskin in the smoke" is one that describes an old spirituality that is blackened, parched, cracked and dried by the heat and good for nothing. In order for a wineskin to be effective, it must be able to stretch and be flexible.

If a wineskin is exposed to heat, it becomes hard, dry and shriveled. It loses its effectiveness. That is what was happening to the writer. He was spiritually and emotionally drained. He was burned out. He was losing his effectiveness. He apparently was thinking God couldn't use him anymore.

But carefully notice the end of **verse 83**; even in this condition he did not forget God's Word.

There are times in our lives when we will be dry. It is in those moments we need to cling to God's Word because it is God's Word that has the power to cause our own revival.

Description #4 - He was almost destroyed. **119:87**

The enemies almost got the best of him. John Phillips, in his commentary on Psalms says there are two words that stand out in **verse 87**, "almost" and "but." They almost destroyed him, but they didn't.

They wore him down to the deepest and lowest level of depression. They almost destroyed him. We would understand this to mean they almost destroyed him physically and also almost destroyed his reputation and even his spirituality.

However, although they almost did this, they did not do this.

PART #2 – The writer describes the dark condition of his enemies. **119:85-86**

The writer saw his enemies clearly. He describes them accurately before God:

Description #1 - The enemies were arrogant. **119:85a**

Wicked people are arrogant people. They are proud. They are not about to humble themselves to God or His Word. They proudly lash out against those who are right with God.

Description #2 - The enemies dug pits. **119:85b**

Proud and arrogant people try to trap those who are godly. They set their snares and dig their pits, hoping to destroy their righteous prey. However, God warns that He will see to it that they will fall into their own traps (Ps. 7:12-16; 57:4-6).

We cannot help but think of Haman, who had gallows built to hang Mordecai and he ended up being hanged himself.

Description #3 - The enemies do not apply God's Word. **119:85c**

The common denominator of all wicked and arrogant people is that they are not interested in accurately understanding and applying God's Word. They do not care what God's Word says. When the text says they are "not in accord" with God's law, what that means is that they are never in harmony with the Word of God. Nothing they do is in accordance with the Word of God.

Description #4 - The enemies are liars. **119:86**

Lying is satanic. All arrogant, wicked people are liars. They lie about themselves. They lie about their sin. They lie about their evil intentions. They persecute those right with God by their lies.

PART #3 – The writer makes specific requests to God.

As we have pointed out, the writer was almost broken by these people. He was beaten down, but he did one thing that every righteous person has a right to do and that is go to God with your requests. There are five requests:

Request #1 - He requested God's deliverance. **119:81a**

In the Word of God he learned of the delivering power of God and he asks for God to save him.

Request #2 - He requested God's comfort. **119:82b**

The writer knew that God was a comforting God. He had seen that in the Word.

Request #3 - He requested God's judgment. **119:84**

He specifically asked God to execute His judgment on those who were persecuting him.

Request #4 - He requested God's help. **119:86**

He knew he needed God's help and he saw in Scripture that God does help His people so he prayed for that.

I am reminded of a story about a son who was given a job to do by his father to move a huge rock that was blocking a key route through the ranch. The son spent all day working on it and he finally went to his dad and said, "I just can't move that rock." "I have tried everything." The father said to the son, "You have not tried everything, you never once asked me for help."

Request #5 - He requested God's revival. **119:88**

God has the power to revive souls. In fact, this prayer for revival was based on the fact that he knew of the lovingkindness and mercy of God. God does not want His people spending their entire lives in gloom and doom. He can revive you. He can forgive you. He can restore you. He can use you. But, you must talk to Him.

It is clear that in the Scriptures we have the right to talk with God and that is what this writer did.

PART #4 – The writer was totally dedicated to God's written Word.

No matter what he went through, he was focused on God's written Word.

Word Fact #1 - He trusted it and waited for it. **119:81**

Word Fact #2 - He read it. **119:82**

Word Fact #3 - He remembered it and did not forget it. **119:83**

Word Fact #4 - He knew God is faithful to His Word. **119:85**

We may always count on the fact that God will be faithful to His Word.

Word Fact #5 - He did not forsake it. **119:86**

Word Fact #6 - He knew God could help him obey it. **119:87**

Now carefully notice verse 88, the writer believed that the written Word of God came from the mouth of God. It is no wonder that he took God's Word so seriously.

Practical Lessons:

- 1) Depression is something very real to even the most spiritual believers.**
- 2) When God delays vindicating us, we can become very discouraged.**
- 3) When arrogant people are lying against us—read, pray, trust, wait.**
- 4) God is personally interested in our hurts and He will be our help.**