

Series: Psalms

Title: How the LORD is My Portion

Text: Ps 119: 57-64

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**Psalm 119: 57: CHETH. *Thou art my portion, O LORD: I have said that I would keep thy words.***

This is where salvation begins in our experience of it. God had given David a new heart and brought David to believe the Lord was his portion, "*Thou art my portion, O LORD.*" "Portion" means my part, my inheritance, my all. Not only in the life to come but right now throughout my life, Christ is my portion.

God the Father gave his elect to his Son and the Lord Jesus Christ "loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father." (Rev 1: 5). When the Spirit of God gives faith, he makes his child know Christ is our portion. He meets every need. Christ has and shall provide all for me. God typified this with Aaron and his sons who he made priests. When God divided the land, God gave no portion to Aaron and his sons, the priests.

Numbers 18: 20: And the LORD spake unto Aaron, Thou shalt have no inheritance in their land, neither shalt thou have any part among them: *I am thy part and thine inheritance among the children of Israel.*

Like those priests, the Lord is our portion in that he has given us the best of the oil [the Holy Spirit], the best of the wine [his precious blood], the [best] of the wheat [Christ the Bread from heaven]. Christ is our Life. He is our Prophet, Priest and King. Christ is our Righteousness, our Holiness, our Redemption, our Wisdom, our Acceptance with God, our Salvation! And he makes us know we are his portion.

Deuteronomy 32: 9: For the LORD'S portion *is* his people; Jacob *is* the lot of his inheritance. 10: He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye.

1 Corinthians 3: 23: And YE ARE CHRIST'S; and Christ IS GOD'S.

So our Portion continues to provide every need and shall provide until at last we have Christ our portion in glory. David said, "I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread" (Ps 37: 25). God the Father was pleased to make us his people by his sovereign, electing grace. The Lord Jesus promised the Father that he would bring all God's elect to the Father holy, unblameable, unreprouvable in his sight. Therefore, the Lord Jesus will not forsake his people. "For the LORD will not forsake his people for his great name's sake: because it hath pleased the LORD to make you his people." (1 Sam 12: 22)

When the Spirit reveals this, our resolve is David's, "*I have said I would keep thy words.*" By God's grace, David began like every believer. First of all, I will keep Christ the WORD. It is our resolve to keep Him, hold Him, abide in Him, continue in Him, never let Him go. Secondly, I have said that I would keep the words of the gospel. It is our resolve to believe the gospel of God's free and sovereign grace who chose us freely. It is our new willingness to abide in the doctrine of Substitution; God provided himself a lamb who suffered in the place of his people and accomplished our redemption. God has made us willing to continue trusting atonement made by the blood of Christ Jesus our Substitute. He is the Propitiation for the sins of his people. We walk by faith trusting Christ has justified us--Christ's righteousness has been imputed to us through faith in Christ. God promises that due to the finished work of his Son, God will never again impute sin to his child because Christ put it away and made us the righteousness of God in him. Thirdly, God's child desires to keep every gospel precept of our Lord. This revelation of all that Christ is to us and has done for us makes us resolve to obey every word, "*Thy word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee*" (v11).

But we do not know much of this good news at first, at least not by experience. So another way the Lord is our portion is by keeping and instructing his child more. He keeps us knowing he is our Savior, our All. He keeps us seeing our need of him, of his grace, of his mercy. He keeps us depending entirely upon him alone for all. Our great Prophet keeps growing us to know that he alone is our portion.

**BY KEEPING US KNOWING OUR NEED**

**Psalm 119: 58: I intreated thy favour with *my* whole heart: be merciful unto me according to thy word. 59: I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy testimonies. 60: I made haste, and delayed not to keep thy commandments.**

Spurgeon called this "a brief but complete account of the conversion of the sinner *and* of the restoration of the backslidden child of God." That first hour the Lord makes us know he is our portion, he puts the resolve in our heart to keep his words. We entreat his favor with our whole heart. We cry out to him for mercy. We think on our ways and mourn our sin. We turn our feet to his testimonies and make haste without delay to keep his commandments. But that is not the last time. Many times, God makes us think on our ways, even the best things, and we find great reason to run to God for mercy and ask for grace.

Spurgeon said, "Do you ever think you have done well? In that very thinking you have done ill."

But the Lord is our portion in that he keeps us depending entirely upon him the rest of our days. It is how David saw his need of mercy and grace. Our Lord keeps bringing us to see our sins more. If we cry for God's favor when we think on the best of our ways, how much more when God brings us to think on our worst ways? We are not told what occasion this was with David but we know there were many. In this psalm he keeps repeating the same thought.

Psalm 119: 67: Before I was afflicted I went astray: but now have I kept thy word...176: I have gone astray like a lost sheep; seek thy servant; for I do not forget thy commandments.

It seems David may be speaking of what God did for him after his sin with Bathsheba and Uriah. I will show you why I think that a little later. But here is where God brought David each time beginning to end. He said, "*I intreated thy favour [thy face, thy countenance, thy grace] with my whole heart: be merciful unto me according to thy word.*"

Our Lord Jesus knew no sin. But he was made sin for his people. When our Substitute hung in darkness on the cross, God refused to shine the light of his face upon him. We hear our Savior cry,

Psalm 13: 1: How long wilt thou forget me, O LORD? for ever? how long wilt thou hide thy face from me? 2:...how long shall mine enemy be exalted over me? 3: Consider *and* hear me, O LORD my God: lighten mine eyes, lest I sleep the *sleep of death*; 4: Lest mine enemy say, I have prevailed against him;...5: But I have trusted in THY MERCY; my heart shall rejoice in THY SALVATION.

By that perfect faith in God our Father, by Christ's blood, he put away the sin of God's elect and made us righteous in him. Therefore, Christ is our portion. Therefore, for the sake of his Son, repeatedly, God wrought this in David's heart. That is how he is our portion. He will not permit us to become self-sufficient and prideful. He left us in this body of death to keep his child beholding our sin, to keep us entreating his favor with our whole heart and begging mercy. It was God who worked this in David.

Psalm 27:8: When thou saidst, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, LORD, will I seek. 9: Hide not thy face [thy favor] far from me; put not thy servant away in anger: thou hast been my help; leave me not, neither forsake me, O God of my salvation.

Psalm 51: 1: Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. 2: Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. 3: For I acknowledge my transgressions:...4: Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done *this* evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest...5: Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me...9: Hide thy face from my sins, [but not from me o LORD] and blot out all mine iniquities. 10: Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. 11: Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me. 12: Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me *with thy* free spirit. 13: *Then* will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee.

This is why believers who have been in the faith longer love the psalms. We hear David pray our prayers. We hear another brother going through what we so often go through. But since our Savior put away the sin of his people, for the sake of his Son, God had mercy on David. He shined his face again and restored him. It was like David was converted again. He thought on his ways and said, "*I turned my feet unto Your testimonies. I made haste, and delayed not to keep thy commandments.*"

Brethren, the sins of God's saints of old do not make us excuse our sin. But God's continual mercy and restoration of his saints sure give us hope. Sin not! But when you do, do not think all hope is lost if Christ is your portion. The cure is always Christ and him crucified. The first step in turning us back into the right path is when the Spirit turns us to Christ our Substitute to cry to God for mercy for the sake of Christ alone. His renewed mercy makes us as eager as the first hour to haste to keep his commandments. It is how God grows us in grace. It is how God shows us his love is everlasting. It is how he makes Christ dearer to our souls. So whether God is first drawing you or you are child of God being drawn again, come to Christ right now! He gives more grace!

Psalm 22:24: For he hath not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted; neither hath he hid his face from him; but when he cried unto him, he heard.

## BY ONGOING CHASTENING

**Psalm 119: 61: The bands of the wicked have robbed me: *but* I have not forgotten thy law. 62: At midnight I will rise to give thanks unto thee because of thy righteous judgments.**

Another way God keeps us knowing that Christ is our portion is by using men to chasten us. It is God doing the chastening. He makes us know it is in him in our hearts. But he often uses men. This is why I think David is writing of what God did after his sin with Bathsheba. He keeps speaking of the reproach. God promised David he would be reproached as part of his chastening.

But David knew these men were sent of God. God did it to make David depend more upon the Lord. God asked Satan, "Have you considered my servant Job." Sometimes the devil uses men, sometimes health, etc. The devil's motive is to try to *rob us* of Christ our portion, rob us of faith and rob us of hope in him alone. But it is God keeping his child knowing that

Christ alone is our portion. Through it, God made David remember and rejoice in his gospel even more--"but I have not forgotten thy law."

Our Lord Jesus knew no sin, yet he experienced the same that David experienced, the same that you experience, child of God.

Psalm 18: 4: The sorrows of death compassed me, and the floods of ungodly men made me afraid.

So our Savior comforts and keeps us remembering the gospel, that he alone is our portion.

Psalm 3:1: «A Psalm of David, when he fled from Absalom his son.» LORD, how are they increased that trouble me! many *are* they that rise up against me. 2: Many *there be* which say of my soul, *There is* no help for him in God. Selah. 3: But thou, O LORD, *art* a shield for me; my glory, and the lifter up of mine head. 4: I cried unto the LORD with my voice, and he heard me out of his holy hill. Selah. 5: I laid me down and slept; I awaked; for the LORD sustained me.

Not only does the Lord not let us forget Christ is our portion, but he also uses the affliction to make us more thankful, "*At midnight I will rise to give thanks unto thee because of thy righteous judgments.*" David had written in verse 7, "I will praise thee with uprightness of heart, when I shall have learned thy righteous judgments." He did not say I will praise myself. But he said if I am enabled to be holy then Lord, I will praise you. By God sanctifying the affliction to his heart, David thanked God, even for the affliction. He knew it was God's righteous judgments. He knew it was God's faithfulness to him as his portion. Look down to verse 75.

Psalm 119:75: I know, O LORD, that thy judgments *are* right, and *that* thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me.

When the Lord's dealings with us are roughest, he brings us to bless God, even for the rod! He grows us in knowledge that he is our portion. We see that his covenant faithfulness for Christ's sake is everlasting. David was taught more and more throughout his life that Christ his Covenant was his salvation. So David's last words were "God made with me an everlasting covenant ordered in all things and sure: this is all my salvation, and all my desire."

David forgot not God's gospel because God's mercy to David when he sinned made David more merciful when he was sinned against. David was merciful even toward those God used to afflict him. God's mercy made him more merciful.

Absalom, his own son, stole the throne, turned Israel against David and pursued David to kill him. But look at David's response.

2 Samuel 13:37 [But concerning Absalom]...And *David* mourned for his son every day.

2 Samuel 18: 5: And the [David] commanded [his men] saying, *Deal* gently for my sake with the young man, *even* with Absalom. [And when word came they had killed Absalom, David wept for him.]

Shimei cursed David. But when Shimei came and fell down asking David not to remember how he spoke perversely, David had mercy on him and promised he would not die. That is what God did for David repeatedly. That is how David forgot not God's law, his gospel.

Mephibosheth was even deceived and forsook David for a time. But when he came asking mercy, David said, "Why speakest thou anymore of thy matters." David kept his covenant for Jonathan's sake. He told Mephibosheth to forget about it.

David *forgot not God's law*. God had shown David great mercy for the sake of the Lord Jesus. Therefore, David showed mercy for the sake of the Lord Jesus. David knew God's judgments are right and the affliction was God's faithfulness showing David that Christ alone is his portion. Therefore, David praised God for afflicting him.

## BY PROVIDING BRETHREN

**Psalm 119: 63: I *am* a companion of all *them* that fear thee, and of them that keep thy precepts. 64: The earth, O LORD, is full of thy mercy: teach me thy statutes. I *am* continually with thee: thou hast holden *me* by my right hand. 24: Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me *to* glory. 25: Whom have I in heaven *but thee?* and *there is* none upon earth *that* I desire beside thee. 26 My flesh and my heart faileth: *but God is* the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.**

God keeps us knowing Christ is our portion, not only by providing men to chasten us, but by providing brethren to remind us of the good news of the gospel. The Lord provided David with brethren, in whom the Lord had worked this same affliction, who believed the Lord and loved David and were gracious to remind him of the Lord's faithfulness and grace during his affliction. So God increased love in his heart for his brethren as well as for the Lord. It made David behold God's mercy everywhere he looked and made him desire God to teach him more, "*The earth, O LORD, is full of thy mercy: teach me thy statutes.*"

Brethren, this is the ongoing cycle of the believers life. God begins showing us he is our portion: we believe on Christ and resolve to keep his words. Then he shows us our ways, brings us to cry out for mercy, renews our faith and renews our resolve to remember he alone is our portion. In every affliction he increases faith in Christ and makes us more thankful for the Lord's righteous affliction. He makes us more merciful and makes us love our brethren more. By it all, he grows us to

know more and more, *"I am continually with thee: thou hast holden me by my right hand. Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory. Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee. My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever."*

**Amen!**