

(Qoph)

- 145) I cried with all my heart;
answer me, O LORD! I
will observe Your statutes.
- 146) I cried to You; save me, and
I shall keep Your testimonies.
- 147) I rise before dawn and cry for
help; I wait for Your words.
- 148) My eyes anticipate the night
watches, That I may meditate
on Your word.
- 149) Hear my voice according to Your
lovingkindness; Revive me, O LORD,
according to Your ordinances.
- 150) Those who follow after wickedness
draw near; They are far from Your law.
- 151) You are near, O LORD, And all Your
commandments are truth.
- 152) Of old I have known from Your
testimonies, that You have founded
them forever.

What an amazing Psalm this has been. We are down to the final four sections. Psalm 119 is a Psalm based on the Hebrew alphabet. Like the Hebrew alphabet with its 22 letters, this Psalm has 22 sections. Each verse in each section begins with a letter of the Hebrew alphabet for that section.

Since we are now in section 19, each verse begins with a word that starts with letter 19 of the Hebrew alphabet, which is the letter “Q.” Letter “q” is the nineteenth letter of the Hebrew text; it is the 17th letter of the English alphabet.

Now the purpose of all of this alphabetical structure is to drive home the importance of the written Word of God. It also is important to understand that the significance of the letter order is to show the importance of systematically studying God’s Word.

There is no way one may look at this order and conclude God wants us leap-frogging around from one topical study to another. He desires that we carefully and systematically study the written Word of God, line upon line, precept upon precept.

Now as we come to this section, what we observe is that three times in the first three verses we read the verb “I cried.” This verb appears in **verses 145, 146 and 147**. Now the verb used in **verses 145 and 146** is different than the one used in **147**.

In **verses 145 and 146** the emphasis is on a very emotional calling out or crying out to God. In fact, in the German language, this word is used for an outcry that includes weeping or any crying that may not even be articulated (William Gesenius, *Hebrew Lexicon*, p. 739). The verb used in **verse 147** has a particular emphasis in crying out for help (*Ibid.*, p. 811).

Now if we combine these two Hebrew verbs, what we may conclude is that the writer is emotionally crying out to God for help.

What this tells us is that there will be times when we are very emotional because of trouble and trials. Troubles and trials should cause us to do two things: 1) Cry out to God; 2) Get serious about God’s Word. Troubles and trials in life should drive us to God’s Word and drive us to our knees.

As we have been journeying through this Psalm, we have certainly seen that even the most faithful of people have hardships and troubles. What this writer did in the midst of this was to talk with God and totally focus his attention to understanding God's Word. Hardships strengthened his prayer life and it also caused him to get refocused on the written Scriptures. In fact, that is the point of this section:

TROUBLES, TRIALS AND HARDSHIPS CAUSE FAITHFUL BELIEVERS TO EMOTIONALLY PRAY TO GOD AND CAREFULLY STUDY THE WORD OF GOD.

This is quite an emotional part of this Psalm. As near as I can determine, there are five emotional prayer requests:

EMOTIONAL REQUEST #1 – The prayer-cry for God to answer. 119:145

Now this is a very emotional prayer request that asks God to answer. He is asking Almighty God to “answer me.” The word he uses for God is LORD, which is Jehovah. This is the self-existing, sovereign, covenant-keeping God. The great I AM. So here is a human on earth asking Almighty Sovereign God to answer him. Now the basis for expecting God would answer is two-fold. There are two ingredients:

Ingredient #1 - It is a prayer made with all one's heart. 119:145a

God will not be moved to answer prayer of one who is not praying out of all of their heart. God does not look for eloquence or elegance or education or even the amount of emotion in prayer; He looks at the heart.

Thomas Brooks, a puritan preacher of the 1600's, said if the heart is dumb in prayer, God's ear will be most definitely deaf.

The man or woman who gets alone with God and emotionally cries out to Him with all of their heart can expect God will answer. Charles Spurgeon used to say, “He who has been with God in the closet will find God with him in the furnace” (*Psalms*, p. 560).

Ingredient #2 - It is a prayer made with a promise to obey God's Word. 119:145b

This is so important. God will not answer the prayer of one who does not commit himself or herself to obeying God's Word.

When this writer was being chased by enemies, there were many things he could not do. He could not publicly go to public religious services to offer sacrifices and worship. He could not enjoy fellowship that most enjoyed. But what he could do was obey God. It did not matter where he was, he could obey God and that is exactly what he purposed to do.

EMOTIONAL REQUEST #2 – The prayer-cry for God to save. 119:146

Now the assumption that this writer obviously does have is that God can save. He and He alone has the power to deliver and save. This is true when it comes to sin and this is true when it comes to trouble.

But again notice the end of the verse, the writer is crying to God to save based on the fact that he will obey God's Word. So many people want God to deliver them from something, but few want to get serious about God's Word.

EMOTIONAL REQUEST #3 – The prayer-cry for God to help. 119:147-148

Now there are some key things to observe about this prayer for help:

Observation #1 - Prayer is made early in the morning. 119:147a

This is a great time to pray. In Psalms there are three specific times singled out to pray: Morning, noon, and evening (i.e. Ps. 55:17). One of the best times to pray is early in the morning. Spurgeon used to say that a person who rushes from his bed into business without first taking time for worship is a fool who is like one going outside without clothing or going to war without weapons (*Ibid.*, p. 561).

Observation #2 - Prayer is made waiting for God's Word. 119:147b

One of the places this writer looked for answer to his prayers was the Word of God. In other words, while waiting for answers, he stayed focused on God's Word.

Observation #3 - Prayer is made at night. 119:148a

Early morning is a wonderful time for petition and evening is a wonderful time for anticipation and reflection.

Observation #4 - Prayer is made while meditating on God's Word. 119:148b

Not only is evening time a time for anticipation, but meditation. Within the heart of this writer was a deep desire to know God's Word and to obey God's Word. He thought much about the Word of God.

EMOTIONAL REQUEST #4 – The prayer for God to listen. 119:149a

Now the writer believed that the basis for God to hear his voice was His mercy and loving-kindness. This was not some name it and claim it prayer. This was a prayer made with the utmost humility and dependency on God.

EMOTIONAL REQUEST #5 – The prayer for God to revive. **119:149b**

Now carefully observe that the writer wanted to be revived in accordance with the ordinances of God. The Word of God testifies if one is committing himself to the Lord and to the Word of God, one is in a position to see God do some wonderful things.

Now in the next verses, the writer gives six reasons why he needed God to answer him:

Reason #1 - Because those who follow after wickedness draw near. **119:150a**

Now the word “wickedness” is one that is specifically used of unclean sins, particularly unclean sexual sins such as fornication, incest and rape (William Gesenius, *Hebrew Lexicon*, p. 246).

This writer was being chased by some of the most immoral and depraved people on the face of the earth. They were trying to discredit and destroy him and he needed God to help.

Reason #2 - Because those who are wicked are far from God’s Word. **119:150b**

Wicked people do not care about God’s Word. They are not interested in knowing it and obeying it. If a child of God has a true motive to obey God’s Word, he will gain the listening ear of God.

Reason #3 - Because God is near to His people. **119:151a**

This is so important to know. God is always near to His people when they are surrounded by wicked and evil people and things. Those who turn to Him will never regret it.

Reason #4 - Because all of God’s Word is truth. **119:151b**

Wicked people do not care about the Word of God, but all of God’s Word is the truth. So what God says about what will happen to the wicked and what God says about prayer is all true. Every bit of it and all of it is absolute truth.

God is always faithful to His Word.

Reason #5 - Because God’s Word is known. **119:152a**

The writer had heard all of the stories of the Word of God. He knew of the testimonies of God. He knew how God had delivered His people time and time again.

Reason #6 - Because God’s Word is forever. **119:152b**

The writer knew that the Word of God was forever.

One cannot help but see that prayer and study of the Word go hand in hand in any situation in life. God’s Word and prayer can revive the lowest of people.