

could read this as more literally reading, “and your laws grace me”. This is a passage for further deep and profitable reflection.

The Path of Consecration

30 I have chosen the way of truth: thy judgments have I laid before me.

The previous verse posed the “*the way of lying*”, this verse shows the choice of “*the way of truth*”. We must choose truth, but that cannot be without calling upon God to deliver us from the way of lying. Deliverance from deceit is simply not within our natural ability. That is the work of God. The way of truth (also faithfulness), is a matter of choice. God will not force that upon us. We may be very wearied with a life filled with lies, but do we really desire to know truth? Truth always has its price. Remember the Lord’s words:

34 Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. 35 For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. 36 And a man’s foes shall be they of his own household. *Matthew 10:34-36*

Christ’s truth brings conflict. This Psalmist has battled with his own soul to choose the path of life. This wasn’t some “easy-believism” he has taken on. He fought the fight within to join the kingdom of God. He has considered the price and made his choice.

The second half of this verse shows the action that flowed from the choice of “*the way of truth*”. It is the action of taking God’s directions, learning His teachings and views. He sets these before him as the pattern to match.

31 I have stuck unto thy testimonies: O LORD, put me not to shame.

The “*I have stuck*” also translating as “I have clung”. He has chosen to dearly cleave to God’s laws which tell of His character, which witness of what He is like. In cleaving, he will not set them aside for “social” interaction. He will not put aside “saying grace” at some social occasion. He will not “freely drink” with the business partners in a sloppy “testimony” of what Christ is like. He will not join with others in their “off-color” humor. The

list of such testimonies we give goes on and on.

Here we find the first, and only occurrence of God’s name, or title, found in this section. It is the name of “Yahweh”. It is most appropriate that it should make its debut here at the end. First, this whole section rests upon the relationship of our life with God. For that reason, we can see the significance of this name being used. It’s connection to shame is a serious warning. Stop and consider the sample list I just gave of bearing witness in our conduct. The reason we fail in such areas is because we are embarrassed of how we may appear to our societal peers. It is the issue of shame. If we fail in our living witness because of shame before men, we will have no choice but to be put to shame before God. Remember these serious words of our Lord Jesus Christ:

8 Also I say unto you, Whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God: 9 But he that denieth me before men shall be denied before the angels of God. *Luke 12:8,9*

This is serious folks! There is no room for “easy-believism” here.

32 I will run the way of thy commandments, when thou shalt enlarge my heart.

This final verse takes us to the most energetic action of promised commitment. He has laid before him, he has cleaved and now he puts it to foot. Remember how this whole journey began. It started in the dust and weighed down with sorrow. At its end, we find the sought for life and energy. We have more than simply standing, we have energetic running. We started with a frown, we end with a smile! Such is the pathway of life in Christ. The battle comes first, abundant victory follows.

Something important you should know about the Hebrew past, present and future verbal structure. They don’t have it. They have completed and incompleting. Past is completed. Present and future is incompleting. Young’s Literal Translation words this, “*The way of Thy commands I run, For Thou dost enlarge my heart!*”. Knowing this, we can perceive the present grace of revelation in the Psalmist’s heart as well as that which will continue. This last verse isn’t “making a deal with God”! It is the declaration of present obedience, and the confession of the work God is doing.

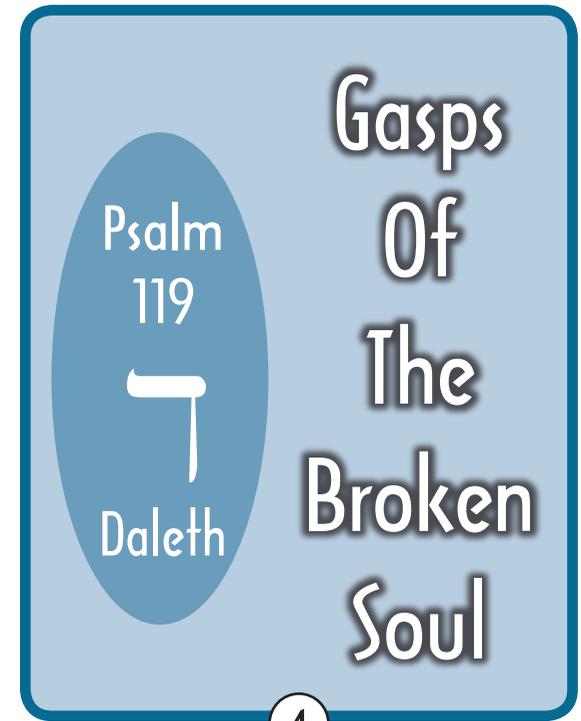
Something else significant here, is the ease with which this course is taken. Those with a defiled conscience prefer to keep their distance from God’s commandments. They prefer to not be reminded of them. The commandments shed light on their ungodliness. Not so with the liberated man. Yes, I said liberated! So many consider the “mitzvot”, or “commandments”, to be the weight of bondage. They desire to be “liberated” from God’s commandments. The fatal flaw to that, is that all are in bondage to sin, so there is no such thing as this kind of liberation. Those in Christ walk in the liberty that John told of. This is the truly liberated walk:

2 By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. 3 For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous. 4 For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. 5 Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God? *1 John 5:2-5*

Hebrew reads from right to left. Notice the “Daleth” that precedes each verse:

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|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|----|
| חַיְנִי כְדַבְּרֶיךָ: | הַבְּקָה לְעֵפֶר נַפְשִׁי | 25 |
| לְמַחְנֵי חַקֶּיךָ: | דַּרְכֵי סִפְרֹתַי וְתַעֲנֵנִי | 26 |
| וְאֲשִׁיחָה בְנִפְלְאוֹתֶיךָ: | דַּרְךְ-פִּקְדוֹתֶיךָ חַיְנֵנִי | 27 |
| קַיְמֵנִי כְדַבְּרֶיךָ: | הַלְפָה נַפְשִׁי מִתּוֹנָה | 28 |
| וְהוֹרֵתֵךְ חַנּוּנִי: | דַּרְךְ-שִׁקְרַת הַסֵּר מִמֶּנִּי | 29 |
| מִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ שׁוֹתִי: | דַּרְךְ-אֱמוּנָה בַחֲרֹתַי | 30 |
| יְהִנֵּה אֶל-תְּבִישֵׁנִי: | דְּבַקְתִּי בַעֲדוֹתֶיךָ | 31 |
| כִּי תִרְחִיב לִבִּי: | דַּרְךְ-מִצְוֹתֶיךָ אֲרוּץ | 32 |

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Psalm 119

Daleth

25 My soul cleaveth unto the dust: quicken thou me according to thy word.
 26 I have declared my ways, and thou heardest me: teach me thy statutes.
 27 Make me to understand the way of thy precepts: so shall I talk of thy wondrous works.
 28 My soul melteth for heaviness: strengthen thou me according unto thy word.
 29 Remove from me the way of lying: and grant me thy law graciously.
 30 I have chosen the way of truth: thy judgments have I laid before me.
 31 I have stuck unto thy testimonies: O LORD, put me not to shame.
 32 I will run the way of thy commandments, when thou shalt enlarge my heart.

This is the fourth section of Psalm 119. Having covered a more detailed overview of the Psalm, it is my intention to go more thoroughly through each section. Briefly, each section is according to the letter of the Hebrew alphabet. Each letter contains 8 verses that begin with that specific letter. Daleth is the fourth letter, so each verse, in the Hebrew, begins with a word starting with the letter Daleth.

In Hebrew, unlike English, each letter was originally also a word. We do not know the meaning of every letter today, but we do know most. Daleth means, “Something swinging, the valve of a door (two-leaved)”. Since the Psalmist built the Psalm based on the letters, it is likely the meaning of each letter played in his thoughts as he composed each section. In this section, there is the definite two-way interaction between the Psalmist and God. This may be a reflection of the meaning of the door which swings both directions. Such is the reality of a living relationship with God.

This Psalm is also based upon the usage of a host of words that are “legal” terms in the Hebrew. I have gone into a more thorough definition of each word, as it has been encountered, in the previous sections. I would recommend going there to find those expansions. I will cover additional words as we come across them.

Changing “Ways”

25 My soul cleaveth unto the dust: quicken thou me according to thy word.

Verse 25 and 28 are poetically parallel verses. Both of these express the desolate state of the Psalmist’s soul. They form a clearly visible division of this section into two parts.

We find the following reference to dust from the mouth of God:

19 In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return. Genesis 3:19

The ending of this verse is commonly used at funerals. The soul that cries out from this position is making a clear declaration of standing in the place of death. This soul has clearly come to see his own death. At this point, he has no hope remaining in himself. What ambition can a corpse have? The difficulty with man, is the power of ambition

that keeps in the way of God working through him. The usable soul, before God, has to START in the position of death. We must die to ourselves. The pathway for life MUST START here. Our souls must cling to the dust!

Now this profitable position is not suicidal in heart. The Psalmist IS NOT ASKING FOR GOD TO KILL HIM. He is simply relating the position of death that he finds himself in. It is just as believers in Christ are dead in Christ, so we must stand in that place of death. What profit is there in that position? Look at the second part of this verse. It is only when we see our death, that we will ask for God to “give me life”, which is the more literal translation of the words translated, “*quicken thou me*”.

That life request is not in itself complete in this verse. The Psalmist could have finished it in just those words, but he doesn’t. He specifically asks for a particular life. One literal way of translating the “*according to thy word*” is “as your word”. At a simple glance, that may not seem to bear any difference, but in another sense there is a difference. In one way, the Psalmist prays for life as he has seen promised in God’s Word. He is praying according to promises. This is accurate. In the other way, the Psalmist prays for something that could only spring from a source of revelation. Christ is the living Word of God. It is truly only in Christ we have any real life. Prophetically, the Psalmist is asking for the life found in Christ.

Remember, until we see our death, we are not prepared to ask for life.

26 I have declared my ways, and thou hearest me: teach me thy statutes.

Here we find the “*ways*” brought up again. This being the way, or “highway” of his life. The broken Psalmist relates the ground upon which he has come before God. He has confessed before God his life of sin. His independence in his natural life. He has seen the powerlessness and futility of his own life and his soul has been brought to the dust. From this position, he has found the peace of knowing his prayer has been heard. Before, he could not have known God had heard his possibly many prayers. Now, after his openness before God of the conduct of his life, and dying to that course, he has the inner knowledge he has gotten through to God. Before, in his prayers, he might have taken the position of “faith” that his prayers were heard, but somehow

the certainty eluded him. Here, however, we do not find any statement of “believing” God heard him. The statement is simply from a “knowing” God has heard him. Living faith KNOWS.

From this position of faith, the Psalmist plainly takes the position of a disciple. He holds out his empty hands in request for what he knows he needs next. He has already sought the life that is only found in Christ. He now seeks to be equipped to walk according to that life in the understanding.

27 Make me to understand the way of thy precepts: so shall I talk of thy wondrous works.

Having confessed his ways, and having given those over to death, his heart cry is for the knowledge of God’s “*way*”. He approaches God with that searching heart. Not just a searching mind. He doesn’t just seek to know a list of rules of what he can and can’t do. He specifically is asking for God’s revelation of the “*way*” of God’s precepts. He knows, when he used to walk in his own way, there was a power that kept him in that dark path, so is there a power and life in God’s ways. It is that very power of life this Psalmist is thirsting for.

To understand the second part of this verse, we need to take a closer look at the Hebrew words that are used. The word translated as “*talk*” means “to meditate upon, ponder” as well as “speak”. The word translated “*wondrous*” meaning “to be extraordinary, difficult to understand”. From the more expansive definitions, we can see the thought goes beyond witnessing or preaching. The thought expounds the first part of the verse. It shows us the Psalmist knows he can gain light only through God shining His light in his heart and mind. With that light shining, the Psalmist will be able to meditate with understanding upon things which are beyond the natural man.

Facing The Inner Corruption

28 My soul melteth for heaviness: strengthen thou me according unto thy word.

Now we come to the poetic refrain of verse 25. The Psalmist has presented his heart state and the knowledge of what God can and will do for one who has come into that state. Verse 28 is not something down the road of time, however. It is

part of the same prayer, so the Psalmist returns to this same place of his crushed soul. This time the position is not in the dust and death. The Hebrew word translated “*melteth*” carries the basic meaning of “to drip, to leak, to weep (from tears)”. It presents the aspect of a wasting sorrow. He doesn’t state yet the cause of this sorrow, but focuses in on the weight that has crushed him in this hopelessness of heart.

The word translated as “*strengthen*” carries the thought of “arise, stand up”, being a position of strength, whereas the weak collapse to the ground when overcome. In verse 25, he sought life as in God’s Word, now we find the same word form and the seeking of strength. Before, the comparison was of death and life, now it is weakness and strength. The source for both life and strength is the same place: “as your word”.

29 Remove from me the way of lying: and grant me thy law graciously.

This verse starts with the Hebrew word for “*way*”. It is interesting to note this section’s verses start with that word, or a form of it, five of the eight times. “The Way” is a clearly critical thought and aspect of this section.

The Psalmist had been seeking for teaching and understanding. Here he makes a turn in seeking for something to be removed: lying or “deceit and fraud”. In a Biblical framework, “lying” can refer to idolatry. Idols are a lie. This might be the thought behind this expression. Another aspect would be the deceitfulness of our own hearts:

9 The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?

Jeremiah 17:9

From both, we need to seek God’s deliverance. I tell you, we are in great danger if we think we can handle even idolatry on our own. Remember that covetousness is idolatry as well as veneration of any images or “aids to worship” that we think help our “worship” experience. Even music can be idolatry if it becomes the “life” of our “worship” experience.

The second part of this verse is an interesting combination of words. It is actually two words. The one is for “torah” meaning God’s directions for us. This also has the meaning of law in many cases. The other word is for “favor, have mercy, graciousness”, or in New Testament thought we find grace. You