

pain. Like Paul, he asked God to removed the suffering. Such a request is not sin, but we must be like Paul and be ready for whatever answer God gives. Some suffering will be removed, others not. It is according to God's wisdom. Removed or not, God's comfort will always be available.

**85 The proud have digged pits for me, which are not after thy law.**

Here we see *“the proud”* again. The proud are always wicked. There is no exception. This should serve as a great warning to pray for God's mercy in keeping us humble. The proud also become the persecutors of the godly. I must say, “even in the church”, but maybe I should say, “especially’ in the church”.

The Psalmist is reporting the traps the wicked have laid to capture and destroy him. They go to great effort to entrap the righteous. They work hard at digging the pit. When it looks nice and deep, after much sweat from the toil, they will try and disguise and bait it. If they can't succeed in baiting, they will place one directly in the path the godly one trustingly walks in his daily tasks. In this world, if they cannot seduce their godly prey into corruption, beware of the plant in the church to destroy the fellowship. Maybe it will be through slander and gossip. Maybe through false charges. They are ruthless and filled with hatred. There is nothing too low for them.

The second half brings up their violations of God's “torath”. They willfully violate all that God has shown as His ways. These proud may be in the high places of law and government, even in the church government. They want to look lawful, but they have no love of God's laws. They must scheme to have the appearance of lawfulness, while they destroy the godly.

Remember the opponents of Daniel. They saw he could not be destroyed by unlawfulness unless they got the King to pass a law that violated the laws of God. They contrived and brought Daniel's sentence this way. He was thrown into the “pit” of the lions. God protected him. The next day they were thrown into that very pit, and their whole families.

**86 All thy commandments are faithful: they persecute me wrongfully; help thou me.**

A literal translation would be, “All Your com-

mandments faithful (true); lying they persecute me help me.”

We have seen how the proud will utter slanderous lies in persecuting the godly. The Psalmist is crying out in the midst of such destructive lies. The question comes up, “Why does he declare all God's commandments are faithful?” I believe he is declaring, like the Apostle Paul:

*11 For if I be an offender, or have committed any thing worthy of death, I refuse not to die: but if there be none of these things whereof these accuse me, no man may deliver me unto them. I appeal unto Caesar.* Acts 25:11

The Psalmist, likewise is not seeking to escape justice. He would stand up for God's laws, even if it meant his own death. He is not challenging lawful government. What he is crying out for, is God's defense from the lying accusations by which they are trying to set him up.

**87 They had almost consumed me upon earth; but I forsook not thy precepts.**

Here is the last occurrence of that word for “consume” in this section. It is one thing to die to self and be offered upon the altar to God. It is another to behold the world's attempt to burn you on the altars of their persecution. On the one hand, we face the temptations of the flesh. The war within our soul. On the other hand, there is the war against our lives, the persecution of those who fear God.

The Psalmist stands at the “end of his rope”, as it were. The “mountain climber” Psalmist is hanging onto his life sustaining rope, while the enemy is at the top, hacking with his hatchet. He sees just a few strands left that will sustain him, and they will be hacked away real soon. Seeing such a scene, he doesn't take the course you would expect. He suddenly turns. There is no more cry for help. When the final end is in sight, only one thing matters. Self preservation must be forgotten, only faithfulness must remain. He may yet, like Daniel in the lion's den, be miraculously preserved from the death sentence, but that failing, he holds to his commitment: *“I forsook not thy precepts.”* Though it means death, I will obey you to the grave!

**88 Quicken me after thy lovingkindness; so shall I keep the testimony of thy mouth.**

A literal translation goes, “As Your mercy give

me life; and I will observe (guard, keep) testimonies Your mouth”. We may loose our life in this world, but we can hope in the eternal life God will give. In that God-given life of the Spirit in Christ Jesus, we must stand committed to that which is the living testimony of God. The very Word of Life, that has come straight from the mouth of the Father. We must not deny Christ, we must, like this Psalmist, “observe, guard and keep” that testimony of God. That strength can be found in dependence upon God's providing overcoming life in the Spirit, according to His merciful provision.

I want to make mention that no title of God, nor His name, was used in this section. I believe the reason was in the suffering, the Psalmist looked alone. He never was abandoned, but the trials tend to obscure our sight of God. Even though our vision is blinded by the thick smoke, God is there and we must remain faithful to the end.

Psalm  
119

Caph

Faithful  
To  
The  
End

11

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

כָּל־תְּהִלַּת לַחֲשׂוֹעַתְךָ נַפְשִׁי לְדַבְרֶךָ יִחְלָתִי:	81
כָּלוּ עֵינַי לְאִמְרֶתְךָ לֵאמֹר מִתִּי תִנְחַמְנִי:	82
כִּי־הָיִיתִי כְּנֹאֵד בְּקִיטוֹר חֲקִיד לֹא שָׁכַחְתִּי:	83
כַּמָּה יְמֵי־עֲבָדְךָ מִתִּי תַעֲשֶׂה בְרַדְפֵי מוֹשָׁפֵט:	84
כְּרוּלֵי זָדִים שִׁיחוֹת אֲשֶׁר לֹא כְתוּרְתְּךָ:	85
כָּל־מִצְוֹתֶיךָ אֲמוּנָה שִׁקְר רַדְפוּנִי עֲזַרְנִי:	86
כַּמַּעַט כָּלוּנִי בְּאָרְץ וְאֲנִי לֹא־עֹזְבֶתִי בַקְדֻיךָ:	87
כְּחֹסְדְּךָ חַיִּי וְאֲשַׁמְרָה עֲדוֹת פִּיךָ:	88

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 entitled “Faithful To The End”

## Psalm 119

Caph

81 My soul fainteth for thy salvation: *but* I hope in thy word.

82 Mine eyes fail for thy word, saying, When wilt thou comfort me?

83 For I am become like a bottle in the smoke; *yet* do I not forget thy statutes.

84 How many *are* the days of thy servant? when wilt thou execute judgment on them that persecute me?

85 The proud have digged pits for me, which *are* not after thy law.

86 All thy commandments *are* faithful: they persecute me wrongfully; help thou me.

87 They had almost consumed me upon earth; but I forsook not thy precepts.

88 Quicken me after thy lovingkindness; so shall I keep the testimony of thy mouth.

This is the eleventh 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. Caph is the eleventh letter, so each verse, in the Hebrew, begins with a word starting with the letter Caph.

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. Caph means, “A wing; the hollow of the hand or palm”. 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, we see the symbol of the opened hand. The previous letter of Jod presented the closed hand. The hand at work. This letter indicates the open hand, exposing the palm. This symbol of open hands also represents the hands held open to God in worship and surrender. I believe we see that from the very first verse.

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.

## The Whole Burnt Offering

### **81 My soul fainteth for thy salvation: but I hope in thy word.**

This verse contains such beautiful words of sacrifice to God. Look at a literal translation of this, “Is being consumed for Your salvations my soul; to Your word I hope.” That first word in the Hebrew is the word for “being consumed”. Translated here as “*fainteth*”. The King James translators did translate that word as “consume” 57 times and only twice as “fainteth”. To the Jewish understanding, this verse would indicate a clear reference to the sacrificial system. They practiced the offering up of whole burnt sacrifices to the LORD. The sacrifice was literally “consumed” upon the altar to the LORD. This Psalmist is alluding to that in reference to himself. The burnt offerings were consumed for their salvations. This shows the consecration and offering of his life, “being consumed” upon the altar

of sacrifice to God. Christ bore the cross, but we also are to bear our cross. This is the same picture. We are living, yet dieing to ourselves. Our lives are to be sacrifices to God for the work of the Gospel. The work showing God’s salvations. Salvations (plural) in view of eternity, and in daily life in overcoming the power of sin in our lives. This is the open hand of worship and free will offering.

Now the question to some may be, “Why would anyone do this?” Look at that second half. We find the “*word*”, being that term mostly referring to the written Word. Most of mankind hopes in this life. Their hopes are their dreams and ambitions, their careers and houses, building and attaining. These are the hopes of the souls of men. For the man who lives his life as a continual daily offering to God, his hope is elsewhere. It is based upon God’s Word. He walks, and dies, by faith. That is where his hope is.

### **82 Mine eyes fail for thy word, saying, When wilt thou comfort me?**

The word for “*fail*” here is the same word used in the previous verse for “*fainteth*”. The previous was in the plural, this case is in the singular. A literal translation could be rendered, “Consumed my eyes to words you have spoken; to speak when will You comfort me?”. This could be presenting the longing look for God to fulfill His promises of comfort. I believe, though, the switch takes place in the second half of the verse, while the first half is still referring to consecration. From what follows, we can see this man is undergoing persecution. He has offered himself to God, to live a life dieing to himself in service to God. He has willingly chosen to offer himself to God, but here we see his eyes likewise were offered to God. In one sense, where our eyes go, our heart goes. This man may be referring to the commitment of his eyes. They are also offered to faithfulness to what God has said. He guards them against covetousness, idolatry and lust.

The second half of this verse takes us to the suffering he has faced, due to his consecrations. In dieing to ourselves, there is suffering. That is what it means to “bare our cross”. Death to the flesh is never pleasant. It brings suffering to our soul’s selfishness as well as suffering from persecutions.

In his request for comfort, he shows he has grounds for hoping for a present comfort from God’s Word. All his hopes are not just in the world

to come. God has promised comfort for this world. It helps to know such care is God’s delight to provide for us in this life.

(I do want to say the rendering the King James Translators choose for these first two verses is a possibility, based upon an overall view of the suffering the Psalmist details. They tried to harmonize the thought on a difficult portion. Their rendering follows consistent with the suffering. The “*eyes fail*” is even more difficult, for it could have been using the same term as it turned a play on words. I would say their intentions were good, but I must defer to the understanding I have described. These just show some of the difficulties translators have to wrestle with. It is not an easy task and must be committed to God to forgive our human failures in such tasks. This should help us to remember to always keep an open mind to hear what others have to say as they look closely at God’s Word. No human is above error and only God’s providentially preserved Greek and Hebrew manuscripts contain the actual inspired, infallible texts. We are dealing with something holy and must approach such in fear and trembling.)

### **83 For I am become like a bottle in the smoke; yet do I not forget thy statutes.**

The “*bottle*” the Psalmist knew was not a glass bottle, like we use today. These were skin (leather) bottles. I heard a message, given by C. H. Spurgeon, on a “bottle in the smoke”. He was saying, in the middle east they would hang their bottles in their homes. They would have a fire and the smoke would blacken everything higher, such as these leather bottles. They would become covered with soot and totally blackened on the outside and possibly a dry and cracked outer portion, while the inside preserved the contents. He likened this to the suffering we endure from the outside. This is a definite possibility.

I would like to suggest another thought here. In line with the burnt offering being “consumed”. The Psalmist has been well coated with that smoke of his offering of self. The bottle has been supernaturally preserved by God, in the midst of the fire. The bottle has not burst and ruined its contents. As the words of God to Paul:

*9 And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in*

*my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. 10 Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ’s sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong. 2 Corinthians 12:9,10*

Our Psalmist has indeed been in the fire but not destroyed, only affected externally. God’s grace shined in the glory that Paul was describing.

The conclusion of this verse declares his solid rock foundation. Though the outside suffered, he held fast to the proper foundation. He did not forget God’s statutes. One of God’s condemnations to leaders in Israel was that they had forgotten His Words. They had learned them and not held them in esteem to value their remembrance. Not so with this man. Though he suffered, he refused to allow the Words to be snatched from his heart.

## Faithful To The End

### **84 How many are the days of thy servant? when wilt thou execute judgment on them that persecute me?**

The Psalmist takes up the position of “*servant*” as he pleads for God’s help. He stands on a humble ground, but still property of God. He is committedly living for God, and such attracts the attacks of the proud. Part of his burnt offering of self is indeed the faithfulness in the face of such enemies. He could sell out for some respite, but he refuses to do such. He knows the irritation and blackening of the smoke holding to such a position. The proud point, and shout their accusations, “Look how black and filthy he is. Who would even want to touch such?” Inside that bottle, though, is the precious wine that has not been ruined, maybe even improved.

Though the rain helps the plants to grow, there is the need for some sunshine. This Psalmist is crying to God for the sunshine. He reminds God that he is only here a short time. The wicked seem to continue without God’s hand of judgment for so long. He knows God brings judgment on the wicked, but he feels he will expire before God’s hand is stretched out in wrath. He pleads for God to act, before he is destroyed. If they continue, unjudged, he perceives it will be to his destruction. He loves God and is committed, come what may, but he has not become inhuman. He knows