

through adversaries in the flesh scorning and shaming him, we can perceive our Psalmist's freedom. Before was oppression, now, the chains of demonic and inner oppression have fallen away. Because he has held to the path, as did Pilgrim in Pilgrim's Progress, he has come to a better place. I believe this is the "liberty" we are seeing referenced to here.

46 I will speak of thy testimonies also before kings, and will not be ashamed.

We find this "speak" to be our famous word for "word". We have beheld this in reference to God's written word. Why didn't he use the word that has a clearer reference to speech? To a degree the words are interchangeable, but I believe there is a distinct reason for the one being chosen over the other. This Psalmist has learned that the stance of victorious warfare is held only by keeping that word of truth, of verse 43, in his mouth. That was a major part of his battle, to not loose that! His whole heart's desire is to speak God's Words, not his own.

In this position of unashamed witnessing before the great men of this earth, it should be noted that he uses the term "testimonies". In giving testimony, he is faithfully presenting God's testimonies as a witness before them. This is a critical difference to the Neo-Evangelical preaching of today. Today we see preachers trying to win converts in giving testimony of, "God will heal you of all your hurts and take your pain". That is not the kind of preaching we see this Psalmist did. That is not the kind of preaching we saw taking place in the New Testament. They preached the testimony of God's judgment on sin and the call to repentance. The people cried, "What shall we do to be saved?" They didn't cry, "What shall we do to be healed of all our hurts and pains?" Those who come "forward" on grounds of "hurts and pains" are not coming on holy ground. They haven't beheld the holy testimonies of God's righteous character and hatred of sins and judgment to come. Such are false conversions. The result, a false group of people calling themselves the Church!

BEHOLD PAUL'S PREACHING:

25 And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee. Acts 24:25

Briefly about the unashamed witness. We be-

hold the scorn and shame the leaders of our day are heaping upon the godly. We see them accusing of "hate speech" anyone who declares God's true testimonies against iniquity. They would cover us with shame and reproach. The Psalmist, who knows God's testimonies, knows better and is not ashamed, no matter how perversely the king would say otherwise. You see, he is the ambassador of the Greatest King!

47 And I will delight myself in thy commandments, which I have loved.

This soldier of the faith is not only unashamed, but is filled with pleasure in cherishing God's commandments. He relishes in beholding them and HE LOVES THEM! Oh, to this man God's commandments are indeed not grievous.

On this side of his battle, we have seen the invigorated walk (verse 45), we saw the speech of life and freedom from shame (verse 46), and now we see the delight of his heart and his love. Every bit of him is radiating his being filled with God's Word in the power of life. This man has been transformed.

48 My hands also will I lift up unto thy commandments, which I have loved; and I will meditate in thy statutes.

Verses 47 and 48 join together at the end of this section in a poetic style. They are the manifestation of that delight and joyous love. It is a type of glad crescendo.

The "hands" is a specific term for hands referring to open hands, presenting the palms. These are neither hands of work or of threat, they are hands that wait to receive from God.

The first part of this verse parallels the first part of verse 47 in delighting in God's commandments and lifting up open hands to receive of His commandments. The one is the result of the other. Each is capped with the expression of love for those commandments.

This is brought to a close with an interesting kind of scrunching. This section has been prefixed with the Vau to the first word for each verse. Talk about something that was a no no in English writing. Each verse was literally begun with "And"! Throughout Psalm 119, each section has exactly 8 verses. They couldn't ruin the meter by adding a half verse so we see that little extra the Psalmist


just HAD to add. Verses 47 and 48 end the Hebrew poetic repeat at "I have loved". These last words for "I will meditate in thy statutes" are likewise prefaced with Vau, but are shoved up as the odd attachment to the last verse. Maybe the Psalmist's purpose had something to do with the musical meter. Whether this is the case or not, it must clearly hold a needed significance. If we consider the words, we must see these as the last words of a wonderful battle and victorious overcoming life for God. When all is said and done, he leaves us with this one "necessary thing" as it were. I believe we can see the same in these words from the Gospel:

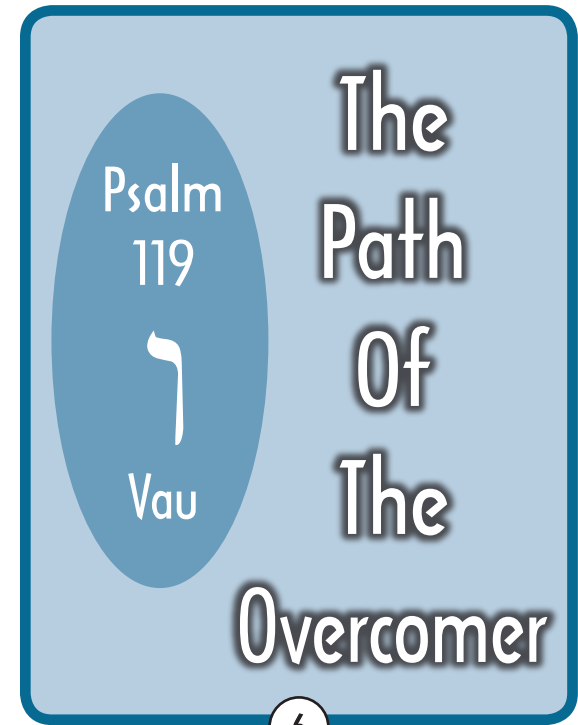
38 Now it came to pass, as they went, that he entered into a certain village: and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house. 39 And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word. 40 But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me. 41 And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: 42 But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her. Luke 10:38-42

Mary was, in a most living way, meditating in God's statutes. Sitting in fellowship and listening to the Lord Jesus Christ is that final necessary thing.

Hebrew reads from right to left. Notice the "Vau" that precedes each verse:

וַיְבֹאֵנִי חֶסֶדְךָ יְהוָה	41
וְאֶעֱנֶה חֶרְפִּי דְבָר	42
וְאֶל־תִּצַּל מִפִּי דְבַר־אֱמֶת עַד־מָאד	43
וְאֲשַׁמְרָה תּוֹרָתְךָ תָּמִיד	44
וְאֶתְחַלְּקָה בְּרִחְבָּה	45
וְאֶדְבְּרָה בַעֲדוֹתֶיךָ נֶגֶד מְלָכִים	46
וְאֲשַׁתְּעֶשֶׂע בַּמִּצְוֹתֶיךָ	47
וְאֲשָׂא־כַפִּי אֶל־מִצְוֹתֶיךָ	48

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Psalm 119

Vau

41 Let thy mercies come also unto me, O LORD, even thy salvation, according to thy word.

42 So shall I have wherewith to answer him that reproacheth me: for I trust in thy word.

43 And take not the word of truth utterly out of my mouth; for I have hoped in thy judgments.

44 So shall I keep thy law continually for ever and ever.

45 And I will walk at liberty: for I seek thy precepts.

46 I will speak of thy testimonies also before kings, and will not be ashamed.

47 And I will delight myself in thy commandments, which I have loved.

48 My hands also will I lift up unto thy commandments, which I have loved; and I will meditate in thy statutes.

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

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. Vau means, “A nail or a hook, as in hooks for hanging curtains”. 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 can see the functional use of holding together that the nail or hook serves.

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 Battleground of Faith

41 Let thy mercies come also unto me, O LORD, even thy salvation, according to thy word.

This section carries the thought of the lead-in letter in a very clear manner. I read once that the hook or peg, that the word of the letter meant, had an exclusive reference to the hooks or pegs of the Tabernacle. That means it was reserved exclusively for the House of the LORD. Its function was the “stitching”, in a fashion, that joined all the building into a unit. This section rests upon the LORD’s mercies. That is the vital stitching, or pegging, that holds God’s house as a completed unit. Without that, it could never be assembled.

The receipt of God’s saving mercies are dependent upon the relationship with Him. Here again we see this section starts with that name of Yahweh in his prayer.

We can plead for Yahweh’s mercy. Now there are a multitude of specific mercies we could plead for, but the second part of this verse specifies what the Psalmist is after. He is seeking God’s “salvations” “as His words of speech”. Both are specifically in

the plural and it is more specifically God’s active words as in comparison to the written word.

Under New Testament understanding, we tend to only think of God’s “salvation” in the singular. The salvation from God’s eternal wrath. The Psalmist has in mind a broader concept in view. I see a distinct reference to Christ as our Saviour, He being God’s living Word in action who brings us our Salvation.

God’s salvation provision is something plural. His work of deliverance isn’t just “for the world to come”, it is something that we will meet with EVERY DAY. Except it be daily, we cannot walk a life of overcoming victory over sin. His “salvations” are also daily with us as we oppose the powers of this world.

42 So shall I have wherewith to answer him that reproacheth me: for I trust in thy word.

A more literal translation would be, “And I will answer my reprovener (scorner, blasphemer) a word, for I trust in Your Word (more specifically the written Word).”

In this verse we see the heart of spiritual battle. We saw, in verse 41, his position in Yahweh’s provided merciful salvations. These provide the base for the battle position of this verse. There is the enemy, in spiritual places, who accuses the brethren. In the battles with Satan, we see and hear the assaults that charge us as unclean. Standing in God’s grace, we can respond to Satan as a liar, knowing we have been covered by God’s merciful salvation. Satan will hurl the doubts, but we will stand firm as we do the same as this Psalmist. He will successfully resist his opponent with “the Word”, both Christ as well as the written Word.

The “for” is an important factor here as well. It tells us he can overcome the counter attack of his reproacher because he “trusts” in God’s Word. His grounds are *in* the Word, but *through* “faith”. Victorious spiritual warfare was the same in the Old Testament times as it is today.

43 And take not the word of truth utterly out of my mouth; for I have hoped in thy judgments.

In this verse we see the confession of his “trust”. We find that same “word” we have encountered twice before in verse 42. That “word”, upon which he

stands in battle, is that of “truth” and “faithfulness”. The Hebrew word carries both these meanings.

For those who have read *Pilgrim’s Progress*, you will be familiar with Pilgrim’s battle with Apollyon. He wielded his sword of God’s Word in that horrific battle with the devil. It depicted the fierceness of battle and the absolute need to not neglect the sword of God’s Word. This Psalmist is depicting a ferocious battle as well. The first half of this verse is a little more difficult to render, but I believe the thought pictured could be put, “do not let your true and faithful words fail to come from my mouth, come what may”.

Do you begin to grasp the significance of what he has just said? He is standing upon God’s Word in faith, and even in that he is counting upon God’s grace to continue in that ground. He is asking for God to sustain him in the faith.

The concluding portion is so settled and lovely. The Psalmist asks for this warfare grace, knowing he has done what God called for. The “judgments” reflecting God’s evaluations and righteous declarations in view of assorted issues. The Psalmist has seen these and knows:

*“Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?”
end of Genesis 18:25*

In his faith, he abides in hope. It is because of his faith, he has hope; and, it is because he has the right heart-response to God’s light, that he can pose his confidence. God respects that, and will answer his prayer for abiding and standing on God’s Words.

44 So shall I keep thy law continually for ever and ever.

As we find in the epistle of James:

17 Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. James 2:17

So we find the mirror declaration of the Psalmist’s faith and the consecration to obey the directions God has shown.

The word translated “law” here is “torath”, that is the plural form. As we saw God’s salvations plural, so we see His instructions and guidance plural. If we resist His Word, then maybe He will send a brother or sister with a word of correction. Do we resist the hand of God there as well? This Psalmist has a more sensitive spirit. He seals the vow of his consecration, as it were, to eternal faithfulness.

The Overcomer’s Victory

45 And I will walk at liberty: for I seek thy precepts.

There is a wonderful turn at this point of this section. Until now, we have seen the war front that we all must face. The pathway of live and victory that comes only via a battle. The grounds for victory in that battle have been laid before us. Life is not all battles though. There is a time for the war and a time for the fruit of that battle. God says, “thus far and no further” in the war fronts we must face. To one it goes so far, to another a different distance. Whatever God has determined for each of us, we have this confidence:

12 Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. 13 There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it. 1 Corinthians 10:12,13

Paul made reference to that war front in verse 12 and the comfort and hope in verse 13 in 1 Corinthians.

Verse 45, of this Psalm, takes an upbeat direction. I love the KJB rendition for the first half, but I really wondered about that term “liberty”. In the New Testament, liberty is a significant term, especially in relation to the law. I dug into these terms and found the term translated “walk” can be translated as “proceed”. The word translated “liberty” can be translated as “large, broad, wide”.

This “proceed” indicates that which comes from what has come before. What he is about to declare is based upon coming from the position reached in verse 44. The second portion tells us he will proceed because he is established to seek God’s precepts. The work of war has been done, and the ground established and held. Due to this victory, he is free to proceed.

Now I want to take a step back to that term “liberty”. It is prefixed with the word for “in”. So we have our Psalmist saying he will proceed in a large, broad or wide way. From the tenor of this verse through this section’s end, we can perceive this is a way of unashamed confidence. Before he faced shame cast upon him. Whether this be directly in accusations against his conscience or