

(Zayin)

- 49) Remember the word to Your servant, In which you have made me hope.
- 50) This is my comfort in my affliction, That Your word has revived me.
- 51) The arrogant utterly deride me, Yet I do not turn aside from Your law.
- 52) I have remembered Your ordinances from of old, O Lord, and comfort myself.
- 53) Burning indignation has seized me because of the wicked, Who forsake Your law.
- 54) Your statutes are my songs in the house of my pilgrimage.
- 55) O Lord, I remember Your name in the night, And keep Your law.
- 56) This has become mine, that I observe Your precepts.

We come now to our seventh section of Psalm 119, which is the seventh letter of the Hebrew alphabet, which is the letter “z” (zayin). Every verse in this eight verse section begins with a word that starts with this letter. The underlined words in your notes are the words that actually begin the Hebrew verses and each word starts with the letter “z.”

This is the most amazing Psalm in all of the Scriptures. It is a Psalm that is designed to magnify God’s Word. This is why there are twenty-two sections. There are twenty-two letters in the Hebrew alphabet, and the Scriptures of the O.T. were written in Hebrew. So each section magnifies God’s Word.

Now we have been seeing that a theme has surfaced in this Psalm and that theme is no matter what this writer was experiencing in life, his focus was on the written Word of God. In times of adversity, his focus was on the written Scriptures. In times of hostility, his focus was on the written Scriptures. In times of depression, his focus was on the written Scriptures. In times when he was surrounded by proud, arrogant people who mocked him and mocked God, his focus was on the written Scriptures. This writer was totally and completely focused on the written Scriptures.

Now each section of this Psalm brings a little something extra to the point of the importance of the written Scriptures. When we go through this section what we see is this:

WHEN WE ARE EXPERIENCING TRIALS AND TROUBLES AND AFFLICTIONS, WE NEED TO REMEMBER THAT OUR HOPE AND OUR COMFORT WILL COME FROM GOD’S WORD.

As we look down through this section, we cannot help but observe that three times the English word “remember” is used (**119:49, 52, 55**). The Hebrew word is “za-car” and this word means to recollect something or bring something back to your mind (William Gesenius, *Hebrew Lexicon*, p. 244).

So one critical thesis of this section is that in moments of trials and afflictions we need to keep bringing back to our minds the Word of God. **This part of Psalm 119 is designed to really focus our memory on God's written Word.**

Another word we see twice in this section is the word "comfort" (119:50, 52). This Hebrew word "na-calm" is one that means to find comfort and consolation in times of grieving and lamentation. This word specifically has to do with remembering how God avenges His people and finding comfort in realizing this (*Ibid.*, p. 544).

So the writer learned a great lesson and that is we can find hope and comfort when we are going through difficult times knowing that God will take care of everything; and the place where we get this stability is by remembering the Word of God. When he found himself in difficult situations, he brought back to his mind eternal truths from God's Word; specifically those truths that reminded him God will settle scores.

Now there are eight reasons why it is important to continually remember God's Word in all situations and circumstances:

REASON #1 – Remembering God's Word will give us hope. **119:49**

The writer reminds God that His Word makes promises to His servants and it is this reality that really gives him hope.

Now when we are serving God and find ourselves in difficult or adverse circumstances, remembering God's Word can give us hope. When we remember that God has made many wonderful promises of all kinds of things for His people and for His servants, it does fill the soul with hope.

A wise Bible teacher used to say to people who were fretting—"You know, God has promised to take care of everyone except you with your particular circumstances. In your case His promise of not leaving you or forsaking you doesn't apply." He always made his point.

Sometimes a very wise prayer for us to make is "God, please do what you have said."

REASON #2 – Remembering God's Word will give us comfort. **119:50**

When the writer found himself afflicted and in need of comfort, he turned to the Word of God. The Word of God can give comfort, which means it can console and encourage.

It can give consolation and encouragement to one who is afflicted. That word "affliction" is one that speaks of both oppression and depression (*Ibid.*, p. 642). God's righteous people go through many things that are afflictions. But God never calls His people to go through them alone. We have Him and we have His Word.

When we find ourselves oppressed and depressed, it is the Word of God that has the power to “revive” us. It does not matter how low or miserable the person is; it is the Word of God that can pump life back into our veins.

When Jesus Christ was here on earth, He promised that He would not leave us comfortless (i.e. John 15:26; 16:7). There are two things Jesus Christ has specifically authorized to comfort His people and revive His people:

- 1) He has given His people His Spirit;
- 2) He has given His people His Word.

In His Word are promises of His grace, love, mercy and care.

By simply remembering this is comforting.

REASON #3 – Remembering God’s Word will give us direction. **119:51**

Arrogant people mock godly people and they mock God’s Word. Charles Bridges said these kinds of people are one of our afflictions.

I love what Charles Spurgeon said here: “Conceited sinners make footballs of godly men” (*Psalms*, p. 527). Many of the problems that God’s people will face in life will be due to godless, arrogant, conceited, deceitful and lying people. These kinds of people will mock and deride one who is godly.

When we look to the Scriptures we discover that godless, conceited, deceitful people troubled Job, David, Daniel, Paul, and, of course, Jesus Christ. The key to coping and being victorious in the midst of these kinds of people is to stay focused on God’s Word. Stay steady and not turn aside or away from God’s Word. God’s Word will give direction and guidance to one under attack.

The ridicule of the scoffer can actually prompt us to a deeper commitment to understand and apply God’s Word. William Plummer, a statesman and a lay preacher of the 1700’s, said, “It is a great thing in a soldier to behave well under fire; but it is a greater thing for a soldier of the cross to be unflinching in the day of his trial” (*Ibid.*, p. 527).

REASON #4 – Remembering God’s Word will give us comfort. **119:52**

Again the writer reemphasizes that it is the Word of God that can bring comfort to people. But in this verse, he states that comfort comes by remembering the ordinances of old. We can find comfort by remembering what God has done in past times. One writer said, “the history of the church is a precious volume.”

Now what the writer specifically has in mind is remembering the regulations that God has revealed to Israel in past distant time.

He could think back on the fact that God tracked down those who hurt His people. Dr. Anderson said he could think back on the times when God saved Israel and delivered Israel because of promises in His Word (*Psalms*, p. 824).

Certainly there would be comfort found in what God did to the Philistines. There would be comfort in remembering what God did to the Egyptians, the Babylonians, the Medes, the Persians, Greece and Rome.

It would be comforting to remember what God did to Haman, who hated Mordecai because he was Jewish. What a memory to have as to how he plotted to exterminate the Jew and God ended up destroying him. Those are good things for God's people to remember.

One of the best things we can do to find comfort is to remember back to what God has done in past history.

REASON #5 – Remembering God's Word will give us right indignation. **119:53**

Do not miss what is said in this verse. People who are right with God will be horrified and angered by those who think lightly of God's Word. Those who are right with God have a "burning indignation" against those who mock and defy God's written Word. Frankly, we ought to burn with anger over the irreverent things we are seeing in churches and denominations.

Wicked people do not care about an accurate understanding of God's Word and that should anger us. When we see godless, arrogant people mocking God's Word and living defiantly against it, it should make us angry.

That word "indignation" is an interesting word. It speaks of violent heat (William Gesenius, *Hebrew Lexicon*, p. 246). Many commentators have observed this "violent heat" has hellish overtones. People who make fun of God's Word should cause us to burn in anger, but we can know that one day they will burn in hell.

When we see the wicked mocking God's Word and defying it, and we remember they will burn and face the wrath of God, it does bring some comfort and hope.

There is a place for righteous, godly anger and indignation.

REASON #6 – Remembering God's Word will give us a song. **119:54**

The prepositional phrase "in the house of my pilgrimage" refers to the problems and trials that we face while we live here on this earth. As believers, we live here in houses for a time and we go through difficulties and setbacks.

It is good to remember that we are just "pilgrims" passing through this world and the thing that can put a song in our hearts and minds is the Word of God.

Watching Fox News will not put a song in your heart. Reading the Newspaper will not put a song in your heart. Watching the stock market will not put a song in your heart. But God's Word will. God's Word can. God's Word does put a song in our heart.

REASON #7 – Remembering God's Word will give us security. **119:55**

No matter how dark things are in life, God's Word gives us our hope and security. There were two things the writer did during dark times:

- 1) He always remembered the name of God that was revealed in the Word.
- 2) He always tried to obey what God had revealed in His Word.

During dark times of life, this writer was committed to knowing God through His Word and obeying God's Word.

REASON #8 – Remembering God's Word will give us character. **119:56**

The writer concludes this section by saying, remembering and obeying God's Word has brought me comfort and hope and "this has become mine."

So when the writer went through dark times, he found his great comfort and hope in God's Word.

We cannot ever minimize the importance of God's Word. It is that which can revive us and stabilize us in the midst of a world that is wicked.