

(Ayin)

- 121) I have done justice and righteousness; Do not leave me to my oppressors.
- 122) Be surety for Your servant for good; Do not let the arrogant oppress me.
- 123) My eyes fail with longing for Your salvation and Your righteous word.
- 124) Deal with Your servant according to Your lovingkindness and teach me Your statutes.
- 125) I am Your servant; give me understanding, that I may know Your testimonies.
- 126) It is time for the Lord to act, For they have broken your law.
- 127) Therefore I love your commandments Above gold, yes, above fine gold.
- 128) Therefore I esteem right all Your precepts concerning everything, I hate every false way.

We come now to our 16th eight verse section of Psalm 119. This section is the 16th letter of the Hebrew alphabet which is “ayin.” All first words in this section begin with a Hebrew word that starts with this letter.

The purpose of this is to magnify the written Word of God and to show the necessity of studying God’s Word systematically.

Now as we go down through this section, we cannot help but notice the repetition of the noun “servant.” That word is used three times in this eight verse section (**vs. 122, 124, 125**).

Now the word “servant” (ebed) refers to one who not only worships God, but also one who takes on the lowly position of being a servant/worker. A servant works and labors for a master and makes himself subject to the one he serves (Brown, Driver, Briggs, *Hebrew Lexicon*, pp. 712-713). Now if this Psalm is written by David, then he was a king who viewed himself as a servant of God.

So this section is written from the perspective that one is a servant of God. In fact, it is this reality that prompts the writer to appeal to God, expecting that God will answer him, assist him and acquit him.

The point we want to see is this:

AS A FAITHFUL SERVANT OF GOD, ONE IS IN A POSITION TO REQUEST SPECIFIC THINGS FROM GOD AND CAN EXPECT TO RECEIVE CERTAIN ANSWERS FROM GOD.

Now it is important to realize that the writer was not pursuing a life of sin, but the life of a servant. He was faithfully serving God and doing God’s work. When you are doing that, you are in a position to see God do some good things.

Now I want to analyze these verses under two main themes:

THEME #1 – What the faithful servant did.

Now the point of this is to testify before God how the writer lived his life. He is going to ask God for things and he uses as a basis for that his faithful service for the Lord.

There are four specific areas of faithfulness that he brings out before God:

Area of Faithfulness #1 - He always tried to do what was just and righteous. **119:121**

It is clear from this opening verse that the writer had always tried to act in such a way that he did what was just and righteous.

Now the word “just” refers to someone who must make some governing decision of judgment. It carries with it the idea of making some judgment of vindication or condemnation (*Ibid.*, p. 1047). So what he is saying is that whenever I was in a situation where I had to make some judgment, I always did my best to make the right judgment.

In fact, he follows that up by saying I always tried to make judgments that were righteous. That is they lined up with the righteous standards found in the Word of God.

So whenever a judicial decision needed to be made, this writer did his best to make a fair and accurate decision based on God’s Word.

Area of Faithfulness #2 - He always kept his focus on the written Word of God. **119:123**

Now the writer spent so much time in the Word of God that his eyes “failed.” What that means is that his eyes were totally spent, finished and consumed (William Gesenius, *Hebrew Lexicon*, p. 398).

This writer was so focused on looking for God’s deliverance that he had read about in the Word of God that at times his eyesight gave out.

It is clear that this writer carefully studied God’s Word to the point of being nearly blind. As a servant of God he was driven to study God’s Word.

His eyes could fail; his strength could fail but God could not ever fail.

Area of Faithfulness #3 - He loved and esteemed all of God’s written Word. **119:127-128a**

This is one of the great marks of a true servant of God. A true servant of God has a passion to know “all” of God’s Word. This writer wanted to know “everything” in the Word of God. In fact, he loved God’s Word more than money. Money is a temporal and tangible reality that can bring comfort and ease in this life.

However, God's Word is eternal and tangible and it can bring great reward in the next life. What this writer wanted was "not the wealth of the world, but the wealth of the Word."

Now not too many people think this way about God's Word, but this writer did. In our day, if you have a lottery jackpot with a chance for people to win money, they will line up to buy tickets.

We are a church who gives our high school graduates a new Bible when they graduate and I have known of at least three graduates who would not even come to church to get their Bible. They apparently don't see the value in the Word of God.

Well this writer did. He saw the value of God's written Word. In fact, he loved and revered "all" of it, every bit of it and "everything" in it.

He did not pick and choose bits and pieces of the Bible, he loved it all. He loved the positives and the negatives. He loved the encouragements and the rebukes. We could say it this way: this writer loved the "whole counsel of God." He loved and esteemed every passage equally.

Area of Faithfulness #4 - He hated every false way. 119:128b

As we have been seeing, a true servant of God develops a proper hatred. A true servant of God will love the things God loves and will hate the things God hates. For example, in Proverbs 6:16-19 there is a list of seven things God hates. In that list, lying is mentioned twice (6:17, 19). We already know from verse 113 that the writer hated those who were "double-minded."

Obviously God hates whatever is false and so did David. We live in a day when so much emphasis is on love, but in order for one to be a true servant of God, there also must be an emphasis on "hate." Both are part of the character of God.

THEME #2 – What the faithful servant requested.

Because of those areas of faithfulness, the servant makes five requests:

Request #1 - The request against arrogant oppressors. 119:121b, 122b

The writer asks God not to leave him to the oppressors or let the arrogant oppress him.

Now the word "oppress" is one that refers to one who defrauds a person through violent, unjust and oppressive ways. This word describes one who is proud and arrogant and who is out to defraud and to injure another person (*Ibid.*, p. 660).

Because the writer had loved the Word and always tried to do what was just and righteous, he asks God to intervene in his behalf and not allow the arrogant oppressors to defeat him. When you are a true servant of God, you will cross paths with arrogant people who will rise up, seeking to defraud and destroy you.

We are living in a world of arrogant oppressors and our prayer should be God don't leave us here, come and rapture us and get us out of here.

Request #2 - The request for God's protection. **119:122a**

The writer asks God to be a "surety" for him for that which was good. In other words, He asked God to watch over him and let good things happen to him. This is especially needed when faced with arrogant oppressors.

Request #3 - The request for God's mercy. **119:124a**

The "mercy" or "lovingkindness" of God is that which enables Him to be gracious and merciful to those who are helpless and hurting. Now because he loved God's Word and sought to obey God's Word, he was in a good position to experience the mercy of God.

Request #4 - The request for Divine understanding. **119:124b-125**

Notice the emphasis placed here on wanting to know God's Word. He asks God to teach him His Word (**124b**); he asks God to give him understanding of God's Word (**125a**) and he asks God to cause him to know God's Word (**125b**).

The ability to know and understand God's Word is a Divine and blessed grant from God. What is intriguing about this request to know more of God's Word is that it is made by one who is writing God's Word. We know that he read the Scriptures so much that his eyes were nearly blind (**123**). But he still wanted to study more and learn more.

True servants of God have a passion to know God's Word.

Request #5 - The request for immediate action. **119:126**

He wanted God to act against these arrogant oppressors right now. They did not care about God or His Word; in fact, they blatantly broke and violated the Word of God.

From this writer's perspective, it was time for God to act. This was a faithful servant who carefully studied the Scriptures and he concluded it was time for God to act.

John Phillips told the story of George Mueller, who one time was traveling on a ship to a place he knew God wanted him to go. A heavy fog came down and the ship slowed down to a crawl.

Mueller asked the captain if they would make it on time and the captain said if the fog doesn't lift, no, we won't. So Mueller said, "Very well we shall ask the Lord to take the fog away." Mueller knelt down and asked God to remove the fog immediately. Well the captain was about to pray and Mueller put his hand on him and said you don't need to pray, and the captain said, "Why?" He said the fog is already gone (*Psalms*, p. 378).

Immediate prayer for immediate action. God answered that prayer.