

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Psalms: God's Nurture Of The Inner Man In The Life Of Faith

CXIX: Appreciating And Applying Scripture For Every Spiritual Need, Psalm 119

J. Yodh - Responding Constructively To Being Misrepresented (Psalm 119:73-80)

I. Introduction

- A. Psalm 119 is about the profitable use of God's written Word, the Scriptures, with the psalm being formed as an acrostic where each section has a Hebrew letter that begins each of the eight verses in its respective section.
- B. Section "Yodh" in Psalm 119:73-80 explains how the believer is to respond constructively to being misrepresented, and we view this section for our insight and edification (as follows):

II. Responding Constructively To Being Misrepresented, Psalm 119:73-80.

- A. The verse numbering system in the Hebrew text matches that of the English Bible (Kittel, Bib. Heb., p. 1082), so we stay with the English Bible's numbering system for this lesson.
- B. We thus translate Psalm 119:73-80 (as follows):
 1. "Your hands made me and fashioned me; give me discernment that I might learn Your commands," v. 73.
 2. "May those who revere You rejoice when they see me, because I have put my hope in Your Word," v. 74.
 3. "I know, O Jahweh, that because Your verdicts are righteous, in faithfulness You brought me low," v. 75.
 4. "May Your loyal love be my comfort, according to Your promise to Your servant," Psalm 119:76.
 5. "Let Your compassion come to me that I might live, because Your law is my delight," Psalm 119:77.
 6. "May the arrogant be put to shame because they have falsely, fraudulently (*sheqer*, B. D. B., A Heb. and Eng. Lex. of the O. T., p. 1055) made me crooked (*'avat*, Ibid., p. 736) [misrepresented me]; I myself will meditate on Your precepts," Psalm 119:78.
 7. "May those who revere You turn unto me, those who understand Your statutes," Psalm 119:79.
 8. "May my heart be blameless with Your decrees, that I may not be put to shame," Psalm 119:80.
- C. We consider significant observations regarding this psalm (as follows):
 1. The psalmist faced the trial of being falsely misrepresented before his godly associates by evil foes, v. 78a.
 2. In response, the psalmist applied Scripture for an edifying result to this crisis: (a) First, he understood God had allowed the fraudulent misrepresentation trial to occur, v. 75. (b) Second, he took steps to enhance his faith in the Lord (as follows): (i) he recalled the fact that God knew how much unjust treatment he could handle since God as his Creator understood that limitation, v. 73a; cf. 1 Peter 4:19. Accordingly, he requested discernment from the Lord so he could think clearly in the trial he faced, v. 73b. (ii) The psalmist then relied on God's loyal love to fulfill His Scripture's promises to the psalmist regarding the trial that he faced, v. 76. (iii) The psalmist then expected God to reveal His compassion toward him so he might remain mentally stable and vibrant in the midst of the trial of being falsely misrepresented, v. 77.
 3. Finally, the psalmist described his victory over being falsely misrepresented: (a) his godless foes were eventually shamed when God fulfilled His promises to the psalmist to deliver him, v. 78a. God fulfilled His promises when the afflicted one meditated on Scripture truth, v. 78b. (b) The psalmist's godly associates then rejoiced to see the psalmist trust in God's Word (v. 74), and they came to believe the innocence of the misrepresented psalmist when God revealed the truth about his good reputation, v. 79.

Lesson: *When facing fraudulent, negative misrepresentation, the psalmist correctly did not take revenge, but accepted the trial as divinely permitted to occur for his spiritual development. Then, the psalmist bolstered his faith in God by entrusting to the Lord his human frailty, realizing God knew how much misrepresentation he could humanly handle, and then he simply relied on and mused on God's Scripture promises relative to his trial, anticipating God's expressions of compassion that would edify him. With his faith thus bolstered, the psalmist chose to apply Scripture to avoid being shamed in the trial of misrepresentation that he faced! God then put his ungodly foes to shame when the Lord arranged for the truth eventually to surface and led his godly associates to rejoice with the afflicted psalmist and to trust his character was good in spite of the trial that he had faced.*

Application: *(1) If our reputation has been fraudulently misrepresented, we must realize that the matter is God's concern, that He has let it occur in order to develop our faith, that we therefore not take revenge! (2) As we then correctly entrust ourselves to the Lord and focus on applying His Word, He causes the truth about us to surface for all to see, what shames the slanderers and vindicates us to our godly associates all to God's glory.*