

(Resh)

- 153) Look upon my affliction and
rescue me, For I do not forget
Your law.
- 154) Plead my cause and redeem me;
Revive me according to Your word.
- 155) Salvation is far from the wicked,
For they do not seek Your statutes.
- 156) Great are Your mercies, O Lord;
Revive me according to Your
ordinances.
- 157) Many are my persecutors and my
adversaries, Yet I do not turn aside
from Your testimonies.
- 158) I behold the treacherous and loathe
them, Because they do not keep Your
word.
- 159) Consider how I love Your precepts;
Revive me, O Lord, according to Your
lovingkindness.
- 160) The sum of Your word is truth, and
every one of Your righteous ordinances
is everlasting.

We are now down to the final three Hebrew letters and the final three sections of Psalm 119. This very unusual Psalm magnifies the written Word of God and it stresses the written Word must be studied systematically, just as one would study an alphabet.

The section we now come to is section number twenty. What this means is this is letter number 20 in the Hebrew alphabet and it is the letter “r.” The letter “R” is number 20 of the Hebrew alphabet, it is number 17 of the Greek alphabet and it is number 18 of the English alphabet.

Now as we have stressed, the purpose of this systematic order is to promote systematic study of God’s Word. I do not believe it is possible to accurately understand truth about God or His Word by leap-frogging from one topic of interest to another. This order demands serious systematic analysis of each section of Scripture.

God’s written Word is written in alphabetical letters that form words that form sentences that form paragraphs and to accurately understand God’s written Word, those paragraphs need to be systematically analyzed.

Now as we look down through this section there is a word that shows up multiple times and ironically it is a word that starts with the letter “R.” The word is “revive” (119:154, 156, 159). What this tells us is that this writer was in adverse circumstances or situations from which he needed to be revived.

Now the actual Hebrew word “revive” is one that means to revive in the sense of making something alive again to a favorable position of God’s grace. This writer was running low in his life and he needed God to bring him back alive to a favorable position of grace and blessings.

There are a couple of other words that start with the letter “r” that give us a good perspective of what is happening: “rescue” (153); “redeem” (154).

Clearly this writer found himself in some difficult, afflicting circumstance that brought him low and he needed God's help. As one commentator said, this part of the Psalm shows us what to do when affliction comes.

The primary point to see is:

WHEN GOD'S PEOPLE FIND THEMSELVES IN DEPRESSING AND DISASTROUS SITUATIONS, THE WAY OUT IS TO ASK GOD FOR A REVIVAL AND PART OF THAT REVIVAL COMES FROM A SERIOUS FOCUS ON THE WRITTEN WORD OF GOD.

There are a series of seven points of communication that take place here between the writer and God.

COMMUNICATION POINT #1 – The writer asks God to look on his situation and rescue him. **119:153**

Now it is obvious that the writer was experiencing personal affliction. In fact, he called it “my affliction.” That word “affliction” is a word that describes circumstances that are very depressing. This writer was in a very miserable and afflicted state (William Gesenius, *Hebrew Lexicon*, p. 643). So apparently a series of bad things and depressing things were happening to this believer.

What he asks God to do is to “look upon” his affliction and rescue him from it. That idea of having God look upon our affliction and rescue us is an O.T. idea in which God specifically focuses His attention on our miserable situation and circumstances and Personally determines that He will come to our aide and rescue us from it (i.e. Ex. 3:7-8).

This is much more than just giving some visual glance. What he is praying is that God will see his specific trouble and rescue him out of it.

Now the basis for him asking God to do this was that he did not forget God's Word. This means a couple of things:

- 1) He did not forget the Word of God when it comes to promising that God will help His people, which He demonstrated time and time again in the O.T. Law.
- 2) He did not forsake the Word of God in his own personal and private life. He stayed focused.

Even though he was afflicted, he stayed committed to God's Word.

COMMUNICATION POINT #2 – The writer asks God to plead his cause and redeem and revive him. **119:154**

The idea behind God pleading a cause for someone is the idea of God Personally taking up the quarrel and avenging the antagonists or the enemies Himself (Ps. 35:1; 43:1; Micah 7:9).

Now what is significant about this verse is to see that both “redemption” and “revival” comes via the Word of God.

God redeems people through His Word and He revives people through His Word. Without the Word of God there is neither.

If this Psalm has communicated anything to us, it is that the written Scriptures are the key to our lives.

COMMUNICATION POINT #3 – The writer states that salvation is far from the wicked.
119:155

The Hebrew word “far” is one that refers to a remote area that is far removed and distant from something (*Ibid.*, p. 766). In this case what is stated is that the wicked are far removed from salvation. They are way far away from salvation.

Now the reason why salvation is far from the wicked is because they do not seek God’s Word. The wicked are not even close to being saved because they are not involved in seeking the way of salvation found in the written Scriptures. Notice what is said, “salvation is far from the wicked” not “the wicked are far from salvation.”

Wicked people are religious people, who think they are saved. Wicked people go to religious services and they make a lot of religious noise. However, wicked people do not seek the Word of God and the Word of God is the only place to find out how one may be saved by God. God literally keeps salvation far removed from any who will not go to His Word.

John Phillips made an interesting observation here when he said, “It is bad enough for the wicked to be far from salvation. But when salvation is far from the wicked that is ten thousand times worse.”

Those who are not basing what they believe about salvation on the Word of God are far removed from salvation. No matter what their belief or what their practice, salvation is far from them.

COMMUNICATION POINT #4 – The writer testifies of the greatness of God’s mercy.
119:156

I do not think that it is a mere coincidence that the writer brings up the great mercy of God in this verse because this is what the Word of God says one must do to be saved. One must totally rely upon the grace and mercy of God. This is exactly what the Word of God says and this is exactly what the proud religious person refuses to do.

Now the more one knows of the Word of God, the more one realizes the amazing grace and mercy of God that is necessary for God to do anything for us and with us.

We may observe that revival is consistent with the Word of God. So the writer asks God to revive him in accordance with what He has revealed in His Word.

COMMUNICATION POINT #5 – The writer testifies that many are his adversaries and persecutions. **119:157**

There are many adversaries and persecutors against those who are right with God. Being a believer is no easy “joyride.” There will be many obstacles and many hurdles thrown into the path of one faithful.

But we need a righteous resolve that we will not turn aside from the Word of God. This writer found himself surrounded by troubles but he stayed true to the Word.

COMMUNICATION POINT #6 – The writer states his attitude of loathing the treacherous. **119:158**

The root meaning of one “treacherous” is one who is a fraud. This kind of person is a phony who wears a different covering rather than the way it really is (*Ibid.*, p. 101-102). There are many who are frauds who pretend to be right with God and pretend to be your friend and pretend to be on your side, but they are treacherous. Notice the text says they are not interested in keeping the Word of God. This is the critical key. People who are right with God love the Word of God. This writer did not hang with phonies who did not love God’s Word. Those kinds of people were loathed by this writer.

That word “loathe” describes a deep emotional repulsion and reaction that desires destruction (*TWOT*, Vol. 2, p. 792). So when this writer loathed someone, he wanted God to destroy them. That idea clearly comes from the Word of God (i.e. Lev. 20:23 - God’s attitude toward Canaanites).

Martin Luther described people who were religious who were just like this:

“I never thought the world had been so wicked when the gospel began as now I see it is; I rather hoped that everyone would have leaped for joy to have found himself freed from the filth of the pope, from his lamentable molestations of poor, troubled consciences, and that through Christ they would be faith obtain the celestial treasure they sought after before with such vast cost and labor, though in vain. And especially I thought the bishops and universities would with joy of heart have received the true doctrines; but I have been lamentably deceived.”

Those religious frauds hated God’s Word and hated Luther.

COMMUNICATION POINT #7 – The writer asks God to consider how much he loves His Word. **119:159**

That word “precepts” is so important because it shows us that this writer loved God’s Word even when it struck against him and convicted him of what he thought and how he lived (*Ibid.*, p. 686).

People right with God love God's Word even when it walks all over them. He loved the very words of the Scripture and he knew that God could revive him because the Word of God speaks of the mercy of God.

COMMUNICATION POINT #8 – The writer states his conclusions about God's Word.
119:160

Now keep in mind that this writer is undergoing great adversity and affliction. He is very low. But he found great delight in the Word of God and he held to three conclusions about it:

Conclusion #1 - Every word of God's Word is truth. **119:160a**

Every word in the Scriptures is inspired by God and is truth.

Conclusion #2 - Every word in God's Word is righteous. **119:160b**

Every word in Scripture reveals righteous truth.

Conclusion #3 - Every word in God's Word is everlasting. **119:160c**

When we find ourselves in adverse situations, remember the Word of God for that is the key to revival.