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| <p>129) Your testimonies are <u>wonderful</u>;
Therefore my soul observes them.</p> <p>130) The <u>unfolding</u> of Your words gives
light; It gives understanding to the
simple.</p> <p>131) I opened <u>my mouth</u> wide and panted,
For I longed for Your commandments.</p> <p>132) <u>Turn</u> to me and be gracious to me,
After Your manner with those who
love Your name.</p> | <p>133) Establish <u>my footsteps</u> in Your word,
And do not let any iniquity have
dominion over me.</p> <p>134) <u>Redeem me</u> from the oppression of
man, That I may keep Your precepts.</p> <p>135) Make <u>Your face</u> shine upon Your
servant, And teach me Your statutes.</p> <p>136) My eyes shed <u>streams of</u> water,
Because they do not keep Your law.</p> |
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We come now to the seventeenth letter in the Hebrew alphabet, which is also the seventeenth letter in the English alphabet and the sixteenth letter of the Greek alphabet, the letter “P.”

Psalm 119 is a Psalm designed to magnify the written Word of God, which this section most certainly reveals. The Psalm is comprised of 22 eight verse sections written in Hebrew alphabetical order. Each section begins with a word that starts with the specific letter of that section. **The point of this is to show the importance of carefully and systematically studying God’s Word.**

Now this seventeenth section is very unique. Charles Spurgeon said that this specific eight verse section is precious, practical, profitable, powerful and peculiar (*Psalms*, p. 555).

What makes this so unique is that of all of the eight verse sections in Psalm 119, this one makes some amazing assertions about God’s Word before it makes some petitions to God’s Person.

One commentator said, “The tone and spirit of this section are much brighter than those of the foregoing one. Something had happened. The plaintive and heart-broken appeal of those verses is followed by the joyous confession with which these, in this section, begin. Believing that there is a real connection in these sections, and that they are not so many disjointed and disconnected sayings, we infer that help had come to the psalmist—had come through God’s word, and had come in wonderful ways and power” (*Pulpit Commentary*, Vol. 8, p. 137).

The thing we observe here is this:

WHEN WE REALLY GRASP THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE WRITTEN WORD OF GOD, WE WILL MAKE PERSONAL REQUESTS TO GOD THAT PERTAINS TO OUR OWN DEVELOPMENT.

Most people have some belief system when it comes to God. The real issue is upon what do you base your belief system?

For example, if a person believes something about what happens when he/she dies, upon what do you base your belief? Most people don't have a clue as to the value of the written Scriptures but this is the only document in existence that is worth being our authority for what we believe. In this book is the key to life, meaning, fulfillment, death and eternity.

In this section the writer takes his love for the Word of God to a new level. As a result of that, he prays concerning his own development. The two go hand-in-hand. Our development is contingent upon our love of the Word of God.

There are primarily two main parts to this section:

PART #1 – The writer makes his personal assertions and conclusions about God's Word.
119:129-131

As we come to this part of the Psalm, there are four assertions or conclusions that the writer had concerning God's Word:

God's Word Conclusion #1 - God's Word is wonderful. **119:129**

Now the Hebrew word "wonderful" is one that means to be totally separate and distinguished from all other things. It refers to something that is very extraordinary in being consecrated to God (William Gesenius, *Hebrew Lexicon*, p. 674).

Now the writer is speaking about a written book and that written book is the written Scriptures. There is only one writing that is at this level, and it is the written Word of God. There is only one writing that is totally separate from all other writings and is consecrated to God, and it is the Bible. The Bible is the Word of God and the Bible contains the testimonies of God.

It is absolutely demeaning to classify any other written document with the Bible because being God's Word, the Bible is uniquely wonderful. So to classify some human book like the "Book of Mormon" or the "Quran" as being as equal with God's Word is not only demeaning, it is heresy.

Now because the Word of God was so wonderful, the writer says my soul desires to "observe" it. What this means is that the realization that God's Word was so majestically wonderful it prompted the writer to look at and keep and obey it.

If a person does not recognize the extraordinary value of God's Word, he will not likely give himself or herself to applying it to his or her life.

God's Word Conclusion #2 - God's Word gives light. **119:130a**

What an amazing statement. The unfolding of God's Word gives light. The word "unfolding" is critical to having the Scriptures light up.

The word means to open something that was closed so that one could partake. This particular word was used of a closed granary that was opened so people could buy grain (*Ibid.*, p. 696).

If God's Word is to give light to someone, it must be opened in such a way that people can partake of it. One commentator said it this way—it is the full exposition and interpretation of the text that gives light and understanding.

When the Word of God is accurately opened, it brings light to people. Now the implication here is that our hearts and minds are dark. Light comes from God's Word when it is carefully and accurately understood.

This is why it is so important for a church to have as its primary emphasis, the opening and expounding of God's Word because God's Word is the only book that can truly give light to a dark world. This is the only thing that can truly light up our lives.

God's Word Conclusion #3 - God's Word gives understanding. **119:130b**

Here is a great statement about what the Word of God is capable of doing. It can give understanding to the "simple." That word "simple" (*peti*) is one that refers to one who is easily persuaded and enticed (*Ibid.*, p. 697).

A simple person, by Biblical definition, is a gullible person who believes things. Now carefully notice what is stated here. God's Word can take the simplest person and transform him into becoming one who is stable, secure and smart. The Word of God is capable of making some of the simplest people into the wisest people.

God's Word Conclusion #4 - God's Word gives refreshment. **119:131**

The metaphor that is used in this verse about opening one's mouth wide and panting is a metaphor of one who is totally expended and exhausted. This kind of person needs to be refreshed by taking in, as it were, fresh air.

God's Word is that which will refresh people. God's Word can refresh the most parched life. God's Word can refresh the most dry existence. God's Word can give life to one dead.

PART #2 – The writer makes his personal petitions to God. **119:132-136**

In view of his high and holy view of God's Word, the writer made a series of six petitions to God.

Petition #1 - The petition for God's grace. **119:132**

When the writer asks God to "turn" to him, he is asking God to favor him and bless him. Notice carefully that at the end of the verse, he equates his love for God's Word with a love for God.

Now the writer knew he was in need of God's grace and he also knew that his high level of commitment to the Word of God was something that can prompt God to grant His special favor and grace.

Anyone who loves the Word of God and seeks to understand it and apply it is in a position to ask God for His grace and blessing, in spite of the fact that he is a sinner.

Petition #2 - The petition for God's guidance. **119:133a**

Now the writer believed that in order to walk on right paths before God, God must sanction it. We have said time and time again that the ability to understand and apply the Word of God to our lives is a gracious grant from God.

There are many people who run from Bible study to Bible study and are ever learning, but never really grasping God's Word. God grants this kind of special guidance to one who loves His Word.

Petition #3 - The petition for God's prevention. **119:133b**

Now in order for one not to be dominated by sin, God must prevent it. The key to not being dominated by "any iniquity" is for God to prevent it from happening. It doesn't matter what the iniquity is.

Years ago, we taught a course on spiritual victory and in that course we brought out the fact that in and of ourselves, we do not have the power to have victory over sin. If you look to yourself for victory, you will fail every single time. Victory over sin is a grant from God and God only grants this to one who asks Him for it and one who has a high and holy view of His written Word.

Petition #4 - The petition for God's redemption. **119:134**

There are different situations we get in that demand redemption. In this case, the writer needed deliverance and redemption from the oppression of man.

Now the particular word used for redemption in the Septuagint is the word that means to redeem something or purchase something and set it free. So the request is for God to step in and set him free from the one oppressing him.

At the end of **verse 134** we learn that by doing this, it would free him up to obey more of the Word of God.

When we find ourselves surrounded by oppressors, we aren't free to pursue a total focus on God's Word. But if God sets us free from the oppression and oppressor, we can refocus again on God's Word.

Petition #5 - The petition for God's Favor. **119:135a**

The petition for God to “make His face to shine upon” someone is a petition for God to favor and bless the person. To have the shining favor and blessings of God should be what every child of God wants.

Petition #6 - The petition for God's Instruction. **119:135b**

Understanding the wonderful Word of God cannot happen without the wonderful work of God.

After expressing his love for the Word and after bringing his petitions to God, the writer says in **verse 136**, I have actually shed tears because people do not want to know your Word and do not want to obey your Word.