

# Psalm 119:49-56

**Introduction** – As we dive back into another stack of Psalms, we will begin again with one of the 22 stanzas of Psalm 119. Every verse of this seventh stanza begins with the seventh letter of the Hebrew alphabet: Zayin. Every stanza is organized this way, reminding us that every Word of God is carefully chosen by Him, and instructing us that thoughtful writing, organizing, and meditating over prayer does not dampen the work of the Spirit. Rather, it reinvigorates the life of the Spirit's work in us (v50). This stanza seems to emphasize the comfort of the Word (and our meditations upon it) in the midst of afflictions, the enemy's derision, and our longing to see the Light of God's Word arise in our hearts and over the world.

**Remembering God and His Word** – It is wonderful to be instructed to command God (v49). We are to tell Him to "remember." And meditating on this, it is not that the Omniscient forgets, that it is possible that something slips His mind. More than this, it is commanding Him to remind us, to recall to us, to *"remember what You said to me, tell me again what You said, what You promised, where this is all going."* To the guilty heart, remind me of the depth of Your forgiveness, the work of Christ's atonement, and the assurance of the Spirit. And while we labor here amidst trials and difficulties, God says He has set a watchmen on the walls of His church, His people (Isaiah 62:6). Both the Son and the Spirit intercede for us before the throne of Grace (Rom 8:26-27, 34). God remembers, reminds, and by His Word we remember His victorious judgments and deliverances of old (v52). In spite of our own wickedness and compromises, how many times has His mercy endured, how many times did He deliver Israel? How many times does He deliver us from our temptations (2 Pet 2:9)? How many great reformations and revivals have been given to the church over the centuries? Will He not do so again?

Remember God's name in the night, we are told, and we will keep His law (v55). Temptations grow stronger in the night. Why do protests go violent in the night? Why do drunkenness, revelry, immorality, and malice increase in the night? Why do treachery and murder proliferate in the darkness? Remember the name of the LORD, remember His character, remember His love and grace and election of you, remember His Son's death for you, remember that you reign with Him in the heavenlies, and you *"will keep His law."* Do not doubt in the dark what you knew in the light.

Reminding God to remember with you, and to do so with His Word open before you, is a great place of comfort, resolve, revival, and hope.

**Comfort over Derision** – Being a Christian today, and upholding the whole counsel of God, is becoming more and more dangerous and marginalizing for us in a world that hates truth. And yet, this has always been the case (Luke 23:35). *"Men must have strange eyes to be able to see a farce in faith and a comedy in holiness; yet it is sadly the case that men who are short of wit can generally provoke a broad grin by jesting at a saint"* (Spurgeon). J. Gresham Machen was derided by the growing liberalism of the church 100 years ago, fighting for the true gospel of Jesus Christ. And so, such insolence can come from inside or outside the church. Today, to take a stand for salvation by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone will get you called a bigot. To take a stand for creationism will get you called a Neanderthal. To take a stand for a God-designed, two-gender, image of God species called Adam and Eve, male and female will get you fired. Take a stand for the unborn, for the lordship of Jesus over every nation, for biblical justice and equal measures and you will find yourself – under derision.

The Word of God is our comfort and hope (v50), His Word teaches us what to do in such afflictions (v51), and the stories of His great deliverances keep us set on the right track (v52, Heb 12:1-3). Rather than sitting down in despair, the Psalmist rallies his spirits with his meditations on the Word.

**Holy Indignation** – And what of these lies and the liars who tell them? We should hate their rhetoric with a holy anger (v53) and His Word helps us in the right way (Exod 32:19, John 2:15-17, Eph 5:3-7). Such lies are leading men and women away from Christ, and we should lament that (Rom 9:1-3). But we, like Paul, rejoice in the salvation of the chief of sinners, like him, like me, like you (1 Tim 1:14-17).

**The Songs of Pilgrims of the New Creation** – And so we sing the songs of our victorious King, who is Lord over His creation and the Redeemer of it (v54). We sing to remember, and we sing because we have been reminded. We sing His statutes, His Word, because it is true and good. Mercy and truth have met, righteousness and peace have kissed (Psalm 85:10). We sing because this nation and all nations are His inheritance (Psalm 2). We sing because He has dominion from sea to sea (Psalm 72:8). We sing as pilgrims because our citizenship is in heaven and we are here to act as leaven, bringing life to a dead lump (Matt 13:33). They sing the song of the Lamb in heaven (Rev 15:3-4), and we sing because He is able to save us to the uttermost (Heb 7:25).

**What Am I Learning from Psalm 119?** – That I am to go through life with my Bible open. Fears and doubts, anxieties and despairs, are to be measured and dealt with by the Word. Anger and frustrations, lusts and hidden sins, afflictions and mockings, are all to be quelled with the Word. Hearts and spirits are lifted by singing the Word. In places of ruling, in places of serving, in places of standing firm, in places of deferring, what to do, what to say, is all determined by the Word. *"This has become mine, because I kept your precepts"* (v56). *"And by this we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before Him"* (1 John 3:19).

*Dave Hatcher – June 7, 2020*