God's Word Keeps One Focused
Verses 81-88

Throughout the entire 119th Psalm, we see the Psalmist in a state of affliction and suffering. While in this state, he found the Word of God to be a pillar, an anchor, and a foundation. The Psalmist is in a storm, and the 119th Psalm is an expression of his desire and determination to stay with the Word of God. In the midst of his adverse circumstances, he found God’s Word to be a source of blessing and cleansing! In the midst of circumstances that he would not have chosen, he found the Word of God to be a source of revelation, revival, and instruction! He found that in cleaving to the Word of God that there was deliverance, hope, help, and comfort!

In this eleventh stanza of the Psalm, the Psalmist seems to be at the lowest depths of his anguish, and at the edge of despair. But he continued to hold on to, and to be loyal to the Word of God, and in so doing, he was able to remain focused on the main thing.

1. IN HIS AFFLICTION HE CONTINUED TO HOPE IN GOD’S WORD:
“My soul fainteth for thy salvation” [verse 81]. His spirit was beginning to sink as he waited and waited for God’s deliverance. This speaks of a prolonged time of suffering. In spite of this, the Psalmist declared “but I hope in thy word” He believed the Word of God to be dependable, reliable, constant, and trustworthy! He found in the Word of God certainty, confidence, and assurance.

2. IN HIS AFFLICTION HE CONTINUED TO DESIRE THE WORD OF GOD:
“Mine eyes fail for thy word” [verse 82]. His spirit was beginning to sink as he waited and waited for God’s deliverance. This speaks of a prolonged time of suffering. In spite of this, the Psalmist declared “but I hope in thy word” He believed the Word of God to be dependable, reliable, constant, and trustworthy! He found in the Word of God certainty, confidence, and assurance.

3. IN HIS AFFLICTION HE CONTINUED TO REMEMBER THE WORD OF GOD:
“For I am become like a bottle in the smoke” [verse 83]. He felt like he was being slow cooked, tormented, and tortured, about ready to crack! In the midst of this, he said “yet” (still even, nevertheless, in spite of that), do I not forget thy statutes” Though his affliction brought him to the end of himself, he did not stop thinking about the Word of God!
4. IN HIS AFFLICTION HE COUNTED GOD’S WORD AS FAITHFUL:
In verse 84 he is seen waiting upon God, wondering when his suffering will end. In verses 85-86 he spoke of the traps, the deceits and persecution by the hands of the enemy. The enemy continued to oppress, and torment him, but in the midst of it all, he said “All thy commandments are faithful” [verse 86]. Through it all, God’s Word proved to be true and steadfast!

5. IN HIS AFFLICTION HE DID NOT LEAVE THE WORD OF GOD:
“They had almost (nearly) consumed me upon earth” [verse 87]. The enemy had come close to depleting and exhausting him. He felt like he was on the brink of being devoured and demolished! In the midst of such feeling, he said “but I forsook not thy precepts” he did not abandon, he did not leave, and he did not renounce the Word of God!

6. IN HIS AFFLICTION HE SOUGHT WHAT WAS NECESSARY IN ORDER TO KEEP THE WORD OF GOD:
In the closing verse of the stanza, the Psalmist prayed “Quicken (stir up, and revive) me after thy lovingkindness (such would be an act of God’s lovingkindness), so shall (in order that), I keep the testimony of thy mouth” In his affliction, he desired to be faithful to God’s Word, so he prays for that which would make it possible!

When the Psalmist was in the lowest depths of trial and suffering, feeling torture of soul, HE MAINTAINED HIS FOCUS UPON THE WORD OF GOD, AND THE WORD OF GOD ENABLED HIM TO BE PROPERLY FOCUSED! Again, God’s Word is a well of comfort, a source of strength, and cheer! IN THE MIDST OF AFFLICTION, THE PSALMIST FOUND THE WORD OF GOD TO BE AN ANCHOR FOR HIS SOUL!