

PSALM 119
Parts 17 and 18

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129 Your testimonies are wonderful; therefore my soul observes them.
130 The unfolding of Your words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple.
131 I opened my mouth wide and panted, for I longed for Your commandments.
132 Turn to me and be gracious to me, after Your manner with those who love Your name.
133 Establish my footsteps in Your word,
and do not let any iniquity have dominion over me.
134 Redeem me from the oppression of man, that I may keep Your precepts.
135 Make Your face shine upon Your servant, and teach me Your statutes.
136 My eyes shed streams of water, because they do not keep Your law.

Reflection on Verse 136 from Charles Bridges

If the Lord teaches us the privileges of his statutes, he will teach us compassion for those who do not keep them. This was the mind of Jesus. His life exhibited a heart of tenderness. There were some occasions when his display of compassion was peculiarly striking. Near the close of his life, it is recorded that when he came near to Jerusalem and beheld the city, Jesus "wept over it." At the time it was a moment of triumph, for the air was filled with hosannahs and the road strewn with branches. All was joy and praise. Amid this exultation, the Savior alone seemed to have no voice for the triumph, no heart for joy. His omniscient mind embraced all the spiritual desolation of this sad case, and he could only weep in the midst of a solemn triumph. *"Rivers of waters run down from my eyes, because they do not keep your law."* Oh, let it be our daily supplication that this indifference of men concerning their everlasting state may give way to a spirit of weeping tenderness on our part.

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137 Righteous are You, O YAHWEH, and upright are Your judgments.
138 You have commanded Your testimonies in righteousness and exceeding faithfulness.
139 My zeal has consumed me, because my adversaries have forgotten Your words.

140 Your word is very pure, therefore Your servant loves it.
141 I am small and despised, yet I do not forget Your precepts.
142 Your righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and Your law is truth.
143 Trouble and anguish have come upon me, yet Your commandments are my delight.
144 Your testimonies are righteous forever; give me understanding that I may live.

Reflection on Verse 141 from Charles Bridges

Most of us are ready to confess that we are small and despised in the eyes of the world, but are we small and despised in our own? A self-loathing spirit before men as well as before God is a rare attainment, for it is gained by a glorious triumph of victorious grace and is usually the fruit of sharp affliction. This was the spirit of Brainerd, that meek and lowly disciple of his Master. He would express his astonishment that anyone above the rank of "the beasts that perish" could condescend to notice him. But we are precious in the eyes of Him who gave a price for our ransom. God has stamped the objects of his sovereign choice as a "peculiar treasure to him above all people." At the day of his appearing, he will bring us forth as the "jewels" of his crown. And though we are small and despised in the estimation of men, let us remember Him whom man despised and a whole nation abhorred, our Messiah, the Lord Jesus.

PRAYER

O just and merciful God, shine your face upon us and dispose our hearts to obedience. Let all our thoughts, words, and deeds be rendered acceptable to you. Keep us from presumptuously running into temptation, lest wickedness get dominion over us and we become a prey for Satan. Bring before our minds our absolute inability to run the Christian race and gain the reward without the help of your Holy Spirit. And give us an earnest, heart-felt compassion for perishing sinners. They have no interest in spiritual matters, no concern for their own souls, and no interest in the words of eternal life. Let us not keep back the saving message but spread the gospel seed far and wide, and through your mighty and powerful word draw sinners to yourself. We ask in the name of our great Redeemer, Messiah Jesus. Amen.