

PSALM 119
Parts 19 and 20

פ Qoph

145 I cried with all my heart; answer me, O YAHWEH! I will observe Your statutes.
146 I cried to You; save me and I shall keep Your testimonies.
147 I rise before dawn and cry for help; I wait for Your words.
148 My eyes anticipate the night watches, that I may meditate on Your word.
149 Hear my voice according to Your lovingkindness;
 revive me, O YAHWEH, according to Your ordinances.
150 Those who follow after wickedness draw near; they are far from Your law.
151 You are near, O YAHWEH, and all Your commandments are truth.
152 Of old I have known from Your testimonies that You have founded them forever.

Reflection on Verse 152 from Charles Bridges

David knew that Yahweh's testimonies were an everlasting foundation; and it is most important for us to have a full certainty of the ground of our faith. We can venture every hope for eternity upon God's faithfulness to his own word. We cannot conceive of God's promising without fulfillment. Can we conceive of his threatening without execution? All God's faithful engagements with his people are founded forever upon his oath and promise, the two "immutable things in which it is impossible for God to lie" (Heb. 6:16-18). We may, therefore, have absolute assurance in casting every hope for eternity upon the rock of our salvation, the Lord Jesus Christ, who washed us from our sins in his own blood.

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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 YAHWEH; 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 YAHWEH, according to Your lovingkindness.
160 The sum of Your word is truth,
and every one of Your righteous ordinances is everlasting.

Reflection on Verse 157 from Charles Bridges

David's experience is common to us all. Our persecutors and enemies are many indeed. This is a solemn cost for those who follow Christ. Let those who are setting out in the Christian race note it well. Too often we neglect our Lord's admonition to first count the cost before embarking on any course of action; and because of this, many who seem to begin well turn back, being hindered in the race. They are zealous but rash, and warm-hearted but ignorant of themselves, their work, and their resources. Perhaps they were first attracted to a love of the Gospel and Savior by some deceptive picture of never-ending paths of pleasantness and peace, or the joys of heaven. The cross was out of sight and out of mind. But this promise of ease and happiness is not less foolish and indefensible than that of a soldier who is utterly forgetful of his profession, promising himself peace at the very time he is called out to war. Count, then, upon difficulties. You will never pluck the Rose of Sharon if you are afraid of being pricked by the thorns. You will never reach the crown if you flinch from the cross. And though the crown is not easily won, glorious is the display of the power of God's grace in helping us attain it!

PRAYER

Glorious God, you have given us immortal souls. Enable us to apply most serious thoughts to our salvation, and let us work it out with fear and trembling. Open our minds that we may see the wondrous things in your law. Rectify our wills that we may follow that which is good and shun that which is evil. Make us consider that the praise of men is but as smoke which vanishes away. And let all our thoughts, words, and actions have respect for your favor only, which is better than life itself. Impress upon us the necessity of watchfulness against the assaults of our spiritual enemies, and hold us up that our feet do not slip. Give us an abundance of your Holy Spirit that we have grace and power to follow the good examples of those who have departed this life in your faith and fear, for we look forward to being made partakers with them of everlasting joy through our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen.