

PSALM 119
Parts 9 and 10

ו Teth

65 You have dealt well with Your servant, O YAHWEH, according to Your word.
66 Teach me good discernment and knowledge, for I believe in Your commandments.
67 Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I keep Your word.
68 You are good and do good; teach me Your statutes.
69 The arrogant have forged a lie against me;
 with all *my* heart I will observe Your precepts.
70 Their heart is covered with fat, *but* I delight in Your law.
71 It is good for me that I was afflicted, that I may learn Your statutes.
72 The law of Your mouth is better to me than thousands of gold and silver *pieces*.

Reflection on Verse 71 from Charles Bridges

If I perceive any difference in myself from the ungodly, if I feel my natural insensibility yielding to the influence of grace, if I am enabled to delight in God's law, and if this softening transformation has been brought about in the school of affliction, then let me thankfully acknowledge that "it is good for me that I have been afflicted." None indeed but the Lord's scholars can know the benefit of this school and this teaching. "I never knew the meaning of God's word," says Luther, "until I came into affliction. I have always found it one of my best schoolmasters." Are you, tried believer, disposed to regret the lessons you have already learned in this school of affliction? Have you purchased them at too dear a cost? Do you grieve over the bleeding of a contrite heart which has brought you under the care of the healing physician? Let us be like Jesus, who "*though he was a Son, yet he learned obedience by the things which he suffered.*"

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י Yodh

73 Your hands made me and fashioned me;
 give me understanding, that I may learn Your commandments.
74 May those who fear You see me and be glad, because I wait for Your word.
75 I know, O YAHWEH, that Your judgments are righteous,

and that in faithfulness You have afflicted me.

76 O may Your lovingkindness comfort me, according to Your word to Your servant.

77 May Your compassion come to me that I may live, for Your law is my delight.

78 May the arrogant be ashamed, for they subvert me with a lie;

but I shall meditate on Your precepts.

79 May those who fear You turn to me, even those who know Your testimonies.

80 May my heart be blameless in Your statutes, so that I will not be ashamed.

Reflection on Verse 79 from Charles Bridges

As the believer finds trouble from the world, he prays that he may find help from the Lord's people. The very sight of our Father's family is cheering. It brings not only fellowship but help. The wise distribution of gifts in the body of Christ, each member having his own gift, was ordained for the mutual help and sympathy of the individual members. It is painful, therefore, to see Christians often walking aloof from each other and allowing coldness, distance, differences and distrust to divide them. Lack of Christian self-denial presents the main hindrance to keeping unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. Shall we carry strife to heaven? Shall we carry envy, covetousness, and animosity to heaven? Then let us work now to rid ourselves of everything that shall not go with us there. Let us divest ourselves of everything unsuitable to our Christian walk in order that there may be nothing to obstruct and hinder our joyous entrance into the everlasting kingdom.

PRAYER

O most merciful Father, out of your great kindness to man you have at times visited them with afflictions and distress in order that they may return to the way of righteousness. Grant that we may receive these fatherly corrections with patience and submission, and that through your grace we may be renewed in the inner man, mortifying all our corrupt inclinations and daily proceeding in all virtuous and godly living. Keep us under your careful and tender watch till at length we come to your heavenly kingdom through the merits and mediation of your dear Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.