

# Psalm 119:81-88 || Ep. 931 – Hope and Longing in a Lost World

## Dwelling Richly Podcast – Summer 2024

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[lightly edited transcript]

Hey, welcome back. This is Jennifer, and this is the Dwelling Richly podcast.

We are continuing in our study of Psalm 119 in this series about how to study the Bible.

The entire purpose, the whole focus, the big picture of the Dwelling Richly podcast is simply that we would let the Word of Christ dwell in us richly and return the favor, that we dwell back into the word.

Instead of just doing Bible study, we get into the word. We love the word. We find great wisdom in God's word. We have hope from God's word. We long for God's word.

And we're learning more and more as we imitate the Psalm 119 in particular, as we imitate this Psalm and the attitude of the heart of the writer of this Psalm, we're becoming better dwellers, I guess is the best way to say it. We're getting better at dwelling in the word.

And I hope you are. I hope you're enjoying this. And I appreciate you being back here with me today. If this is the first time you happen to be listening, welcome. And if this is the 101st time that you happen to be listening, welcome, welcome, welcome. Glad you're here.

Leave a comment, say hi, click the like button, share and all those good things.

Today, we're going to continue on in Psalm 119. We're picking up at verse 81, and this brings us to the halfway point in Psalm 119. Psalm 119 is the longest psalm of the Bible. It's got 176 verses, and it is divided up into 22 sections. Each one of those sections begins with the same letter of the alphabet.

So when you're in section one, every single Hebrew word of the first section is Aleph, Aleph, Aleph. And we are in the 11th section. The 11th letter of the Hebrew alphabet is the letter Kaf or Kaf. You can say it with a ka sound or kind of that where you drag the K out a little bit and go chaf like that. So if it has a dot in the middle of it, it's a ch, and if it has no dot when you're reading Hebrew, then it's a ch, and it has that longer sound. Anyway, that's beside the point.

But the chaf is the 11th letter of the alphabet, and that's where we are. We're in the 11th section, and since there's 22, that means we're at the end of this. We're going to be at the end of the first half of Psalm 119.

So we're going to dig into God's Word today, talk a little bit about that, some principles of how we approach God's word. Let's go ahead and read that together and then we'll talk about it.

So Psalm 119 verses 81 to 88, I'll be reading again today from the English Standard Version.

My soul longs for your salvation. I hope in the Lord. My eyes long for your promise. I ask, when will you comfort me? For I have become like a wineskin in the smoke, yet I have not forgotten your statutes. How long must your servant endure? When will you judge those who persecute me? The insolent have dug pitfalls for me. They do not live according to your law. All your commandments are sure. They prosecute me with falsehood. Help me. They have almost made an end of me on earth, but I have not forsaken your precepts. In your steadfast love, give me life that I may keep the testimonies of your mouth.

All right. Such good reminders in this passage once again for us today.

As we begin, I'm connecting this as we read to lots of current events going on during this time. I think you're like me and you probably sense the darkness, the challenge of what we're facing in our lives, describes what's happening here in America politically.

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It's just dark. There's a lot going on, and the enemy isn't hiding. The things that are evil are just right out there, and we're aware of it. And I was struck by this. This is in an interview, and you're probably familiar with Tucker Carlson, but I thought this was really interesting what he said about what is going on in America today.

He was on a podcast show and he was talking about the spiritual forces today and how he's seeing it, he's aware of it. And he says, you know, he says there's something going on. And of course, that's the way God works.

Clearly, we're under oppression of evil. And you know he as a believer is making that connection as well but here's what he said that I found really interesting he said it like this what I didn't know was that Christians are the only wise people they're the only ones who know what's up and they're just like way smarter than everybody in other words he's saying the Christians are the ones who aren't surprised by any of this They're aware of it, they're seeing it, and they're the ones with the wisdom to deal with.

And I have to say, the Christians who are in God's word, the Christians who are paying attention, are indeed the wise ones.

Not surprised, we see the evil. And we have something to go back to. Because we read Psalms like this, this portion here, especially in Kaff, verses 81 to 88, when the writer says, my soul longs for your salvation. I hope in your word. My eyes long for your promise. I ask, when will you comfort me? We know our comfort doesn't come from this world. We know our promises don't come from being fulfilled in this world. We know our hope is not in the words of men. We know there's no salvation coming from a president or any elected official. Our soul, like the author of this psalm, longs for God's salvation, hopes in God's word. Our eyes are looking for his promise to come up over that horizon, right? And we, along with the psalmist, say, when will you comfort me? We feel the pain. And then he goes on in verse 83 to describe himself as like a bag of wine. And back when this would have been written, this would have been like a leather bag hung up over a fire.

With smoke coming up against it and leaving the burn marks up against the wineskin. And he says, I have become like a wineskin in the smoke, yet I have not forgotten your statutes. In other words, I'm going through a great trial and great tribulation, but I haven't forgotten the most important things. I have not forgotten your statutes. And then he kind of asked that question again, like he said in verse 82, when will you comfort me? How long must your servant endure? endure, verse 84, endure. When will you judge those who persecute me? Question after question after question, and then statement. The insolent, they dug pitfalls for me. They don't live according to your law. All your commandments are sure. They persecute me with falsity, he says. So help me.

They've almost made an end of me, but I have not forsaken your precepts, he says in verse 83. I have not forgotten your statutes. And in verse 88, we see this beautiful phrase again. I love that the English Standard Version preserves that word chesed. Here it is again, your steadfast love. In your steadfast love, give me life. Why? That I may keep the testimonies of your mouth.

And in the same way, you and I today, in what we're dealing with, what we're facing, can agree with how Paul worded this in Ephesians 6. And he says at the end here of this letter to the Ephesians, finally be strong in the Lord, in the strength of his might, but on the whole armor of God, that you might be able to stand against the schemes of the devil.

Why? Verse 12, you know the answer to this. We don't wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, authorities, cosmic powers, present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

And so what do we do? We take up the whole armor of God so we can withstand the evil that is going We do the exact same thing that the psalmist is doing in this cough section and throughout the entire Psalm 119.

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Going to the word of God, the whole armor of God, we can withstand evil day. And he says in verse 14 of chapter six, back in Ephesians, stand therefore having fastened the belt of truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness. Look exactly what the psalmist is doing in this psalm. He's doing the exact same thing.

He's talking about the truth of God's word. He's talking about his own righteousness that he has before God because he is keeping God's word. In verse 15, it says, as shoes for your feet, having put on readiness given by the gospel of peace. In verse 87, he says, they've almost made an end of me. In verse 85, the insolent dug pitfalls for me. They don't live according to your word. And over back in Ephesians 6, you know, Paul's talking about, I've got my feet are ready, right?

So that I don't trip up. I've got the gospel of peace. I've got it ready to go. And he says, in all circumstances, take up the the shield of faith with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one, which is literally exactly what he's saying.

Well, not literally, but it echoes what is being said here in this cough section of Psalm 119.

The same idea is happening here. He is taking up his shield of faith. He is ready to extinguish the flaming darts of the evil one, the persecution that he's dealing He has that helmet of salvation. What does he say in verse 81? My soul longs for your what? Your salvation.

And then it

continues on in Ephesians 17, the sword of the spirit, which is what? The word of God, the word of God, praying at all times in the spirit with prayer and supplication to that and keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints, right?

So I love seeing scripture agree with scripture. Folks, that's why you have hope. That's why you do have comfort, even though it's difficult, because you're in God's word and you have that.

That true wisdom that only comes from knowing that we're not trying to put our hope in anything in this world, but we're longing and we're waiting and we're trusting for God no matter what happens.

And he is talking about deep affliction that's happening here and feeling discouraged even and needing the comfort from God, but he still hopes in the Lord. He has that steadfast love that he's assured of in God.

And so as we become better students of God's word, as we are here, not just doing Bible study, but letting the word of Christ dwell in us richly, and we return the favor as we do that, we're growing in our own faith.

We're growing in our own ability to feel like we're at the end of our rope. Like he says, they almost made the end of me, but I've not forsaken your your precepts.

I go back to the basics is what the writer here, David or Ezra, Jeremiah, whoever, I go back to the basics. I haven't forsaken that. I go back to the basics.

And that's why I want to encourage you today as well as you study the Bible, go back to the basics, get down on your knees, pray, ask God to help you to memorize, ask God to help you to bring back the word of God into your heart in the times that you need it so that you can be a light to others.

I remember this from our previous passage together.

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That people would go to him, they would come to him, and those who fear him, and they would see me, and we can put ourselves in that position, they would see us who are faithful and rejoice because we've hoped in the word, right?

So same thing is happening here in this particular section of the psalm. I also want to point out one last thing. This word kaf or kaf in the psalm, the k-s-a-m, again, 11th letter of the alphabet, is the idea of a spoon, right?

In fact, it is the word spoon. And it's the idea of everything that can be held in a spoon as well. And what I found really interesting is that this passage, this chunk follows after that small letter yod from the very previous passage.

And do you remember what the very first word was, or first phrase was in in our Bible. In verse 73, back in the previous passage, it says, your hands have made and fashioned me.

Give me understanding that I may learn your commandments. He's giving the picture of God's hand and everything that's in God's hand, which is us and everything that God can provide for us.

And then the very next portion is basically saying, all right, I see your hand. I see their spoon, the cough, and my soul, my soul longs for your salvation. I hope in your word, I see that you are holding everything as it were in a spoon for me, the cough.

And as a result of that, I respond with hope. As a result of that, I might still question when are you going to comfort me? How long must I endure?

But in your steadfast love, I hope. In your word, I hope. And what's beautiful reminder, we'll close with this, is this idea of hoping in the word and having hope in general is throughout this psalm.

The hope that we have in God's word is throughout it. And so I want you to continue to look for that, the way that the author writes about having hope in his word.

He talks about it explicitly in verse 81, again in verse 114 and verse 147, But he talks about hope in the rules, hope in his word, that you have made me hope, that I have hoped in your word, and that we would not be put to shame because our hope is in your word, right?

So today I want us to think about that. I want us to think about that, this cough letter, this idea of the spoon, God holding everything together in his hands, allowing for us to question, when are you going to come, Lord?

But knowing that we're not in a battle against flesh and blood, right? We're in a spiritual battle. And it's God's words that we don't forsake. We go back to the basics. They may have almost made an end of us. We might feel like that right here in America today. But we won't forget. We will not forget the basics. We will not forsake his precepts.

And we will remember what the psalmist says in verse 88, in your steadfast love, give me life. Why? That I may keep the testimonies of your mouth.

So thank you for being here again with us today. And I just love being a part of this study with you. I hope that you're learning and being blessed. I would love it if you said hi and just give me a thought of what you're thinking about and come back to me with that.

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And at the end today, I want to also say that, well, I keep on wanting to tell you about this fun little thing that's coming up, but I'm going to wait. I'm going to wait once again and tell you about it maybe in the next episode. I'm not quite ready, but it's coming and I'll tell you about that pretty soon.

For now, know that you are loved. Know that you're prayed for. I appreciate you being here with me on this. And I look forward to being back here again with you real soon. Bye-bye for now.

### Bible Verses Referenced

Psalm 119:81-88, Ephesians 6:10-18

### Growing Deeper...

1. **Read and Reflect:** Meditate on Psalm 119:81-88 and Ephesians 6:10-18.
2. **Pray for Understanding:** Ask God for wisdom and understanding as you study His word.
3. **Memorize Scripture:** Commit to memory key verses from Psalm 119 to strengthen your faith.
4. **Share Insights:** Discuss your reflections with a friend or in a Bible study group.