



Psalm 119:81-88 “Waiting on The Lord”

Intro:

As we enter the eleventh section of Psalm 119 (Hebrew letter Kaph) we encounter a sobering moment in the life of the servant of God (vv. 17, 23, 38, 49, 65, 76, 84). He speaks from a place of deep anguish, longing for God’s salvation. His joy is eroded by those who seek his destruction. Yet amid this suffering, one truth becomes clear: though circumstances threaten to crush him, the psalmist refuses to let go of God’s Word. This passage will show us that when adversity intensifies and ***God’s response seems delayed***, His Word remains the only means by which we can stand, endure, and remain faithful ***until restoration comes***.

V.81-83 “My soul languishes for Your salvation; ***(but) I wait for Your word***. My eyes fail with longing for Your word, while I say, ***“When will You comfort me?”*** Though I have become like a wineskin in the smoke, ***I do not forget Your statutes.***”

The word *salvation* (*teshû’âh*, H8688) conveys the idea of rescue or deliverance, whether physical or spiritual. While Scripture assures us that tribulation in this world is unavoidable (John 16:33), it also reminds us that we have a choice in how we respond to adversity. The first three verses provide a practical guide for living faithfully in every circumstance, especially during seasons of trial while we wait on the Lord:

1. Dependent on the Word – waiting in God’s word is ***active not passive*** (*Psalm 1:1-3*). His Word declares that He is sovereign (Isaiah 46:10), merciful (Lamentations 3:22-23), a loving Father who will complete His good work in us (Philippians 1:6); our rock, our fortress and our deliverer (Psalm 18:2). The Word also rebukes, corrects, and trains in righteousness (2 Timothy 3:16). Where else could we turn for hope, guidance, and strength?

2. Persistent in Prayer – Jesus instructed us to pray and not become discouraged (Luke 18:1-8) and opened a pathway for us to boldly approach the throne of grace that we may receive mercy (Hebrews 4:16). When we go through anguishing times every minute seems like an eternity and we begin to wonder “How long will I have to endure this situation?” This is what David asked in Psalm 13, not without concluding that his heart would rejoice in God’s salvation!

3. Obedient to His statutes – The psalmist compares himself to a wineskin in the smoke, expressing how dry and useless he feels after prolonged hardship. Even in this state, he does not forget the Lord’s statutes which are His “prescribed ways of living”. There is no greater example of faithful obedience than Jesus himself: “For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me” (John 6:38), see also John 8:29, Hebrews 5:8, and John 4:34.

V.84 ***“How many are the days of Your servant? When will You execute judgment on those who persecute me?”***

Suffering can feel endless, and in those moments, we are tempted to demand immediate rescue, convinced that relief should arrive on our timetable. Our hearts struggle against the delay, longing to bypass the pain. Yet Scripture reminds us in **Ecclesiastes 3** that there is a season for everything. God’s timing is perfect and wise, far surpassing our understanding, and even our moments of despair fit within His greater plan. (Isaiah 55:9 “For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts.”)

V.85-87a “The arrogant have dug pits for me, people who are not in accord with your law. All your commandments are faithful; they have persecuted me with a lie; help me! They almost destroyed me on earth.”

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The cause of the suffering is revealed; this is a constant in the life of a Christian: persecution for the sake of righteousness. It is almost incomprehensible that God's children would endure hardship at the hands of those who openly reject Him. Yet no matter how fierce the attacks, not a hair of our head will perish outside of God's sovereign permission (Luke 21:18)

V.87b-88 "But as for me, I did not abandon Your precepts. Revive me according to Your faithfulness, so that I may keep the testimony of Your mouth."

This is the declaration of a *servant of God*, who understands his identity (Isaiah 43:7), understands God's character and power intimately (Deuteronomy 32:3-4), and embraces the reason of his existence (Acts 1:8).

Conclusion and Main Idea:

Even in the midst of prolonged hardship, God's Word gives us strength to wait, hope to endure, and guidance to remain faithful. By depending on Him, persisting in prayer, and obeying His statutes, we can navigate every trial with confidence, trusting that His timing is perfect and His faithfulness will never fail.

Memory Verse:

"My soul languishes for Your salvation; I wait for Your word" Psalm 119:81 (NASB)



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