

PSALM 119 – A STUDY ON SALVATION BY THE WORD OF GOD

(CP PSA 119:1-176). It is not known who wrote Psalm 119, but whoever it was he was passionately devoted to the word of God. The teaching underlined in the Psalm for Christians today is the necessity of obeying God's word in order to appropriate His blessings and ensure eternal life. God's word is presented in the Psalm as the Christians' inspiration for consecration (CP V1-3, 9-16, 20, 26-27, 30-36, 40, 44-50, 54-56, 59-64, 66-71, 73, 88, 92-93, 97, 101, 109-112, 127-128); rule for living (CP V4-6, 29, 169-172, 176); guide (CP V17-18, 102, 104-105, 129-130, 137-140); comfort (CP22, 52, 74, 76-80, 82-84, 87, 113-114, 141-144, 151-152, 161-164, 165-168); resource for Christians' every need (CP V24-25, 28, 37-38, 57-58, 72, 98-100, 103, 106, 159-160); protection (CP V41-43, 51, 94-96, 107, 116-117, 121-125, 132-135, 145-149, 153-156, 173-175); promise (CP V65, 81). God's word represents His revelation in general together with His commandments – statutes, precepts – and promises. Psalm 119 is both the longest psalm and the longest chapter in the bible. It is made up of twenty-two sections each containing eight verses, totalling one hundred and seventy six verses, all but four of which – V84, 121, 122 and 132 – refer to God's word by some title or other. Although some verses may appear to say the same thing, each has a different shade of meaning.

The names used in the Psalm to describe God's word are *way(s)*, which means a well trodden path, manner; a course of life or mode of action, journey (CP V1, 3, 5, 14, 26, 27, 29, 30, 32, 33, 37, 59, 168); *law* or Torah, which means precept, statute, as used in the Old Testament of God's instruction in the way of righteousness (CP V1, 18, 29, 34, 44, 51, 53, 61, 70, 72, 77, 85, 92, 97, 109, 113, 126, 136, 142, 150, 153, 163, 165, 174); *testimony testimonies* which means to testify, witness; a solemn affirmation (CP V2, 14, 22, 24, 31, 36, 48, 59, 79, 88, 95, 99, 111, 119, 125, 129, 138, 144, 146, 152, 157, 167, 168); *precepts*, which mean mandates of God, are the same as commandments and statutes. They prescribe the way of life and conduct that all God's people are to diligently pursue. *Precepts* are not options, but commandments that have to be obeyed (CP V4, 15, 27, 40, 45, 56, 63, 69, 78, 87, 93, 94, 100, 104, 110, 128, 134, 141, 159, 168, 173); *statutes* (CP V5, 8, 12, 16, 23, 26, 33, 48, 54, 64, 68, 71, 80, 83, 112, 117, 118, 124, 135, 145, 155, 171); *commandment(s)* (CP V6, 10, 19, 21, 32, 35, 47, 48, 60, 66, 73, 86, 96, 98, 115, 127, 131, 143, 151, 166, 172, 176); *judgments*, which mean verdicts, sentences or formal decrees, divine law, orders, ordinances (CP V7, 13, 20, 30, 39, 43, 52, 62, 75, 102, 106, 108, 120, 137, 156, 160, 164, 175); *word(s)*, which mean commandments decrees, judgments, oracles, spoken word (CP V9, 11, 16, 17, 25, 28, 38, 41, 42, 43, 49, 50, 57, 58, 65, 67, 74, 76, 81, 82, 89, 101, 103, 105, 107, 114, 116, 123, 130, 133, 140, 147, 148, 154, 158, 160, 161, 162, 169, 170, 172); *truth*, which means firmness, stability faithful, sure (CP

V30, 43, 142, 151); *counsellors*, which mean advice prudence, counsel, purpose (CP V24); *righteousness*, which means rightness, that which is altogether just, justice, virtue (CP V40, 123, 142, 144, 172), and lastly, *ordinances*, which mean judgments, formal decrees, divine law, orders (CP V91).

(CP V1-8). Here we see the blessedness of obedience to God's word. These verses highlight eight characteristics of blessed, or happy Christians: they are undefiled, walk according to God's word, keep His testimonies, seek Him with the whole heart, do no iniquity, walk in His ways, praise Him with an upright heart, keep His statutes (CP V1). Christians' lives are undefiled who walk according to God's word. If they do sin God has made provision for them to confess, and receive His forgiveness. This keeps them in an undefiled condition – they are cleansed from all unrighteousness (CP Psa 32:1-5; Pr 28:13; 1Jn 1:8-10). Blessed Christians also keep God's testimonies and seek Him with the whole heart. This means they are not half-hearted in their efforts to do God's word but whole-heartedly serve Him. These Christians press in with ardent zeal and intense exertion to secure their place in God's eternal Kingdom (CP Mt 11:12). This expresses the earnestness of Christians who seek after God with their whole heart (CP Lu16:16). *They also do no iniquity, they walk in His ways* in Psa 119:3 simply means that Christians completely surrendered to the authority of God's word do not habitually sin (CP V3 with 1Jn 1:6-7). Christians can, and do sin as we read in 1Jn 1:8-10, but they are not habitual sinners (CP Ro 6:2-6, 1Jn 3:9; 5:18). Psa 119:4-8 teaches that God has prescribed the Christian way of life and those who walk in the way He has prescribed will never be put to shame. They will never regret their Christian walk (CP V 4-8, with Psa 19:7-11; 1Jn 2:28). Christians can ask God for the grace needed to walk in the way He has prescribed. His grace is there for the asking (CP Psa 119:5 with He 4:16). Those who are completely surrendered to the authority of God's word, and walk in the way He has prescribed, are joyous and spontaneous Christians whose hearts are in a continual attitude of praise toward God. They need never fear that He will forsake them (CP Psa 119:8 with 37:23-324; He 13:5).

(CP Psa 119:9-16). Here we see that purity – being free from sin – is the fruit of obedience to God's word. It is only by ordering their lives to conform strictly to God's word that Christians can resist the influences of the immoral and corrupt world system in which they live, and ensure their place in God's eternal Kingdom (CP Psa 37:31; Jas 4:7; 1Jn 1:7). There are eight ways listed in Psa 119:9-16 – one in each verse – teaching Christians how to keep their lives pure. The first, in V9 is by practical obedience to God's word.

Eternal life is only assured for those doing the work of God's word (CP V9 with Pr 13:13; 19:16; Mt 7:21-27; Ro 2:13; Jas 1:21-25). The second way, in Psa 119:10, is by whole-heartedly seeking to do the will of God. As we learned in V2, blessed, or happy Christians, are not half-hearted in their efforts to seek to do God's will, but whole-heartedly serve Him. There are no half-hearted, or nominal Christians in God's economy (CP V10 with Mt 12:30; Rev 3: 14-16). The third way, in Psa 119:11, is by God's word lodged in the hearts of Christians and lived out in their daily lives, which empowers them to resist sinning (CP V11 with Eph 6:10-18; Jas 4:7). The fourth way, in Psa 119:12, is by learning God's word and making it the rule for living. God is blessed when Christians sincerely want to be rid of sin and live according to His word (CP V12 with Rev 3:7-11). The fifth way, in Psa 119:13, is by taking an open stand for all God's truth. Christians must always declare the full counsel of God, not a soft version (CP V13 with Php 1:20-21; 2Ti 2:15). The sixth way, in Psa 119:14, is by delighting more in doing the work of God's word than in riches (CP V14 with Psa 40:8; 119:72, 127; Ro 7:22). The seventh and eighth ways, in Psa 119:15-16, is by obeying God's commandments and walking in the way He has prescribed. *Having respect into thy way* in V15 means to follow the rule for living marked out by God's word, and *I will not forget thy word* in V16, means essentially the same thing – to never forget that God's word is the rule for living by which Christians must abide to be saved (CP V15-16 with Psa 19:7-11; 119: 93, 105-106; 1Jn 2:14; Rev 3:7-10).

(CP Psa 119:17-24). Here we see enlightenment by the word of God. V17-19 highlight the need for Christians to continually pray for God to give them understanding of His word in order that they may walk in the way that He has prescribed for them (CP V17-19, 27,34, 73, 125, 144, 169). It is only by discerning the importance of God's word for Christian living that Christians will desire to walk in the way that God has prescribed for them. Christians need never fear that God will hide His commandments from them – they are so clearly laid out in scripture that even the most simple person can understand them (CP Psa 19:7; 119:98-100, 130; Pr 1:1-4, 2Ti 3:15; He 5: 13-14). V20 in Psa 119 expresses the intense longing and hunger for righteousness which is reflected in the lives of all who hunger and thirst for the things of God (CP V20; Psa 42:1; 63:1; 84:2 with Mt 5:6). Christians are scorned and ridiculed by the world but their zeal for the things of God will be rewarded in time to come and they will no longer be subject to the reproach and contempt of the world (CP Psa 119:21-22 with 1Pe4:3-4). Although they may be criticized and vilified in the world Christians must never give up on God's word. It provides strength and solace for every circumstance of life. God's word – His precepts, statutes, commandments, are the Christian's counsellors, which teach Christians how they must bear

things patiently (CP Psa 119:23-24, 98-100 with Mt 5:10-12; Lu 6:22-23).

(CP Psa 119:25-32). Here we see the sustaining power of God's word. The expression, *my soul cleaveth unto the dust* in V25 (KJV), speaks of sorrow, suffering, and affliction in the Psalmist's life, but he knows that the sustaining power of God's word will revive him. This teaches Christians who are cast down in sorrow that they too can pray for God to sustain them through His word (CP V25, 37, 40, 88, 107, 145, 154, 156, 159). V26 teaches that when Christians confess their sins "...I have declared my ways," God forgives them "... and thou heardest me." This leads to a renewed desire for holiness, as expressed in the prayer, "*teach me thy statutes. Make me to understand the way of thy precepts*" in V26 and 27 (CP V26-27). V28 teaches that when Christians are spiritually depressed they can find strength and solace in the word of God (CP V28). *Melteth* (KJV), means to weep, sorrow. *Heaviness* means grief, spiritual depression (CP Psa 107:26). V29-30 in Psa 119 teaches that Christians must emulate the true character of God in contrast to the lying character of Satan (CP V29-30, 163). *Truth* is what God says about something (CP Jn 17:17). Psa 119:31-32 reflects how Christians must respond to the word of God (CP V31-32). *When thou shalt enlarge my heart* means that whoever walks in strict obedience to God's word will have their understanding increased (CP 1Ki 4:29; Isa 60:5).

(CP Psa 119:33-40). Here we see God's word as the Christian's inspiration for consecration. Christians who determine to order their lives according to God's precepts can pray for instruction and understanding. These are prayers that God will always answer because the reason for asking in the first place is so that Christians will be able to faithfully fulfill their duty to God's word (CP V33-35 with Pr 2:1-22; Jas 1:2-5). Psa 119:36 teaches that Christians must set their affection on doing God's word rather than on personal gain (CP V36). This should be the prayer of every professing Christian in light of what scriptures teach against covetousness (CP Lu 12:15). *Abundance* here means more than is needed. Jesus is warning Christians here that accumulating more than is needed is the sin of covetousness. Covetousness is idolatry, and no covetous person or idolater, will inherit the eternal Kingdom (CP Eph 5:5; Col 3:1-6). *Turn away my eyes from beholding vanity...* in V37, Psa 119 (KJV), is a commentary on the worthless things that Christians spend time on (CP V37). Christians' eyes are the windows of their soul and if they spend time looking upon impure things they themselves will become impure and eventually lose their soul (CP Psa 101:2-3 with Mt 6:22-23; Lu 11:34).

Psa 110:38 teaches that Christians determined to obey God's word and live the way He was prescribed in

Psalm 119 – A study on salvation by the word of God

scripture can pray for the promises found in His word to be fulfilled in their lives. The fulfillment of God's promises in the lives of Christians contribute to their *fear*, their reverence of God (CP V38 with 2Sam 7:25-26; 1Ki 8:39-40; Jer 33:8-9). Christians can also pray to God to keep them from reproach, from anything that would bring shame or dishonour to God's name. Psa 119:39 teaches that the Psalmist had obviously committed a grave sin for he called it *my reproach which I fear* in the KJV (CP V39). Christians are quickened in God's righteousness when they are born again and determine to walk in obedience to God's word (CP V40 with 2Cor 5:17; 21; Eph 4:24).

(CP Psa 119:41-48). Here we see victory by the word of God (CP V41). God's mercies – His lovingkindness, unfailing love – and salvation, is a repeated desire of the Psalmist, which should also be reflected in the prayers of every Christian (CP V41, 77, 81, 88, 94, 123-124, 146, 153-154, 159, 166). Christians must never take God's mercies or His salvation for granted, but must be in a constant attitude of prayer before God for His word to be fulfilled in their lives. Their faith is based on God's word which can never fall. God's answers to prayers silences the reproach of unbelievers (CP V42). V43 teaches that Christians must believe in God's word to fulfill itself and must never be afraid to witness to the truth of the word (CP 43, 49). In V44-45 we see the outworking of salvation by the word of God. Keeping God's word brings victory over sin (CP V44-45 with Jn 8:31-36). Psa 119:46 teaches that faith in God's word to fulfill itself gives one boldness to witness for God even before kings (CP V46 with Mt 10:18-20). V47-48 in Psa 119 teaches that those who love God's word derive great enjoyment in studying the word and meditating upon it. They are in awe of its scope, depth and power and lift up their hands to God in praise of His word (CP V47-48).

(CP Psa 119: 49-56). Here we see comfort in the word of God (CP V49-50 with Ro 15:4). God's word is a relevant, effective, unfailing, living source of comfort, always availing for those determined to live by it (CP Jn 14:27). Those who live by God's word will be mocked and derided by unbelievers, and suffer persecution and hardship at the hands of their enemies. This is the Psalmist's affliction in V50 in Psa 119, and the portion promised to all New Testament Christians (CP Mk 10:27-30; 2Ti 3:12). But having found divine principles to live by Christians will never forsake them. They are comforted by the record of scripture that God's word will never fail them (CP Psa 119:51-52 with V89, 144, 152, 160 and Nu 23:19; Psa 89:34; Isa 55:11; Jer 1:12). Faith to believe that God will do as He says comes by continuously reading and meditating upon His word (CP Josh 1:8; Psa 1:1-3; Pr 4: 20-22). V53 in Psa 119 teaches that the Godly, who zealously live by God's word, will always be concerned about the ungodly, who

spurn it (CP V53, 136, 139 with 113, 115, 158). God's laws are the source of joy and singing for the Godly in their earthly pilgrimage. They obey God's law and live by it day and night (CP V 54-56 with Psa 5:11-12 and 63:5-8).

(CP Psa 119:57-64). Here we see satisfaction for believers by the word of God (CP Psa 19:7-11; 73:26). God is all-sufficient for those who determine to live by His word (CP V57 with Nu 18:20; Psa 16:5; Lam 3:24). Psa 119:58 teaches that Christians must abide in God's word, prayerfully seeking His favour and grace, while claiming His promise of mercy (CP V58 with Jn 15:1-10). We learn from V59-61 in Psa 119 that Christians need to constantly test the genuineness of their faith. They must continually examine their beliefs and activities and hasten to ensure that they conform to the way of life God has prescribed for them. Ungodly men may try to lure them back into sin but that is all the more reason for them to remember God's word and obey it (CP V59-61 with Ro 8:9-14; 2Cor 13:5). Even in their darkest hour Christians can praise God for the way of life He has prescribed for them (CP Psa 119:62 with Ac 16:25). Christians must only associate or fellowship with other Christians. (This does not mean that Christians cannot befriend non-Christians, but that there can be no close fellowship with them). Christian's close fellowship must be with like-minded people – those whose ideals and visions centre in Jesus (CP Psa 119:63 with 2Cor 6:14-18). Finally, V64 in Psa 119 teaches that Christians respond to God's mercy by remaining teachable by His word (CP V 64 with Psa 119:9).

(CP Psa 119:65-72). Here we see the chastening power of God's word. The term *afflicted* in V67 and 71 is also used in V75 and 107. It refers to the afflictions the Psalmist endured in V50, 92 and 153 (CP V67, 71, 75 and 107 with V50, 92 and 153). The afflictions referred to were mocking and derision, persecution and hardship the Psalmist suffered for his faith (CP V51, 61, 69, 78, 83, 95, 110, 121, 134, 141, 143, 150, 157, 161). In V67 we learn that the Psalmist had fallen into sin and was afflicted as a result. This teaches the law of sowing and reaping (CP V67 with Ga 6:7-8). In Psa 119:71 and 75 the Psalmist declared that being afflicted was the motivating power for him learning God's word. This underlines the chastening power of the word which is further highlighted in V72 when the Psalmist declared that the word was better even than a thousand pieces of gold and silver (CP V71-72, and 75, also V127, with Psa 19:7-11 and Pr 8:11, 19). The teaching that comes out of all this is that God is true to His word – Christians can depend on Him.

(CP Psa 119:73-80). Here we see the righteousness of the word of God. V73 teaches that Christians totally conformed to the word can depend on God to complete the work he has started in them (VP V73 with Psa

Psalm 119 – A study on salvation by the word of God

138:8; Php 1:6; 1Ti 1:12). *They that fear thee* in Psa 119:74 is a reference to other Christians (CP V74). When like-minded Christians meet each other great joy wells up among them, for they all share the same hope in God's word (CP Psa 34:2 Jer 9:24). As we learned in our previous study on Psa 119:65-72, V75 does not teach that God personally afflicted the Psalmist for sinning, but that the law of sowing and reaping under which he was afflicted, is God's law (CP V75 with Ga 6:7-8). Psa 119:75 also teaches that Christians must always vindicate God for His justice and faithfulness in their afflictions. And as we also learned earlier, V75 underlines the chastening power of God's word. The Psalmist's plea in V76 and V77 should reflect the prayer from every Christian's heart for the protection of God's word for their wellbeing also (VP V76-77 also 41, 88, 124, 149, 159 with He 4:16), V80 in Psa 119 teaches the importance of Christians being sound in God's word. Not in man-made doctrines, but the word itself, which allows no compromise with anything that is not of God (CP V80 with Pr 2:1-11, 3:21-26; 2Ti 1:13-14; Tit 1:9; Jude 1-3).

(CP Psa 119:81-88). Here we see the word of God as the source of hope. These verses teach that Christians may suffer persecutions and hardship in their Christian walk, their hope is in God's word for the salvation they long for (CP V81.82, 84 and 114 with Psa 84:2). In V83 in Psa 119 the Psalmist compares the persecutions and hardships he has suffered to a wineskin hanging in smoke. As the smoke dries and shrivels up the wineskin so the persecutions and hardships he suffered debilitated the Psalmist. But he would not give up on God's word (CP V83 and 85-87). New Testament Christians must emulate the Psalmist here and never give up on God's word either, regardless of their sufferings for the gospel's sake. Christians are promised persecution and hardship as their portion for following Christ (CP Mk 10:29-30; 2Ti 3:12). V88 in Psa 119 teaches virtually the same as V40 (CP V88 and 40). Christians are quickened after God's lovingkindness the same as they are in his righteousness when they are born again and determine to walk in obedience to God's word.

(CP Psa 119:89-96). Here we see eternity of the word of God. V89 teaches that the word of God is infallible, unchanging, eternal (CP V89 with Psa 89:2; Isa 40:8; 55:10-11; Mt 24:35; 1Pe 1:23-25). V90-91 in Psa 119 teaches that everything exists as a result of God speaking it into being: heaven and earth, the sun, moon and stars, the seasons, day and night, cold and heat, seed-time and harvest etc. God spoke everything that is into existence over six thousand years ago and they still continue to this day, and will continue, upheld and sustained by God's word throughout eternity (CP V90-91 with Gen 1:1-31; Psa 104:1-32; Ecc 1:4; He 1:1-3; 2Pe 3:7; Rev 21). Psa 119:90 also teaches that the human race will continue throughout eternity "...unto all

generations."this is also taught throughout scripture (CP Gen 8:22; 9:12; Psa 69:35-36; Isa 9:6-7; 59:21; 65:18-25; 66:22-24; Dan 2:44-45; 7:13-14, 18, 27; Mic 4:1-5; Zech 14:16; Mt 25:31-36; Lu 1:32-33; Rev 11:15; 21:3-7; 22:4-5). V92-96 in Psa 119 teaches that God's word is the source of help for all generations. Faith to appropriate God's blessings comes by meditating upon His word like the Psalmist did here, and while there is a limit to what man can do, God's word is unlimited (CP V92-96 and 97-100 with Ro 11:33-36).

(CP Psa 119:97-104). Here we see the word of God as the source of all wisdom and knowledge (CP 2Ti 3:16-17). V97-100 in Psa 119 teach, as we learned in our previous study on V89-96, that while there is an end to all human perfection, there is no limit to God's word – it is perfect and infinite (CP V96 and 97-100 with Ro 11:33-36). In V101 in Psa 119 we learn the secret of acquiring wisdom: Christians must restrain their feet from paths of sin in order to obey God's word to the utmost (CP V101 with Pr 1:15-16). In Psa 119:102 we learn that Christians are sanctified by the word of God (CP V102 with Jn 17:17-19; Eph 5:25-27). God's word is sweeter than honey to those who determine to order their lives according to His word (CP Psa 119:103 with Psa 19:7-11). Christians whose lives are ordered according to God's word hate sin and love holiness (CP Psa 119:104 and 128 with Eph 4:17-24).

(CP Psa 119:105-112) here we see the word of God as the source of light and joy (CP Psa 19:18; Pr 6:23). We learn from V105 in Psa 119 that God's eternal word shows Christians how to live the life He has prescribed for them. Christians who live by God's word will never wander out of the way of His truth. They allow the word to guide, correct, instruct, lead and teach them (CP V105 with De 8:3-6 (also Mt 4:4 and Lu 4:4); 2Ti 3:16-17). Christians will suffer mocking and derision, persecution and hardship for their faith, but as this study teaches throughout, they must never give up on God's word (CP Psa 119:107). The *freewill offerings of my mouth* in V108 of Psa 119, refers to the Psalmist's praise for God. This teaches that Christians are to praise God continually and thank Him, and regardless of their circumstances in life are to remain open to His word (CP V108 with He 13:15). V109 and 110 in Psa teaches that although their lives may be constantly in peril, Christians must never forget God's word. There is safety and security in the word and the tendency to err from it in troubled times must be avoided at any cost (CP V109-110 with V23, 46, 167). God's word is to be chosen by Christians as their inheritance – a prized possession of incomparable value. All who realize its worth should determine to obey it to the end of life. It will be their rejoicing forever (CP V111-112 with V33 and Mt 10:22).

Psalm 119 – A study on salvation by the word of God

(CP Psa 119:113-120). Here we see the word of God as the source of security. *Vain thoughts* in V113 mean divided in heart or mind, double-minded. Christians must be single-mindedly committed to obeying God's word. There is no middle ground with God. Christians either obey Him unreservedly or they will forfeit their salvation (CP V113 with Mt 4:4 and 12:30). No one who professes to love God but is divided in their mind towards Him will be saved (CP Mt 7:21-27; Rev 3:22). God can only be the refuge and protector of those who abide in Him and in whom His word abides (CP Psa 119:114 and 32:7 with Psa 91:1-4 and Jn 15:7-8). Christians who keep God's commandments will not fraternize with sinful men. They will do nothing that could prevent their prayers being answered or that could cause them to lose hope in God's word. They ensure their eternal security by continued obedience to God's word (CP Psa 119:115-117 with 2 Cor 6:14-18 and Php 1:20). It should be noted here that while obedient Christians will not fraternize with evil-doers, they will maintain contact in order to share the gospel with them.

V118-120 in Psa 119 teach that once-saved Christians can err from the truth of God's word and forfeit their salvation. They will be punished together with those who have never known God, if they die in sin (VP Eze 18:24-26). God's Judgment of the wicked will be so severe that it should cause Christians to fear God. The wicked will be cast into the lake of fire where they will be tormented in the flames day and night for ever. Their punishment will be ongoing throughout eternity (CP V118-120 with Rev 21:8 and Isa 66:22-24). Isa 66: 22-24 teaches that the wicked being tormented in hell will be a vivid reminder throughout eternity to all the saved, of the consequences of dying in sin.

(CP Psa 119:121-128). Here we see God's word as the source of confidence for Christians (CP Pr 3:4). V121-125 in Psa 119 teaches that a righteous life is the fruit of salvation. This is the proper basis for Christians to believe for God to deliver them from oppression and be a guarantee for their good. God is the Christian's surety against oppression and every evil that would try to overcome them. Christians must persevere in faith and never give up on God for His salvation and His righteousness (CP V121-125 with Psa 91:1-16; He 4:14-16). V126-128 in Psa 119 teaches confidence in God's word. In V126 the Psalmist calls upon God to act against evil-doers who have violated His word. In V127-128 he contrasts their violations with his love for, and the confidence he has in God's word. He also declares again his hatred for every false way. Zeal for God's word awakens righteous anger in Christians against those who violate the word (CP V113, 115, 158), and it brings abhorrence of all that is contrary to the word (CP V104, 163). Christians whose lives are ordered according to God's word hate sin and love holiness (CP Eph 4:17-24). What the Psalmist declares

throughout Psa 119 should also be the declaration of every Christian, and then proved by how they esteem God's word. Otherwise they are only deceiving themselves (CP V126-128, and V14, 57, 72, 11 with Psa 19:7-11).

(CP Psa 119:129-136). Here we see guidance by the word of God (CP Psa 19:11). The word *wonderful* in Psa 119:29 describes the wondrous redeeming power of God's word which, like the Psalmist, Christians must determine to live by (CP V129 with V9). God's word is the Christian's guide to eternal life. It enlightens their understanding of God's purposes, and makes wise ordinary people who determine to live by it (CP V130 with Psa 19:7-11; 119:105; Pr 6:20-23; 2Ti 2:16-17). V131 in Psa 119 typifies Christians who hunger and thirst for God's word (CP V131 with Psa 42:1-2; 143:6 and 1Pe 2:1-2). V132 in Psa 119 teaches that Christians never get to the place in this life where they are beyond the need of God's grace (CP V132 with Psa 51:1-2; 106:3-5). Psa 119:133-134 teaches that there are two aspects to holiness – to keep going on for God, and to keep one's self from sin. Grace is the key to both. It is the enabling power of God by which Christians can live the way God has prescribed for them, and keep His precepts (CP V 133-134 with Ro 6:1-23). Psa 119:135 teaches that Christians, whose desire is to single-mindedly serve God, can expect God to show them signs of His favour, presence and power (CP V135 with Mk 16:17-20). V136 in Psa 119 teaches how Christians should sorrow and anguish over the souls of the lost for disregarding the instructions of God's word (CP V136 with Psa 44:17-22; Eze 9:4; Ro 9:1-3; Php 3:18).

(CP Psa 119:137-144). Here we see the character of the word of God (CP Nu 23:19-20; Psa 12:6; 18:30; 33:4,6; 107:20; 119:89-91; 103, 105, 130, 160; 147: 18; 148:8; Isa 40:8; 55:10-11; Jn 15:3; Eph 5:26; 1Pe 1:22-23). We see in these scriptures that God's word cannot fail. It is pure, tried, right, righteous, upright. It creates, heals, and quickens (makes alive, restores). It is eternal, sweet. It is a lamp, a light, true. It controls the weather, shall stand forever, accomplishes that which God purposes and prospers in the thing whereto He sends it. It cleanses from sin and is incorruptible. We learn in V137-140 in Psa 119 that God is righteous. His judgments are upright and His commandments righteous and faithful. Christians should become more jealous of God's word because of those who reject it. God's word is so refined there is nothing in it worthless or useless. Christians' zeal for God's word should be as Christ's zeal was for God's house (CP V137-140 with Psa 69:9 also Jn 2:17 and Psa 12:6). V141-144 in Psa 119 teach that although Christians may be physically impaired in the estimation of others, and despised for it, they must never give up on God's word. God's righteousness is everlasting and every word of scripture is true. Trouble and anguish in their circumstances in life should only

Psalm 119 – A study on salvation by the word of God

highlight Christians' delight in God's word. The more Christians understand the word the greater will be their capacity for life (CP V141-144 with V77 and Jn 17:17).

(CP Psa 119:145-152). Here we see the word of God as the source of strength for Christians (CP Psa 119:11; Php 2:16; Col 3:16). Christians who single-mindedly serve God and obey His word can rest assured of His salvation (CP Psa 119:145-146 with Mt 7:21-27). V147 in Psa 119 teaches that Christians, like the Psalmist, should rise up early in the mornings to pray and meditate on God's word. Meditating on God's word and prayer should start the day for Christians before they do anything else. V148 teaches that the early hours of the night – the evening – should also be utilized for meditation on the word (CP V147-148 with Psa 5:1-3 and Lam 2:19). A similar teaching comes out of V149 in Psa 119 as V88 when the Psalmist pleads with God to hear his prayer and quicken, or revive, him. Christians are quickened – made alive in Christ – and receive God's mercy and justice when they are born again and determine to walk in obedience to God's word (CP V149 and 88 with 2Cor 5:17,21; Eph 4:24). Psa 118:150-152 teaches that God's word is the source of confidence for Christians before their enemies. Christians can know the nearness of God through His word; the truth of His word, and that the word will never fail them (CP V150-152 with Psa 145:18; Isa 50:8; Lu 21:33). Christians can stand on the promises of God's word knowing that they abide forever.

(CP PS Psa 119:153-160). Here we see the word of God as the source of deliverance (CP Mic 7:9; Ro 1:16). The Lord knows the afflictions of every Christian and He will deliver all who cling to Him and to His word. *Afflicted* in the context of V 153 in Psa 119 refers to the persecutions and hardships the Psalmist suffered at the hands of his enemies, which is also promised to New Testament Christians (CP V153, also 50 and 92 with Mk 10:27-30 and 2Ti 3:12). The word *deliver* in Psa 119:153 means to loose, take away; put off, whereas in V154 it means *redeem* (CP V154). For New Testament Christians this means that God will redeem all who are made alive in Christ by God's word. Christ is the Christian's advocate with the Father (CP He 4:14-16; 1Jn 2:1). V155 and V156 in Psa 119 teach that salvation is only available to those who have determined to walk in the way God has prescribed in His word (CP V155 and 156 with Mt 2:21-27), V157 in Psa 119 teaches that though Christians may have many enemies and undergo great persecutions they must never forsake the word of God (CP V157 with Psa 44:17-22). Psa 119: 158 teaches that Christians should sorrow and anguish over the souls of the lost for their utter disregard for God's word (CP V158 and 136 with Ro 9:1-3; Php 3:18). Psa 119:159 evokes the same teaching for New Testament Christians as V88 and 149, that Christians are quickened –made alive in Christ – when they are born again and

determine to walk in obedience to God's word (CP V159, also 88 and 149 with 2Cor 5:17,21 Eph 4:24). V160 in Psa 119 teaches that scriptures ...*every one of God's righteous judgments* (KJV), will endure forever. They are true and eternal from the beginning, for God cannot lie. Christians can depend on His word for their very life (CP V160 with Nu 23:19; Isa 40:8; 55:10-11; Mt 5:18; Jn17:14-17; 2Ti 3:16-17).

(CP Psa 119:161-168). Here we see that the word of God is the source of peace (CP V165 with Pr 3:1-4; Isa 26:3; 32:17-18). *Peace* in these scriptures is **Shalom** – God's favour, which He bestowed upon the righteous in the Old Testament. Its New Testament Equivalent is **Eirene**, which means peace of mind, tranquility. In general it denotes the state of a soul assured of its salvation through Christ and content with its earthly lot, whatever it is (CP Isa 53:5 with Ro 5:1; 14:17-19; Php 4:7), V161-164 in Psa 119 teaches that the word of God is the only thing that enables Christians to be at peace with the circumstances of their lives. Only it can preserve their faithfulness to God in the face of persecution and hardship. The truth of God's word is as the spoils of battle which their enemies have to forfeit when confronted with God's word. Christians must hate and abhor all that is contrary to the truth of God's word, and must continually and whole-heartedly praise God for His righteous judgments (CP V161-164 with Eph 4:25; He 13:15). We should note here that the teaching of V165 in Psa 119 regarding the peace God bestows upon the righteous does not mean that they will not undergo sorrows and sufferings and even death at the hands of God's enemies, but rather that by obeying God's word, they avoid the pitfalls of sinning in their trials and temptations. V165 also teaches that no one who is truly obedient to God's word will ever be offended by anyone, and neither will they offend anyone else (CP V165 with Mt 18:6-9). V166-168 in Psa 119 teaches that Christians' works are the fruit of their faith in God's word. The more Christians obey God's word, the more work of the word they do for which they have been ordained by God, who sees it all (CP V166-168 with Job 24:23; Pr 5:21; Eph 2:10).

(CP Psa 119:169-176). This segment brings to a close our study on Psa 119. Here we see prayer and praise for the blessings of God's word. New Testament Christians can emulate the Psalmist here and pray to God for the eyes of their understanding to be enlightened that they may know the truth of His holy word (CP V169, 170, 173, 175, also V34, with Psa 18:28; Pr 2:3-6; Mt 7:7 Eph 1:18-23; 3:18). The word *deliver* in V170 in Psa 119 means to rescue out of the hands of the enemy, recover (CP Psa 142:6; 143:9). V171 and 172 in Psa 119 teach that increased knowledge of God's word should lead Christians to praise and adoration of the Lord. Their lips should pour forth and bubble over with praise for God's word because all His commandments

Psalm 119 – A study on salvation by the word of God

are righteous (CP V171-172 with Psa 145:7; Pr 18:4 and 2Th 1:4-5). Psa 119:174 teaches that the hope of every Christian is the salvation of their soul as an actual fact. It is only fully certain however for those, like the Psalmist, who have ordered their lives according to God's word (CP V174 and V166 WITH Mt 7:21-27). V176, the last verse in Psa 119, teaches that before their salvation, men are compared to sheep which have gone astray (CP V176 with Isa 53:6; 1Pe 2:25). The Psalmist's prayer for God to seek and save him in Psa 119:176 was answered in the New Testament when God sent Jesus to seek and save the lost sheep (CP Lu 15:1-

7; 19:10). Christ's atoning death on the Cross of Calvary saved Old Testament and New Testament saints alike (CP Isa 53:6-8; Jn 1:29; 3: 16; 6:47-51; 1Ti 2:5-6; He 2:9; 9:15; 1Jn 2:2).

This completes our study on Psa 119. The teaching throughout is salvation by the word of God. It depicts the Christian's relationship with God through His word. Those who determine to live by God's word are declared blessed and undefiled in the way of the Lord, and are assured of their place in His eternal Kingdom (CP V1 with Psa 32:1-5; Pr 28:13; 1Jn 1:8-10).