

Tuesday, July 9, 2024 • Read Psalm 119:65–72

Questions from the Scripture text: What does the psalmist call himself (v65a)? How has YHWH dealt with him? According to what (v65b)? What two things does he ask to be taught (v66a)? Why (v66b)? What did he used to do (v67a)? But what happened to him? Now what does he do (v67b)? What does he say about YHWH's character (v68a)? About His conduct? How does the psalmist hope to be conformed to Him (v68b)? Who else have done what to him (v69a)? What will he do in response (v69b)? How does he describe their hard conscience (v70a)? How does he describe his tender one (v70b)? What does he say about his affliction (v71a)? Why (v71b)? What does he call the law (v72a)? How much does he value it (v72b)?

What is good for us? Psalm 119:65–72 looks forward to the opening portion of morning public worship on the coming Lord's Day. In these eight verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **whatever our good God gives us is good for us**.

Good to be afflicted. Five of these eight verses begin with the word "good" in the original. Perhaps the most surprising "good" thing here is in v71: affliction. The word refers not to the painful circumstance, but to the pain itself. Not only did this pain lead to his learning God's statutes (v71b), but to his keeping them (v67b).

Evil men do us evil, but the good God does us good. One of the worst pains is when one is slandered with a lie (v69a)—but, praise God when in order to say something bad about you, they have to lie! The idea in v70 is that instead of muscle tissue, their heart is made of a substance with no nerves in it, unable to feel. The psalmist is thankful for having been under merciless attack that made him wretched with pain! In even the most painful situation, we must remember that human actors are not the primary actors. God is always the primary actor. And because He is not just characterized by good, but the very definition of good, we may know that He is always, only doing perfect good to us (v68a)! This is the initial and controlling thought of the stanza (v65).

Desiring to be made good by the good God. And this is why the psalmist wishes for the Lord Himself to teach him His law. Learning the law is not just a function of acquiring information and forming behavior. It must be conveyed to us by God's own grace. So, v66a says "teach me," and v72 identifies the law as that which is "of Your mouth." This is what is better than a limitless amount of earthly wealth.

About what circumstances have you felt wretched? When have you been mercilessly lied about? But what is the good God doing in such times? And what do such times compel you to learn to do? How can you learn to keep His Word?

Sample prayer: Lord, before we were afflicted, we went astray, but now we keep Your Word. For You are good, and You do good, according to Your Word—You even do this good, when we are in pain. And if pain is blessed to us by its sanctifying influence, how much more now Your worship! For, You have filled Your worship with the means by which You sanctify us. When Your law comes to us from Your mouth, it is better than a treasure trove of gold. So, help us to worship You by Your Spirit, that we may come to You Yourself through Your Son, in whose Name we ask it, AMEN!

Suggested songs: ARP119! "According to Your Word, O LORD" or TPH119! "You Treated Your Servant with Grace"

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. PLEASE BE AWARE of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

Psalm 119 verses 65-72. These are God's words. You have dealt well with your servant o, Yahweh, according to your word. Teach me good judgment and knowledge for I believe your Commandments. Before I was Afflicted, I went astray.

But now I keep your word. You are good and do good. Teach me your statutes. The proud have forged a lie against me. But I will keep your precepts with my whole heart. Their heart is as fat as grease. But I Delight in your law. It is good for me that I have been Afflicted.

That I may learn your statutes. The law of your mouth is better to me. Than thousands of coins. Of. And silver. Amen, that sends this reading of Gods inspired and And Aaron twerked. All eight verses of this stanza, start with the Hebrew letter Tet. and perhaps the most commonly used word in the Hebrew language.

It starts with that letter. Is the word Tove, which means good. And it appears at the beginning of 4 versus here and the word tuve. Appears once. all the consonants are the same there's different vowel pointing the middle consonant. And since the vowel pointings are, Over a thousand years after.

the writing of the Psalms. We might as well take it as the same word so we have Five out of eight. starting with the word good. Now what may be a little bit surprising to us? Or at least surprising to our flash. when we see what is good is, especially in verse, 71 is good for me that I have been afflicted.

And that word doesn't talk about the circumstances that are painful. It actually describes the pain that is felt in the circumstances made to feel rich wretched. Doubled over made. Cringe, it's It's a pain that is. intense enough or a grief that is intense enough, that there's actually a physical response to it.

And it's this that he's saying was good for him. Because as a consequence of that pain, he learned the Lord's statutes. In fact, it's the same word. verse 67. well it's just, it's a A different form of the same verb. That's in verse 67 before I was afflicted.

I went astray. And so, which is better to be going astray, and to not have Bane, or To have pain that stops us from going astray. Sin is worse. Than any pain. Sin is worse than getting kidnapped. Sin is worse than any hard circumstance. and so he says, before I was Afflicted Before I was doubled over in this grief.

I won't destroy but now I keep your word. And so, we get to next week's, passage the Lord sparing us in. 25 or sorry, verse 75. We're going to say, in faithfulness, you have Afflicted me To the Lord, it's in his faithfulness that he has done this.

Now, the particular circumstance that seems to have afflicted him, here is the one that is described in verses 69 and 70. Proud had forged a lie against him. The word that translated forged here is one. It's actually a painting word, not a metal working word. For. White washing or covering over.

they have painted him to others as a liar. it's a very descriptive word. You often have in poetry like the all of the Psalms or poetry. But, have painted him as as someone who is wicked and praise God. one of the things if we have to be lied about in order for people to say bad things about, we may be grateful that in God's mercy, he spared us to such an extent that they had to tell a lie to slander us.

If men, you are hearts and The sinful thoughts and feelings, and impulses that were there, they would not need to tell lies. They could just expose the truth about our hearts. But that's one thing that you can be grateful for if you are lied about. And one thing therefore to commit yourself to do.

As in verse 69, I will keep your precepts with my whole heart. So, if you're ever lied about whether it's by someone in this house or Or anyone else here's something that you can remember from the Bible as a good and right way to respond if you're lied about, keep it a lie.

By committing yourself to keep the Lord's word with your whole heart. Resolve to do such good be so Godly in your character and conduct that if they are ever going to disabled things about you, they will have to lie. But here. have painted him as a liar. And not only that, but mercilessly so, when he's when he says what's translated here their heart is as fat as Greece.

When it says here, their heart is as fat as grease. It's using phrase and a word that appears only here. but the idea is That although the heart is supposed to be made out of Flesh and has nerve endings in it and can feel pain. their heart is more like a fatty deposit, it's not living tissue like like the heart is supposed to be It's similar to things that someone is has a Heart of Stone and the idea is That they Are merciless.

they don't feel any guilt at all. Either about him or before God, when they tell these lies, And you are going to encounter people. Who don't care that they harm you and they don't have conscience before God about it. So, you see to it that your heart would be tender.

And yet your heart would be tender especially to the Lord. So in the contrast there in verse 70, but I Delight in your law. We would not want to be such unfeeling people. Could read and think about God's word and feel nothing. Truly that is that would be a dreadful.

Lack of lack of sense. A dreadful hardness. If we. could read and hear God's word. And sometimes we do find that In our minds and in our hearts. Sometimes even in family worship. We don't pay attention like we ought to if we are remembering that, it's the very word of God that has been read and that is now being taught to us.

And so we can be grateful for the Lord Jesus being our righteousness and his paying for our sins. But when someone else, Stone-Hearted hard-hearted. Fat-hearted. As it were towards us. It can remind us that we want to be tenderhearted towards God, not only keeping his precepts with our whole heart, but even delighting In his law.

Well, praise God. even in Situations that are so painful as the one that is described here and other dreadfully painful circumstances in our lives, we know that there is not only the human actors. Involved. So not only the person who is attacking you. In fact, the primary actor in every situation is God himself.

That's why verse 68 is connected to verses, 69 and 70. You are good and do good. Teach me your statutes. So, whenever anyone is doing us evil, let us remember that. God is doing us. Good. Remember what Joseph said to his brothers? You intended it for evil. Why did they intend it?

Because they are evil. But what does he then? Say but God intended it for good. Well, how does he know that? God intended it for good? Was it by some special Revelation? Well. He knew that God intended it for good because God is good. That's what this almost is saying.

Here you are good and do good. Not only is God, good. As one who is characterized by good, like when we say a person is good, God is good because he is the source of all goodness. Goodness is defined by him. Goodness comes from him. Things are good in so far as they conform to him.

and so we may always be sure. That God is still good and that God is still doing us good. This is one of the great things that this almost has learned by his Affliction. Maybe that sounds strange to you, but if you think about it, Perhaps the Lord will help you see?

That it is precisely when everyone else is being evil. And when the circumstances are hard, And when the only good that you can see in the situation is God himself. That you discover and remember and it becomes more critical to you and clearly highlighted to you that God is good.

And then if you remember that, he is good. Then you'll remember that he is doing good. And you will resolve. to do good unto and before this God, who is doing you good? That's how. Verses 65 and 66 have opened the stanza. You have doubt well With your servant.

Oh, Yahweh. According To your word. So you have done me good and he says, teach me good judgment and knowledge for I believe your Commandments, let me be like you Since the Lord is the one who always does good, we want to learn from him. good, judgment and knowledge.

Not just, That we would. Learn it, but that we would learn it from him that he would give it to us. learning good, judgment learning. What is good? Is not merely accumulating information. About what goodness is. Learning to do. Good is not merely forming good habits of The heart, the mind and In our actions.

No, if we are to learn, what is good. We need God himself by his grace to act upon us to work in us to communicate goodness to us. And same, not only for our thoughts, but our actions. That's why he says, teach me, you teach me good judgment in verse 66 and that's why he doesn't just say the law is better to me.

And verse 72, but listen to how he says it. in the Poetry here, the law of your mouth is better to me. That we would receive his word that we receive as law. Coming to us from his mouth. Now, God doesn't have a mouth. But similarly, the scripture tells us that every word of scripture is breathed out by God.

Now, God does not breathe. About the word. Breath is the same as the word Spirit. And his holy spirit, does. Communicate him to. But here, it's very personal. Not just wanting to know these things. But wanting God to teach us himself. The law of your mouth is better to me.

He says than thousands of gold and silver. another word thousands is the the highest number in common use among the Hebrews. it would be as if we said millions or billions or trillions or a Google or whatever we would what whatever we would say. to have relationship with God, to have the good God, communicate his goodness to us.

Not only loving us and doing us good but making us. Good conforming us to His Image, that's better. Than any Earthly wealth and the amount of material wealth. That we could ever have. So, praise God, he is good. And he does good and even When we are in the sorts of circumstances, that cause us such pain as and grief as would even double us over physically.

Yes, God is still being good to us. And we ought to seek from him. That he would make us good as well. So let us pray and let us ask him to do that. Thank you, Father for giving us this portion of your word. That has put our afflictions into proper perspective.

We do pray that you would teach us. Your your law, your word. That as we receive it from your mouth. Your spirit would work on our hearts and make us to find it more precious. Any amount of material wealth could be. That you would make us tender hearted towards you.

To take Delight in your law. Do protect us and turn. intend for good. whatever the wicked intend for evil. Thank you that we may be sure. That this is always the case from you. For you are good and you do good. And you have given yourself both for us and to us in your son, our Lord Jesus.

And so now in him, we pray that you would make us good by the work of your spirit. Which we ask in Jesus name.