

GIMEL – STANZA #3

The Psalm of the Bible – Psalm 119

Today we continue with the third stanza of this 119th Psalm that has the heading of “Gimel”. As is the case with the other stanzas, there is no real theme to the stanzas. Each verse for the most part has its own individual message. We will see more of those wonderful messages today in verses 17-24. We begin this third stanza with:

1. **Asking for God’s favor – Psalm 119:17** -. The opening verse of this stanza is a request to God. The Psalmist here is asking that God “deal bountifully” with him. This has the idea of having God’s favor or blessings upon his life. Notice that the Psalmist identifies himself as God’s “servant”. God will only bless those that are committed to living for and serving Him. Far too many Christians who refuse to serve God still want His favor. They won’t get it. The Psalmist had two very good reasons to want God’s favor – that he might live and with that life, keep God’s Word. The Psalmist did not want God’s favor for his own selfish benefits but that he could use that favor to live for and obey God. While we all desire a healthy life, the question has to be asked – what will we do for God with the health and favor he shows us?
2. **A request for illumination – vs. 18** -. Notice the next request, “Open thou mine eyes”. The Psalmist wanted God to open his eyes for yet another good reason – “that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law”. The desire by the Psalmist is that God would give him illumination in regards to the Word of God. The Psalmist wanted to see in the Law of God those things that are wondrous to his eyes. Most people today do not want their eyes opened because they do not want to see what they need, and they do not want to be responsible for what God demands. We have all heard the phrase, “turning a blind eye”. That is what many people do today to God. They are turning a blind eye towards God, and His Word. The Psalmist wanted to see; most people want to stay blind. Let this request be our request.
3. **A request for living as a stranger – vs. 19** -. In this verse we see a third request. The Psalmist begins the verse with a statement that fits every believer in Jesus Christ – “I am a stranger in the earth”. **Hebrews 11:13 and 1 Peter 2:11** call believers, “strangers and pilgrims”. The reason we are strangers to this earth is because we are citizens of heaven, just passing through this life. The closer to God a Christian gets, the more alienated he feels on this planet. The closer a Christian gets to the world, the more like home he feels here. The Psalmist understood what he was, and made this request as a result – “hide not thy commandments from me”. The idea behind this request is the desire to know God’s commandments so that he could live effectively as a stranger of this earth. Many people get their advice for life from an unsaved world that has no clue. God’s people need to understand that we are strangers to this world and while we are passing through we need God’s advice on how best to navigate this life. God’s people cannot effectively live the life of a pilgrim if we get our advice from a world that wants us to be a part of them.
4. **The wearisome pursuit of the knowledge of God – vs. 20** -. The word “breaketh” literally means, “to be crushed by rubbing, grating or scraping”. The idea here is that the Psalmist was literally being worn out and worn down by his pursuit to know as much about God as possible.

He was being crushed through his “longing” to know as much as possible about the commandments of God. There are many things in life that wear us out; would to God that more of God’s people were found wearying themselves with a pursuit of the knowledge of God rather than pursuing the things in this life that matter little.

5. **The consequences of rejecting God’s commandments – vs. 21 -**. In this verse, the Psalmist reveals a truth. He tells us plainly that God has rebuked the proud, who are cursed by God, as a result of rejecting His commandments. Multitudes today are facing the consequences of rejecting the commands of God. We are told in Galatians 6:7, “for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap”. Without saying it, the Psalmist is telling us that it is better to obey the Lord because of the natural consequences that flow from disobedience. Not only does rebellious man suffer the results of sowing to the flesh, but he also incurs the displeasure of God.
6. **Living right in the face of wrong accusations – vs. 22-23 -**. In these two verses, we see the Psalmist taking a different approach. In verse 22, he is asking God to remove “reproach and contempt” that flow from the unsaved, as a result of the life he has chosen. His desire is to have his testimony untarnished as a result of keeping God’s Word. We see the same theme in verse 23 -. Here the Psalmist tells us that even princes did speak against him, but he was not deterred by their false claims against him. He was going to continue to “meditate in thy statutes”. God’s people must also learn to never be deterred by false criticism from the unsaved and even wayward Christians. Living God’s way will always draw the fire from the ungodly. We must remain determined to live for God in the face of wrong accusations.
7. **Happiness in the testimonies of God – vs. 24 -**. The Psalmist tells us two things about the Word of God; it brings him happiness and is his counselor. Many Christians see the Bible as a burden, or a weight to carry. The writer of this Psalm found happiness in living out the Word of God. Far too many people are missing out on the happiness that the Bible can bring into a person’s life. It should come as no surprise when people find misery in a life that does not include living according to the Word of God. The second thing mentioned by the Psalmist in this verse is the fact that he saw the Bible as his “counselor”. The Bible has the answer to every question and problem that we can have in this life. There is no greater counselor than the Word of God. If you are in need of advice in any area of your life, ask counsel from the Word of God. The world would love to be the counselor of every Christian. We have already seen the horrid track record of the world’s counsel.