**KOPH – STANZA #19: PSALM 119:145-152**

**The Psalm of the Bible**

Today we commence with Stanza #19 entitled - “Koph”, which corresponds to our letter “k” in English. In this stanza, we will see several uses of the word “cried.” It is more than mere asking. It has the idea of desperation, a desperation that can only find deliverance in God. We will see how often the psalmist cries unto God in this stanza. We begin today with:

1. **Crying with a united heart – Psalm 119:145 -.** Notice that the psalmist cries with his “whole heart.” In other words, the psalmist cried unto God with a united heart. It is possible to pray for one thing, but still want the opposite. A Christian that is living in sin may pray for victory over that sin, perhaps out of guilt, but in reality not want victory at all. A Christian may ask God to use him as a result of a message on service, but in reality have no real desire to serve the Lord. That is a divided heart. James tells us in 1:8 – “A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways.” A divided heart will always create instability. A united heart is only achievable if we are totally convinced of the rightness or wrongness of an issue. If we are on the fence, we will have a divided heart. Insure that your “whole heart” is completely given over to God.
2. **Foxhole religion –** **vs. 146 –** This verse certainly could be the foundation for what is known as “foxhole religion.” The psalmist does not use it this way. The psalmist is simply crying out to God to deliver him from trouble, with a promise to serve the Lord after deliverance takes place. I believe the psalmist simply wanted life so that he could give God his life. The idea of “foxhole religion” comes from the foxhole that the soldier is held up in during combat. The frightened soldier, who has never reached out to God in the past, does so with his life on the line. As the bullets are flying overhead, he makes a “promise” to God. He promises God that he will serve Him, if God gets him out of that hole alive. This soldier now has “foxhole religion.” The problem with this religion is that most soldiers do not keep their promise. They may escape that hole alive and be thankful that God delivered them, but when they come back to safety and normalcy they forget about God. This type of religion only wants God in times of distress. When things are back to normal, God is forgotten. Do not practice “foxhole religion.”
3. **Rising early to pray – vs. 147 -.** The word “prevented”, has the idea of “preceding.” In this verse, the psalmist is telling us that he rose up before the dawning of the day to pray. For many, this is the best time of the day to pray. It shows the urgency of talking with God and it insures that this very valuable period of fellowship takes place, without being crowded out later in the day. This type of commitment presupposes the importance of prayer in the life of the believer. A Christian who has no prayer life, will certainly have no interest in rising early to pray. If you are a morning person and generally rise early as a habit, this practice of prayer is something that would be beneficial. The main goal for every Christian is to have a time of prayer at some point in the day. Whether it is early, midday or late, insure that you talk with God every day. The psalmist winds up the verse with the basis of his prayer life – the Word of God. The psalmist could utilize the privilege of prayer because he trusted in the Word of God. Prayer and trust for the Bible go hand in hand. You cannot have one without the other.
4. **Anticipating time with God –** **vs. 148 -.** Once again, the word “prevent” here means “precede.” The night watches refer to military type watches that have designed shift times. The idea of this verse is that the psalmist has such a desire to commune with God through His Word, that he is actually anticipating it to the point of getting up before his usual time. If he was normally used to getting up at 4:00 AM, his anticipation got him up earlier. He couldn’t wait to get into the Word of God. How different the psalmist is from us. When it comes to the study of God’s Word, there are three types of Christians: those who rarely or never read, those that have to read, and those that want to read.

Only the third example has anticipation about reading and studying the Word of God. If the Bible is a chore or a bore, then being like the psalmist is not possible. We should anticipate the reading and studying of the Bible. If we don’t anticipate, we will eventually eliminate it from our lives. The benefits of our anticipation are found in God speaking to us through His Word, our learning of the truths of the Bible, and our equipping for the Christian life. When it comes to the Bible, anticipate do not procrastinate.

1. **Humility in our prayers – vs. 149 -.** Here the psalmist is exemplifying humility as he prays. He is simply asking God to hear his prayers based on God’s “loving-kindness.” The psalmist is not asking God to hear him based on anything good within himself. He is asking God to hear him based on God’s tender mercy. This is a great attitude to have. We should never approach God with the idea of God owing us anything. We even read in Lam. 3:22 – “It is of the Lord’s mercies that we are not consumed.” When we approach God in prayer, we should come humbly. Every good thing that God gives us, is as a result of His mercy and grace. While we should come boldly before His Throne of Grace (this speaks of access -Hebrews 4:16), we should come with a humble spirit, understanding that it is God’s goodness, and not ours, that ignites His favor in our lives.
2. **The wicked are far from God’s laws – vs. 150 -.** The psalmist is again referencing his enemies. He states that “They draw nigh that follow after mischief.” Basically his enemies were closely pursuing him for no good. He goes on to say about his enemies, “they are far from thy law.” The idea is that his enemies were so far away from God’s laws, so as to pay no attention to them nor heed them. Sadly that is the case in our day as well. In the last 50 years or so, American culture has slowly done its best, to phase out God and His Word. Good is now being called evil, and evil is called good. Mankind is more focused on his right to what he wants, rather than considering what he does is right. All of this has driven most people “far away” from God’s laws. Most know little of God’s laws, see no reason to obey God’s laws, and for the most part, consider the Bible and its message, to be old fashioned and not relevant. This is one of the many reasons why most are not being saved today. It must be our goal to bring the knowledge of God and His Word back to multitudes, who know nothing about them. We must share with lost sinners that God will judge their sin, and that judgment will be eternal. We must let people know about verses like John 3:36 -.
3. **God’s Word is true and eternal – vs. 151-152 -.** Before we get to these two closing characteristics of the Bible, I want to focus on a wonderful truth from vs. 151 – “Thou are near, O Lord.” The psalmist tells us that God was always close to him. If you are saved, you can take solace in that truth as well. The idea of God being near is foreign to those who worship false gods. Every false god is basically a god that needs to be appeased and has no interest in having a relationship with people. To appease a false god is to avoid his anger. There has never been a false god who actually loves people. Our God is different. The Lord loves us and wants to fellowship, and enjoy us. False gods foster intimidation, while our God fosters intimacy. How wonderful it is to have a personal relationship with the Creator of the universe! In regards to these verses, we also see that the Bible is true and eternal. The Bible is not religious literature nor is it a collection of opinions. The Bible is truth, John 17:17, “Thy Word is truth.” This truth was ordained in eternity past to be eternal. God’s Word does not change with the times. It has always been, and will always be truth regardless of what unsaved sinful man says. Untold billions will be in hell because they did not believe these two truths about the Bible. Unsaved people will be without excuse, because of the testimony of the Bible about itself. It is eternal truth.