

# THE VICTORY LIFE

in

## PSALM 119

by

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### CHAPTER FIFTEEN

#### THE ZENITH OF SECURITY

**“Thou art my hiding place and my shield”** (Psalm 119:114)

THE PSALMIST IS MAKING a persistent ascent, albeit painfully arduous at times. He is now at the summit. Before him lies a sweeping vision into three states:

- The state of Biblical magnificence,
- The state of human destitution, and
- The state of personal development.

There are the towering peaks of Holy Oracles emblazoned on the horizon of his sanctified vision; there are the weary windings of a flowing stream of humanity, ebbing out to the sea of disillusionment and doom; there is the favorable promise of fruitful areas in the newly fertilized soil of his soul.

He has reached the mount of understanding, the highest peak in the range of practical godliness. Here the pattern for his life is fixedly final — God preeminently first, others prominently second, self purposely last. He is overwhelmed with wonder, love and praise. Like an explorer raising a flag to mark the point of discovery, he turns his eyes heavenward and presents a pledge of allegiance:

**“I esteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be right . . . I have known of old that thou hast founded them for ever . . . every one of thy righteous judgments endureth for ever . . . my heart standeth in awe of thy word”** (vv. 128, 152, 160, 161).

The psalmist is no longer a novice in spiritual enterprise. There is a tone of certainty in his voice as these sound, meaningful, and well-measured statements issue from his lips. While he, with all of us, must look constantly to the Lord for daily strength, and while there are intermittent petitions for special help, no longer are there cries of perplexity, uncertainty and desperation such as those which were heard earlier in his life. Here is the reason.

**“Great peace have they which love thy law”** (v. 165).

This peace is not what the world speaks about, fights and dies for — an uncertain, unstable, unsatisfying something to grasp at but never to be sure the grip is firm and lasting. No, it is something real, something restful, something refreshing! It is the ultimate in confidence, the fountain of joy, and the foundation of fellowship. It is a priceless possession.

This restless, writhing, shiftless age in which we shuffle along, grabbing, grasping, gaining what we may, needs as nothing else this message of possessing **“great peace.”** But suppose we were to schedule an appearance of this young psalmist in our most prominent city auditorium. How much fanfare and “best” talent would be required to procure a hearing with the soul-hungry masses?

Suppose he were to relate for us today with careful and prayerful detail how he caught a vision of God and of the richest, deepest joy imaginable; how he once was not too serious about Bible claims; how he learned about those who knew God in a real way; how the matter became a pressing issue with him to the point of his surrendering wholly to the Lord; how it had all proved to be glorious, real, unspeakably wonderful. Would he make a “hit”? Would he receive a return engagement? Would he not at once be branded as “too serious,” “fanatical,” “unrealistic,” “bigoted”?

**“Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe”** (v. 117), he prays.

Here is an index into the walk of faith. He does not fear consequences. He does not expect all to understand what God has done in his life. He simply desires the consciousness that **“underneath are the everlasting arms.”** He wants no other support. This is protection enough. Verbal attacks and satanic snares will constitute no alarm whatsoever. The tempter may wax convincing, but with the Lord holding him up there is no fear of evil thrusting him down. This is safety! This is security!

**“Thy testimonies have I taken as an heritage for ever: for they are the rejoicing of my heart”** (v. 111), he confides with noticeable pleasure.

What other heritage lasts so long? What other means so much? What other is so available? And note the naturalness of his comment. The testimonies of the Lord were provided for him. He is simply reporting to the Lord that he has taken them, even as a child would say to his father upon his return from work in the evening: “Daddy, I got the candy you left for me this morning.”

Thus, in similar fashion, the psalmist is taking what God has left for his use and enjoyment. This is the simplicity of faith.

We hear occasionally of hermit souls who live and die in the severest of poverty, but with thousands of dollars tucked away in an old tin box. This is a very strange thing to fathom. But stranger far is the fact that millions are living and dying in absolute spiritual destitution when the wealth of all Heaven is available in the gold mine of the Bible.

It is your heritage, young people. It is your heritage, adults. Take it! Let it be the joy and rejoicing of your hearts here and now, and the promise of your eternal reward later in the land that is fairer than day.

**“Thou art my hiding place and my shield”** (v. 114), he assures the Lord, after viewing the coldness, crookedness and cruelty everywhere about him.

- What a shelter in the midst of a desert storm would mean to a worried sojourner, the Lord is to one in the storms of life.
- What a covert would mean to a wanderer as a protection from the blowing sands of an arid waste, the Lord is to a believing heart when the blasts of adversity strike with crushing velocity.
- What rivers of water would mean to the thirsty traveler over the dusty plains, the Lord means to the thirsty soul.
- What a shade tree would mean to the sun-fatigued plodder, the Lord is to the trusting one in the heat of life's exacting trials.

How good to be able to say with Solomon, **“I sat down under his shadow with great delight.”**

During World War II, there was an acute shortage of electricity in the Niagara area of Canada, with legally enforced dim-outs and the use of certain appliances rigidly restricted. There was, of course, measureless power pouring over Niagara Falls continually—indefinitely more than the need, but it was not being appropriated. Instead, it rushed into the rapids of non-use and reached the whirlpool of lost energy. How true is this of unavailed, superabundant grace! How true is it of the lavish love and protecting care of our wonderful Lord!

The account of the psalmist gives us a very graphic illustration of the ups and downs one may experience who presses for the deeper, richer things of God. But it also gives to us just as vividly how victory may become the order of the day. Herein is the great practical value of Psalm 119.

The constant trust which this young man reposes in the Scriptures is a most magnificent tribute to the availability and the profitableness of the Word of God in the daily life. It is also a challenging exhibition concerning the possibility of a human heart, of either young or old, finding full satisfaction and sweet contentment in the things of the Lord.

We know this to be the promise of Truth, but the precept must have its example. Most of us are dull of hearing and slow of heart to understand when it comes to matters of spiritual import. Thus, the Holy Spirit attracted the attention of the psalmist to the victory life by presenting a display of people who had enjoyed and were enjoying this type of blessed experience.

There is great comfort in spiritual development. There is true satisfaction in it.

**“Thou art my hiding place and my shield,”** is the testimony of all who take refuge in the Rock of Ages. This is the Gibraltar of unassailable protection, of impregnable safety. And Satan is aware of this fact. This is his reason for strenuously barricading the way which leads to victory, and to such unshatterable assurance.

In his failure to dislodge righteous Job, Satan accused the Lord of “hedging” him in. It is a true accusation. For **“as the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about his people.”**

The psalmist is in the secret place. We tread softly as we come upon him. He is engaged in prayer. He seems unconscious of the external influences for the moment. He is closed in with God.

**“Thou art near, O Lord”** (v. 151), he whispers in a sacred and solemn manner.

This is victory! This is life on the highest plane! This is what his heart had longed for all the time. He had forced upon himself substitutes of many kinds, as multitudes so foolishly do, but there was no settled peace in his soul. There was no joy. Solomon, too, tried strenuously to find soul satisfaction short of the Lord’s way. He gave himself to industry, to philosophy, to pleasure. Futility stared him squarely in the face.

**“It is all vanity;”** the wise man concluded, **“It is the whole duty of man to fear God, and to keep His commandments.”**

**“Thou are near, O Lord,”** the psalmist’s praying heart maintains.

Now his desire is fulfilled. Now it matters not what others say or do. Now the wonderful words of life are sweeter than honey. Now his pathway is bright with hallowed illumination — all because he had inclined his heart to perform the statutes of the Lord (v. 112).

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