

“Dependency & Devotion” Gimel (Vv. 17-24)

1. Illumination (17-18)

a. Dependency (17)

- i. Completely: deal fully = provide everything I need for an obedient life.
- ii. Earnestly: a plea for God to help him keep God’s word. As a servant serves the master – the master is responsible for his servant. Yet the servant pleads for grace not merit. It already is an act of grace for us to live (Ro. 6:23). It is an abundant life that acknowledges and seek God’s word (Jn. 10:10). In fact the abundant life is more valuable than a mere physical life (Mat. 4:3-4).
- iii. “keep” presupposes given. As elsewhere in these immediate verses (vv. 8, 12, 17, 18, 19), David depends on the LORD to help him to keep His commands.

b. Expectancy (18)

- i. Though the psalmist recognized the need to heed God’s word, He knows that he still need his spiritual eyes opened in order to see the treasures therein. Not unlike v. 5’s acknowledgment of dependency, he knew enough to know that he needed more intimate knowledge. He had a conscience of darkness w/in which prohibited such liberating knowledge.
- ii. Treasure: David merely had the Law and a portion of writings yet knew there were treasures to mine therein. Many who possess an entire Bible do not know the treasure within it.
- iii. The revelation is before us but the veil is not on the book but on our hearts. What a supreme request! What is more critical than knowing the Word of God? One day will reveal what we failed to consider. The psalmist is not passively requesting God’s Spirit to endow him with understanding but to guide him in his treasure mining. In order to support my claim, consider this: In the *Treasury of David* Charles Spurgeon cites John Kerr as writing, “A man will never grow into the knowledge of God’s word by idly waiting for some new gift of discernment, but by diligently using that which God has already bestowed upon him, and using at the same time all other helps that lie within his reach.”⁵
- iv. Today we have the full Revelation of God and thus can find the treasures therein because of the Treasure of Messiah revealed! How much more ought we to praise the word of God? 2 Cor. 3:14-18 cf. Jn. 9:39.

2. Alienation (19-20)

a. External (19)

- i. Refugee. Why? James 4:4.
- ii. Resident alien (oxymoron). One may possess land but it is ultimately a stewardship from God. Lev. 25:23 states this fact and w/ it the motive of compassion.
- iii. However, the world’s enmity is due to its lack of adherence to God’s commands (21).
- iv. The resident alien perspective is wise because aliens are not as concerned about rights, privileges, possession, and prerogatives as they are boundaries, values, and priorities. They are sojourners passing through, not seeking to make a permanent attachment.

¹ Spurgeon, *The Treasury of David*, vol. 3a, 177–78.

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- b. Internal (20)
 - i. Even at David’s pinnacle (or anyone else’s), he felt a longing deeper than any earthly thing could fill. Therefore Col. 3:2 because 2 Cor. 4:18.
 - ii. In awareness of alienation, he re-acknowledges his need for revelation of “commandments.” Not that David didn’t have the Decalogue, he knew that both revelation needs to be coupled with illumination. Having the Law and understanding it are not always congruent. Consider Mat. 5:21, 27, 31, 33, 38, 43).
 - iii. V. 20 Wow! “My soul is crushed.” Have you had such a longing for God that you felt crushed by it? We ought to long for such longings. How few men and women have felt so?
 - iv. If we are honest, we can ask how David the great sinner (Bathsheba/Uriah) was burdened so heavily regarding truth when he sought to cover it up!? He went further and said that such a feeling was felt in all circumstances “times.” Perhaps this was written after his great sin.
 - v. This longing for righteousness is expressed in Mat. 5:6. At least I have felt the need to need it and such is expressed in Isa. 55:1-2; Jn. 7:37; 2 Tim. 2:22-23. These lead to the ultimate longing for God and are juxtaposed to the temporal fleshly passions born of excitement which are as easily cooled as they were heated.
 - vi. Thirst for righteousness is by God and to God.
- 3. Deprecation (21-22)
 - a. Conceit (21)
 - i. The ‘arrogant’ are ‘cursed.’ They are disobedient and thus lack humility. Cannot be humble w/o obedience.
 - ii. In the world’s eyes, they are to be celebrated and envied and even imitated. But in heaven’s eyes they are a disgrace of corrupt, deceiving evildoers. →
 - b. Deceit (22)
 - i. The request for vindication. Trusting God with vengeance is necessary but it doesn’t negate our desire and need for righteous vindication (Ecc. 7:1). How great an injustice when the righteous are slandered? Jesus despised the shame (Heb. 12:2) and yet trusted God.
 - ii. He who preserves God’s testimonies will be vindicated and inherit an everlasting name! this man will also leave vengeance to God (Deut. 32:35).
- 4. Dedication (23-24)
 - a. Conspiracy (23a-b)
 - i. Even when those who are seen as authoritative and trustworthy join to conspire against the innocent. Rather than use their platform to promote truth and justice, they denounce truth, defame the innocent, exploit the poor, and destroy creation.
 - ii. They do so unto the LORD’s servant. Daniel and others have been persecuted for their integrity as others are threatened by the truth they so abhor.
 - b. Cost (23c) The cost of the faithful may be significant in this life but it is insignificant in light of eternity. Spurgeon wrote, “The rabble of princes were not worth five minutes’ thought, if those five minutes had to be taken from holy meditation. It is very beautiful to see the two sittings: the princes sitting to reproach David, and David

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sitting with his God and his Bible, answering his traducers by never answering them at all. Those who feed upon the word grow strong and peaceful, and are by God’s grace hidden from the strife of tongues.”

- c. Commitment (24) The result of looking to the word for counsel is elation.

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A faith that isn’t tested is a faith that can’t be trusted. True devotion is manifested in times of trial. If adversity renders one faithless there was never any devotion. Jesus spoke of those who seemed to be receivers of His word. He said they initially acknowledged it but when adversity or selfish desires arose they abandoned it (Mk. 4:16-19). In our focal verses, the psalmist both acknowledged his dependency on God and his willingness to cling to His statutes in the face of slander and conspiracy. In fact, it is presupposed the antagonism was because he preserved God’s testimonies (v. 22) whilst they ignored them (v. 21). You and I may not have so deep a longing for righteousness that we are crushed by such a conviction (v. 20), but a longing for such a longing (v. 5) may be enough to prove our faith true and advance our faith in a surprising faithfulness.