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LONGING FOR GOD'S WORD

Psalm 119:20, 40, and 131 are three passages that state David's desire for God's word. They are worth studying. In Psalm 119:20, we read, "*My soul is breaketh (is consumed, JM)] for the longing that it hath unto thy judgments at all times.*" Verse 40 says, "*Behold, I have longed after thy precepts: quicken me in thy righteousness.*" Verse 131 states, "*I opened my mouth, and panted; for I longed for thy commandments.*" I sat down and read a few other Bible versions for comparison purposes. I found it fascinating that the same teaching and perhaps a more vivid description of David's emotions can be seen there. For example, the CSB says, "*I am continually overcome with longing for your judgments*" (Ps. 119:20). The LSB renders this verse, "*My soul is crushed with longing your judgments at all times.*" Moving to Psalm 119:40, we read, "*How I long for your precepts! Give me life through your*

righteousness" (CSB). "*Behold I long for Your precepts; revive me in Your righteousness*" (LSB). Finally, Psalm 119:131 is translated, "*I open my mouth and pant because I long for your commands*" (CSB). The LSB reads, "*I opened my mouth wide and panted, for I longed for Your commandments.*" The "*sweet psalmist of Israel*" (II Sam. 23:1), inspired by the Holy Spirit (II Pet. 1:20-21), was able to capture the emotions and true feelings that one has when thinking about God's word and how it affects the hearts of men. Notice that David said he longed for God's word "*at all times*" (v. 20, KJV, CSB, LSB). This thought is similar to Psalm 1:2, which tells us that the blessed man meditates upon God's word "*day and night*"! Verse 40 says he recognizes the connection between God's righteousness and life. Do we recognize that? This is a truth taught in the New Testament, but have we Christians learned it yet (Rom.

5:17-21)? On seven other occasions in Psalm 119 alone, David repeats his praise for the life-giving power of God's word. In verse 131, we see how David "pants" like a thirsty person and wishes to be refreshed with God's word. This thought is similar to the statements made in Psalms 42:1 and 63:1. It is also a characteristic that Christ calls "*blessed*" in the people of His kingdom (Matt. 5:6). As I read those statements from Psalm 119, I thought about myself. Can I say that I honestly **long** for God's word? Can I say that my soul is "*consumed,*" "*crushed,*" or "*continually overcome*" for longing for His word? Do I "pant" for it? Do I want to hear it "*at all times*"? In a world that is saturated with entertainment, hobbies, sinful acts, unemployment, cares, worries, troubles, conspiracies, and the like; in a world that is constantly trying to pull my attention away from spiritual truth, can I speak as David and say I "*long*" for God's word? What joy, what nourishment am I gaining from God's word? Am I like David? From a physical standpoint, we recognize our dependence upon food. We know that eating a proper diet has life-sustaining power for our bodies. Now, are we ready to admit that the Bible has life-giving and sustaining power for our souls and then act on this truth? David, the king of Israel, recognized the truth and acted on it! Though a mighty king, a great warrior, and

though he had power over a nation, he readily confessed his dependence upon God and His word (Ps. 23). What about us? As the Old Testament heroes did, do we confess that we are "*strangers and pilgrims on the earth*" (Heb. 11:13)? When we remember who we are and our purpose for being upon this earth, then the longing, the hunger, for spiritual truth gets greater and greater. Friends, do we see what a high priority David placed upon God's word? What importance do we give God's word? Within the Bible, we find the instructions for salvation from sin (i.e., new life, Rom. 6:3-6). We also find sustaining power within the Scripture, for the Bible is our soul's sustenance (I Pet. 2:2; Heb. 5:14). How can we not long for it? This is our soul's nourishment (I Pet. 2:2; Job 23:12b)! Jesus stated this as well when He said, "*Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God*" (Matt. 4:4). How much more should we confess we are "strangers and pilgrims" when we understand that we need that life-sustaining power today? As we noted earlier, Peter compared Christians to "*newborn babes*" who "*desire the sincere milk of the word*" (I Pet. 2:2). Babies desire or long for milk so that they may be nourished and grow. Babies are not satisfied with eating once a day or two times a week, etc. They desire food multiple times a day, every day! Adults are like this, too! On

a spiritual level, David expressed the same sentiment as the words of Christ in Matthew 5:6. Friend, do we desire or long for God's word and wish to be nourished daily, if not multiple times a day? If not, why not? When our priorities are straight, we will speak as David. When we appreciate God's word the way David did, we will not want to hear the experiences, philosophies, and creeds of men. We will only want to listen to the pure, unadulterated, complete, and simple word of God (Acts 10:33). We will readily say as Paul did, "*Preach the word*" (II Tim. 4:2)! When we humble ourselves as David, we will understand the words of Job, who said, "*I have treasured the words of his mouth more than my portion of food*" (Job 23:12). Jesus said, "*My meat is to do the will of him that sent me*" (Jn. 4:34). Let us read the Bible daily and glean the blessings! Let us satisfy our true hunger with God's word and be filled (Matt. 5:6)! – Jarrod Jacobs

POINTED PARAGRAPHS
From: *The Kingdom of Promise and Prophecy*, p. 83, 99 By faith Noah built the ark. Faith only — that is, faith without works — is dead. Such faith never would have built the ark; neither does it ever accomplish anything nor bring any blessings. Faith prompted and guided Noah in building the ark, and so it is said that he built the ark by faith — a faith made perfect by works. (In connection with this, see Gen. 6-8; Heb. 11:7 - JMJ). God has

always tested man's willingness to do His will. To be a real test, the thing commanded must be such that the person can see no connection between the thing commanded and the result to be obtained. Examples: The brazen serpent (Num. 21:4-9); Naaman's dipping in the Jordan (II Kings 5:1-19). Baptism is such a test. To write the word of Christ upon the heart, or, what is essentially the same, to let it dwell in us richly, means more than to commit it to memory. It is to make it the dominant factor in our thinking and in our plans and purposes. – R. L. Whiteside
"IT IS BETTER TO..." " ... hear bad news that is true than good news that is false. " ... be a slave in the Savior than to be a master in Satan. " ... imprisoned for truth than to be free in error. " ... be silent and satisfied than to speak and be sorry. – Larry Ray Hafley

BIBLE TRIVIA

C H A L L E N G E

DIRECTIONS: After searching through your Bible, circle which answer is correct.

1. Jesus said He spoke in parables "because while seeing they do not see, and while hearing they do not hear, nor do they ____."

- a) Speak
- b) Understand
- c) Whistle
- d) Breakdance

2. Seed sown beside the road is snatched away by the ____ one.

- a) Crazy
- b) Fidgety
- c) Shy
- d) Evil

3. Wheat and tares will be allowed to grow together until the ____.

- a) Harvest
- b) Birthday
- c) Evening
- d) Sunset

4. When the mustard seed is full grown, it is larger than the garden plants and becomes a ____.

- a) Turtleneck
- b) Harmonica
- c) Swatch
- d) Tree

5. The ____ of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three pecks of flour until it was all leavened.

- a) Kingdom
- b) Jello
- c) Noodles
- d) Pudding

6. Jesus did not speak to the crowds without a ____.

- a) Powerpoint
- b) Lazerpointer
- c) Pulpit
- d) Parable

7. "I will open My mouth in parables; I will utter things ____ since the foundation of the world."

- a) Silly
- b) Fantastic
- c) Hidden
- d) Frightening

8. The man who found the treasure hidden in the field sold all he had and bought the field from ____ over it.

- a) Fear
- b) Joy
- c) Suspicion
- d) Confusion

9. The kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking fine ____.

- a) Turtles
- b) Fannypacks
- c) Pearls
- d) Frogs

10. At the end of the age, ____ will take out the wicked from among the righteous.

- a) God
- b) Jesus
- c) Holy Spirit
- d) Angels

- 1) B, Reference: Mt. 13:13
 2) D, Reference: Mt. 13:19
 3) A, Reference: Mt. 13:30
 4) D, Reference: Mt. 13:31-32
 5) A, Reference: Mt. 13:33
 6) D, Reference: Mt. 13:34
 7) C, Ps. 78:2; Mt. 13:35
 8) B, Mt. 13:44
 9) C, Mt. 13:45
 10) D, Mt. 13:49