

Part 2 – Rest for Our Soul

In chapter one-hundred-sixteen, part 1, we learned that the Psalmist was committed to praising the Lord (YHVH) *because* He graciously heard (and answered) the Psalmist's *earnest* prayer. And that teaches us the vital fact that, we *learn to love* by *experiencing* God's love *for us*. And that love is *certainly* felt when the Holy Spirit *takes away* the guilt in our conscience (Heb 9:13-14, 10:2, 22) - *when* we believe in Jesus Christ, *sincerely* repent for our sins, *and* are firmly committed to *changing* them - which leaves us with an *amazing* peace inside our 'inner man'! And *that* fact (that God loved us *first*) **is what** teaches us *how* to truly love others, as John pointed out in 1 John 4:19. For while God's law does teach us how to love others ***in action*** (Lev 19:18, Rom 13:10), it is the Holy Spirit that teaches us how to love people ***from the heart***, especially by getting rid of the negative feelings (such as bitterness, anger and hate), which is what *true* forgiveness really is. Therefore, we also learned that there's more to *true* love than just the *feelings* of affection; for the Scriptures explain that, **if** we truly love the Lord (YHVH) **then** we will also *wholeheartedly* strive to obey Him (*from the heart*). And we also learned that, the more love, mercy and grace the Lord (YHVH) gives us, it just *encourages* us to *continue* to call out to Him when we need help. And truly, that's also what helps our trust in Him to grow! So, as we experience His love, mercy, grace and help – over and over again – our trust, love and commitment to Him just *continues* to grow.

And then we learned *why* the Psalmist spoke of loving the Lord (YHVH) so fervently. For, at one (or more) point in his life, he was having *great* troubles. In fact, he was having *so many* troubles, and afflictions, he felt like he was 'going through hell', and *the pains* he was feeling from his troubles were 'closing in' on him (like a nose around his neck). Yet, the Psalmist knew what to do, for he turned to the one (and only) *true* God (YHVH) and called out for Him to rescue him *now*, which shows the seriousness of his troubles. Therefore, it was *because* the Lord (YHVH) helped the Psalmist (when he was in the most terrible distresses), that he *learned* to love the Lord (YHVH) so very *deeply*. And we also learned that, still today, when we serve our Heavenly Father (Jesus Christ), He *will* indeed help us when we *earnestly* call out to Him for help 'in truth'. And that means there is a stipulation to the Lord (YHVH) helping us. And that stipulation is: we *must* call upon Him 'in truth', which means we must be *earnestly* seeking Him, i.e. not half-heartedly or playing games. As Prov 1:22-33 explains, if we have long refused to hear the Lord's call for us to repent, and *turn away from* our sinful ways, *He won't answer* our calls for help, even though He hears us (Prov 1:24, 28). That is, so long as we *remain* hard hearted and *not* willing to repent *sincerely*. Once we do (earnestly) turn back to Him, He is very gracious, and merciful. Yet, even if we've previously been rebellious towards Him, we can still call upon Him, but we *must* be sincere about changing from our sinful ways (from the heart), *and* serving the Lord (YHVH), when we call upon Him - which this Psalmist most certainly was! And it is the thought of the Lord's (YHVH's) great mercy, and grace, to hear (and help) us through all our troubles that we pick up with in this great Psalm...

Psalm 116

5 Gracious is the LORD, and righteous; yea, our God is merciful.

So, now the Psalmist points out some of God's important (even 'key') characteristics. The word '**gracious**' here does indeed mean **gracious** (#2587). And the word '**righteous**' here means **just** (#6662) and comes from a prim root that means **to be** (or, **make**) **right** (in a moral or forensic sense) (#6663). And then, the word '**merciful**' is a prim root that means **to fondle**; and, by implication, it also means **to love**, especially to be **compassionate** (#7355). So, three 'key' characteristics of our God is that He's indeed gracious (giving us that which we don't deserve), righteous (He *always* does what's right, Ps 145:17) and He's also loving and compassionate to us who are *earnestly* striving to obey Him (Ps 145:18-20). And the word '**Lord**' here is God's sacred (and covenantal) name **Yehovah** [<https://t.me/BibleStudyTruth/946>] which means (the) **self-Existent** or **Eternal** (#3068). So again, the use of His Sacred Name points to the fact that *only* our Heavenly Father (Yehovah) is eternal *because* He's the *only* one who has *always* existed and *always* will (Rev 1:8, 4:9, 11:17, 16:5, 22:13). But, the Psalmist also uses a 'title' of the Lord (YHVH) in this verse, which is rendered as '**God**' but, in the Hebrew, it is '**Elohiym**' (also spelled as '**Elohim** at times #430), which means **the Supreme God**, who is our **Creator**. '**Elohiym** is thus, 'God the Creator', *putting His omnipotence* ('**El**, #410) *into operation*. So, the Psalmist is not only addressing our Heavenly Father by His Sacred, and covenantal name (Yehovah #3068, i.e. YHVH), he's also addressing Him with the 'title' of '**Elohiym** (#430), which shows he's speaking of our Heavenly Father's **eternality** (#3068) and His **supreme power** (omnipotence) as the Creator of all things, *even* our own soul (Rev 4:11; Ezek 18:4).

So, the **Supreme God** (who is our Creator) is Yehovah. And He is *eternal* and **He *always* does *what's right***. After all, righteousness is *what* keeps corruption out (Isa 59:16-18), for sin is *corrupting* (Rom 6:23, 8:5-8; 1 Cor 15:50; 2 Pt 1:4, 2:12-19, etc.). As Deut 32:4 points out, the Lord (YHVH) is the Rock, *his work is perfect*: *for all his ways are **judgment**: a **God of truth** and **without iniquity**, **just and right** is he*. And, this is also *why* He shows us so much grace and compassion (love) for us. After all, we are His creation and, therefore, *He loves us very much*! As Ezek 18, 33 and 2 Pt 3:9 point out, our Heavenly Father doesn't want His children to have to die (spiritually, Rev 20:10-15), which is *why* the Lord (YHVH) *Himself* came to earth as Jesus Christ (God incarnate) [<https://t.me/BibleStudyGodsWord/460>], to testify of (and teach us) the *truth* (His Word, John 17:17; John 18:37) *and* to shed His righteous blood to atone for our sins (Rom 3:23-25, Rom 5:6-11; Col 1:10-20; Eph 1:5-7; Heb 9:11-15) so we *can* be forgiven and live *eternally* with Him!

So, *because* the Psalmist *experienced* God's great love, grace (giving us what we don't deserve) and mercy (not giving us what we do deserve, when we earnestly repent), he knew that, indeed, the Lord (YHVH) is righteous! For, of a truth, our Heavenly Father is not an 'angry' God,

looking for people to kill (i.e. ‘hellfire and brimstone’ as so many teach). He truly is *merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth* (Ex 34:6) and He will continue to show mercy to those who fear, love and try to *earnestly* obey Him. However, He also does not put up with rebels (those who harden their heart to Him and willingly sin) *because they hurt His children*. So, He *does* punish the wicked, but it’s always done *in righteousness* (Ex 34:7) - and the point is to *stop them* from harming others, *as well as* hoping they will repent for their sins. As Ps 145:20 says, *the LORD preserveth all them that love him: but all the wicked will he destroy*. And, Peter also points out that, *the Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished* (2 Peter 2:9). So again, while our Heavenly Father isn’t a ‘mean’ or ‘hateful’ God, He simply won’t put up with the wicked ones *continuing* to do evil (without repentance). So, while He does get angry at times, it’s *always* righteous - for punishing the wicked *is a righteous thing to do* (2 Thess 1:6). And, He also chastens those who He loves, i.e. those are willing to hear Him (Heb 12), *because that is also* the right thing to do (Prov 13:24).

Psalms 116

6 The LORD preserveth the simple: I was brought low, and he helped me.

Now the Psalmist explains *why* he knows that the Lord (YHVH) is gracious, merciful (compassionate and loving) and righteous... for though the Psalmist was ‘brought low’ (oppressed, #1809), the Lord (YHVH) ‘helped him’ (#3467). Thus, the Psalmist was assured that the Lord (YHVH) ‘preserveth’ the ‘simple’. Now, the word ‘**simple**’ here means *silly* or even *seducible* (#6612). And, it’s possible the Psalmist used this word because he felt that his ‘simplicity’ was what got him into trouble. But, because he was sincerely seeking the Lord (YHVH), our Heavenly Father helped him out of his troubles. And truly, it is God’s Word (Prov 8) that changes those who are silly (senseless) and seducible (easily deceived) by giving them His *wisdom* (Prov 1:2-5, 8:5) *if* they are willing to receive it. However, the *Companion Bible* notes suggest this word ‘simple’ should be rendered as ‘sincere’ or guileless’, not as foolish in the modern terms. Further, *Moffet* renders this word as ‘poor souls’. So, as long as those who are silly (or seducible) are earnestly seeking the Lord, He does indeed ‘preserve’ them.

Now, the word ‘**preserve**’ is an *important* Hebrew word to understand. As we’ve learned in our past studies, it’s the Hebrew word *shamar* (#8104) and means *to hedge about* (as with thorns), i.e. *guard*; and, generally, *to protect, attend to*, etc. So, even if we are silly (senseless) and/or seducible (easily fooled or deceived) – which *everyone* has been at *some* point in their lives (Rom 3:23; Prov 22:15) - when we turn to our Heavenly Father (with our *whole* heart) – and seek Him *sincerely* - then He *does* indeed guard and protect us. The only time He does *not* is *if* we *remain* hard hearted and *willingly* rebel against Him (Prov 1). And, as Ex 22:22-24 points out, the Lord (YHVH) hears those who are oppressed (poor and needy) and *will* take justice into His own hands, when they have no one else to defend them. Ps 9:9 also tells us *the LORD also will*

be a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble. You can learn more about this precious in the study **Take Heed and Keep It** [<https://t.me/BibleStudyTruth/943>] as well as series of studies on **Keep God's Word** [<https://t.me/BibleStudyGodsWord/465>].

Psalm 116

7 Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the LORD hath dealt bountifully with thee.

Now, in this precious verse the Psalmist is pointing out the blessed *peace* that comes from *trusting in* our Heavenly Father. The word '**return**' here means to **turn back, away** or **again** and can also mean to **retreat** (#7725). In the context of this verse, it means to *turn back*, or *retreat*. For the Psalmist is telling his *troubled* soul to retreat (or even to turn back) to '**rest**' which means **quietness** (#4494) and comes from a prim root that means **to rest**, i.e. **settle down** (#5117). So, the Psalmist is simply telling (or reminding) his troubled soul (inner man) to 'settle down' and 'turn back' to *spiritually resting* 'in the Lord' *by trusting in Him!* After all, the Lord (YHVH) dealt 'bountifully' (treated him well, #1580) with him, by helping him out of his troubles, as the prior verse (6) pointed out.

So, trusting in the Lord (YHVH) is *what* gives us *spiritual* peace, in our 'inner man' (heart and mind). And this is *very* important to know *how* to do. It's also something that takes *discipline*. For when hard times (or troubles) come, our first instinct is to worry and/or be afraid. But, if we learn to *control* those carnal emotions (*instead of* letting them to *control us*), *and* remember God's promises in His Word (and *trust in* them), then we will be able to handle them, and get through them. As 1 Cor 10:11 says, God won't let *anything* happen to us that we cannot handle; He will either give us the strength to get through them, or help us find a way out of (or around) them. An excellent example of this is Paul. If you read through the book of Acts [which you can do so via this link if you'd like: https://t.me/BibleStudyBooks_Acts] you'll see that Paul went through *many* hard times when spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ. And how did he endure *so many* 'hard times'? How did he *not* allow them to get him so depressed, upset or frightened that he lost focus on serving Jesus Christ? Yes of course, the Holy Spirit was in him, but Paul had to *put out the effort* to keep his heart and mind *right* with the Lord (YHVH), in order for the Holy Spirit to continue to bless Him. And so it is for us today. But again, *how* did he do it? Thankfully, he explained his 'secret' to the Philippians...

4 Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice.

5 Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand.

*6 Be **careful** for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.*

7 And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

8 Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, **think on these things**.

9 Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.

Phil 4:4-9

So, Paul reminds us, not only to rejoice in the Lord (YHVH) – meaning to rejoice in *every* kind of circumstance – but also to be *moderate* (self-controlled) *in all that we do*. In 2 Thess 5:16 he also tells us to ‘rejoice evermore’. But he then goes on (in Phil 4) to say that we should not be anxious about *anything* (the word ‘careful’ is #3309 and actually means to be anxious about). So, instead of being scared, worried or anxious about anything, we should take our concerns, fears, worries and anxieties to God in prayer. But, an important part of that is to also make sure to give our Heavenly Father praise, and thanks, for all He has done for us (as many of the Psalms do). But, *why* is this? Because ***being thankful a vital part of the spiritual warfare*** (Eph 6). You see, Satan wants us to get *distracted* from God’s Word (reality) and *focus on* ‘self’ (our emotions) instead; and he does this in several ways; not only by using flattery to stir up our pride but he also likes to plague us with ‘bad thoughts’ *to get us stressed* to the point that we desire ‘relief’ from them. And he does *not* want us turning our mind, and heart, to our Heavenly Father for help (as David and Paul did) but rather, to our own selfish desires for a temporary ‘relief’. That’s why people love music, tv, food and all sorts of other entertainment *that lead our mind away from* God’s Word (Christ Jesus). So, Paul taught us ***we must learn to counter all of the bad news with information, knowledge and understanding of things that are true, noble, just, pure, lovely, virtuous and praiseworthy.***

In other words, ***we must purposely work to counterbalance all of the bad news with the truth.*** We can’t let all of the discouraging news from the world (or our own personal problems) go into our minds, and hearts, *unchallenged and unbalanced*. It must be deliberately counterbalanced. Of course, it takes **discipline** to do this and we have to start somewhere. We aren’t able to run ten miles the first day we start running. It takes small steps to condition your body to be able to do more. Such as it is with our heart and mind. So, we must learn to *discipline* our heart and mind to compare what we’ve been given - and what we’re charged with doing for Jesus Christ - with what is going on in the world. That’s why the Word tells us to ‘remember the days of old’ (Deut 32:7, Ps 77:5, 145:5, 119:52; Isa 46:9), so we can remember all that God *has* done for His children. This reminds us He is well able to help us. And we’re also supposed to remember His promises (Heb 6:12, Rom 8:25). As Rom 15:4 says, *for whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope*. Therefore, **studying and remembering God’s Word is what comforts and strengthens us, which also makes us *patience***. And we *should* have patience, as Heb 10:36, 12:1, James 5:7-11 and Rev 14:12 tell us. In short, learning to disciple our ‘inner man’ to put God at the *forefront*

of our heart and mind (and not ‘self’) *gives us a rejoicing and thankful attitude, which is what enables us to persevere through all the hard times.*

And Paul’s advice came directly from the Holy Spirit, so we know that his wisdom is from God Almighty. Further, Paul was not a hypocrite; he knew how to advise us of this vital part in the spiritual war because *this is what he had to do daily*. Paul experience *so much* suffering when he spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ – much more than any of us have ever had to. **Yet, he found a way, a right balance, in whatever circumstance he was in.** As he said in Phil 4:12-13: *I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.* In other words, **it was his relationship with Jesus Christ that enabled him to endure all things because Christ always gave him the strength to overcome bad thoughts about his circumstance – and this is a key point to the spiritual war that we are all in.** And remember, this didn’t happen ‘magically’ to Paul – he had to work at *training* his mind to think upon things that are true, honest, pure (etc.) as well as disciplining his heart not to have sinful desires, emotions and intentions.

And we must do likewise. In his second letter to his protégé, Timothy, Paul said: *for God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind* (2 Tim 1:7). The words ‘**sound mind**’ here is the Greek word *sophronismos* (#4995) and it means: **discipline**, i.e. **self-control**. Yes, you read that right; a sound (healthy) mind is a disciplined and self-controlled mind. It even comes from a word that means to make of sound mind or to discipline or correct (#4995). And, because God has given us free will to do with our mind and heart as we want, it’s therefore up to us to put out the effort to discipline our mind and learn to control it. But thankfully, as Paul said in Phil 4:13, and also in Eph 3:16, **the Holy Spirit will help us to learn to control (discipline) our mind and heart when He sees we’re sincerely trying.** And it’s also wise to ask God (in Jesus’ name) for the will power (internal strength) to be able to discipline and control our mind and heart so we *can* obey Him from the heart – so we can counterbalance all the bad news – so we can stop the lustful, prideful, greedy, selfish, jealous and envious (etc.) thoughts, and desires, that pop up into our heart and mind on a *daily* basis (for *all* of us).

As Rom 8:26 says of those who are truly ‘walking in the Spirit’ (i.e. studying God’s Word sincerely, and consistently, and striving to obey it *from* the heart), the Holy Spirit helps us with our ‘infirmities’, which means *our weaknesses*. But we’ve got to do our part and that’s why we must learn to pray to God also with ‘thanksgiving’, because it *counterbalances* all the bad news we are subjected to (internally and externally). So, just as Paul ***meditated on the truth to prepare his mind and heart for the bad things he had to go through, so must we do as well.*** One could even call it ‘counting your blessings’, as we say today. And doing so brings us back to ‘reality’ that we really do have much to be thankful for *and the Lord has not left us*. And that is why, this Psalmist tells his ‘soul’ (inner man) not to worry, but to trust in the Lord (YHVH), for He indeed

dealt ‘bountifully’ (well) with him, i.e. He helped (or was helping) the Psalmist out of troubles. And this is truly what having faith in, and *trusting* in, our Heavenly Father (and His Son, Jesus Christ) is all about. So, Paul truly taught us how cleansing our soul with *the truth* (and keeping our mind on it) is how we overcome difficult times.

Now, this doesn’t mean we can’t think about what’s going on (for we must if we’re going to handle things correctly) but we should not *worry* about things that are happening; not about what’s happening to us *personally*, to others, in our home, community, nation or the world. Remember, Ps 37 told us not to fret [https://t.me/BibleStudyBooks_Psalms/423]. Further, thinking and focusing on *truth* (God’s Word) is *how* you ‘put on the new man’. And learning to block out (or kick out) fear, worry, lust, pride, etc. - *and think clearly* - is what taking control of your heart (carnal mind) is. Many people struggle between the two mindsets (the ‘old’ carnal mind and the ‘new man’ that the Holy Spirit creates in us) because they can’t discern (differentiate) between the two. Nor do they how to take control of the old man *and kill it*. The Bible does tell us how, but it’s something that the Holy Spirit has to help us understand. Such a blessing is the Holy Spirit indeed. So again, what the Psalmist is telling himself to do is to *think about reality* (God is in control and will help you through all things) and don’t let your emotions and/or desires motivate you or control your thinking. This is why Jesus told us to, “*Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light* (Matt 11:28-30). You can learn more about this *spiritual* ‘rest’ in the special study on **The Yoke** [<https://t.me/BibleStudyTruth/859>]. So, let’s earnestly strive to remember...

3 Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.

*4 Trust ye in the LORD for ever: for in the LORD JEHOVAH is **everlasting** strength:*
Isa 26:3-4

25 These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you.

26 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

*27 **Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.***

John 14:25-27

We’ll pick this up in part 3...

AMEN.