

St Andrew's Presbyterian Church Penrith

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ENCOURAGEMENT LETTER 9/7/2025

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

How are you today? I am thankful for the Kids Holiday Club where kids are learning about Jesus and growing in him. Pray for kids and families who do not know Christ to turn to him in faith. Pray for kids who do know Jesus to grow as his disciples.

Today's encouragement is "Psalm 119 Kaph – Waiting for Salvation" before moving on to church matters.

ENCOURAGEMENT: Psalm 119 Kaph – Waiting for Salvation

Have you ever found yourself in a situation where you have to wait hoping for a good outcome? It was like that when in 2020 Nic had to take me to hospital with severe abdominal pain. I waited in emergency to be seen by a doctor. I struggled through triage doubling over in pain. I returned to the waiting room, huddled in a ball, trusting that I would see a doctor, trusting they would find the source of my pain and be able to treat it. I wait for hours, trusting and hoping relief would come. In Psalm 119 Kaph, we find the Psalmist waiting for salvation and trusting the Lord will rescue him.

The first half of this stanza the Psalmist waits for salvation:

My soul faints with longing for your salvation,

but I have put my hope in your word.

My eyes fail, looking for your promise;

I say, "When will you comfort me?"

Though I am like a wineskin in the smoke,

I do not forget your decrees.

How long must your servant wait?

When will you punish my persecutors?

Psalm 119:81-84

The situation that he needs rescuing from is unclear, although he does speak of his persecutors. The ambiguity of the context broadens the scope of how we think of salvation – we might think of the temporal, people who make life difficult, a disease, the frailty of old age, family breakdown, a besetting sin – but all these fit into a bigger context for salvation, we long for release from the pain and heartache of this world

that arrives when Jesus returns. We look beyond short range struggles to the long range solution of Jesus return.

These verses are coloured with yearning, his soul faints with longing, his eyes fail looking for God's promise, he wonders "How long?" This is a longing we all experience. The world is not the way it should be. We endure hardship and suffering and long for relief. We long for the pain of this life to end. Paul describes this longing as "groaning" (Romans 8:23) as we look to God to fulfil his promise and see the return of Jesus – the only lasting solution to this sin-blasted world. But his longing is not in vain as he hopes in God's word and looks for the fulfilment of God's promise.

The second half of the stanza, the Psalmist holds fast to God.

*The arrogant dig pits to trap me,
contrary to your law.
All your commands are trustworthy;
help me, for men persecute me without cause.
They almost wiped me from the earth,
but I have not forsaken your precepts.
Preserve my life according to your love,
and I will obey the statutes of your mouth.*

Psalm 119:85-88

There is more clarity in his situation – the arrogant setting traps, men who persecute him, almost dying because of their actions. But through all of this he holds fast to God and his word declaring that God's commands are trustworthy, that he does not forsake God's precepts and he prays for God to preserve his life because of his covenant love. His waiting is not passive. It is characterised in trust expressed in obedience. During times of hardship he holds fast to God and his word knowing that God will keep his promises and bring salvation.

We too can trust in God's promises to us in his word as we struggle with the difficulties of life in this world. These promises are guaranteed in Christ the crucified and risen Lord who will take us home to be with him. Those who trust in the Lord have a sure hope in him. Whatever difficulty you are facing in life, will you hold fast to God as you wait for the promise of his salvation in Christ to be fulfilled?

As always, love and prayers,
Steve