

## **EXPERIENCING THE NEARNESS OF GOD**

### **PSALM 119:145-152**

Introduction:

God is never far away; in fact, He is always near. But to the struggling believer He sometimes seems to be far away, if He exists at all. Life can be very difficult and dark. The young psalmist was acquainted with such times of darkness—but he also knew about an experience of the nearness of God.

Evidently he knew this experience in a time of great stress. He was very aware of the nearness and wickedness of his enemies. They were all around him. But in the midst of that circumstance, something happened. He exclaims, “You are near, O LORD.” This was not just a declaration of faith, it was a testimony to an experience of God’s nearness.

This QOPH stanza is about an experience of the nearness of God, and the difference it made. You may feel the need for such an experience today. If so, listen to the report of one who had such an experience.

#### **I. THE EXPERIENCE FOLLOWS PRAYER.**

##### **1. It follows earnest prayer.**

“I cry out with my whole heart; Hear me, O Lord!”

“I cry out to You; Save me.”

2. It follows persistent prayer.

“I rise before the dawning of the morning, and cry for help.”

“My eyes are awake through the night watches, that I may meditate on Your word.”

3. It follows believing prayer.

“I hope in your word.”

“Hear my voice according to Your loving kindness; O Lord, revive me according to your justice.”

## II. THE EXPERIENCE SUSTAINS OBEDIENCE.

The experience is not a reward for our obedience, but the source of strength for our obedience. The obedience is not a basis of our salvation, but a sign of our salvation.

1. It gives a reason for obedience.

“Hear me, O LORD! I will keep your statutes.”

“Save me, and I will keep your testimonies.”

2. It gives the strength for obedience.

“Hear my voice according to Your lovingkindness; O Lord, revive me according to Your justice.”

To revive is to enliven, to infuse with life, to quicken, to preserve. This expression of God's mercy enables us to have the strength to obey. When there is the inner experience of the nearness of God, there will be the strength to obey.

### III. THE EXPERIENCE CONFIRMS THE PROMISE.

1. It confirms the trustworthiness of the promises.

“And all your commandments are truth.”

2. It confirms the eternity of the promises.

“Concerning your testimonies, I have known of old that You have founded them forever.”