

Psalms 119:125

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

I am thy servant; give me understanding, that I may know thy testimonies.

Analysis

I am thy servant; give me understanding (עֲבָדֶךָ אָנִי בְּנֵנִי, avdekha-ani havineni)—Servanthood establishes the relationship; understanding (binah) is the request. Biblical service requires illuminated minds, not blind obedience. The verb bin means to discern, perceive deeply—the same word used in Daniel's request for wisdom (Dan 9:2).

That I may know thy testimonies (עִדּוֹתֶיךָ, edoteika)—God's witnesses or testimonies, His covenant stipulations. Intellectual comprehension aims at relational knowledge (yada). Understanding leads to knowing, head knowledge to heart experience.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern servants typically performed tasks without explanation. Israel's covenant was radically different—God revealed His purposes, rationale, and character to His servants. Moses knew God's 'ways,' not merely His 'acts' (Ps 103:7).

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. How does your identity as God's servant create both obligation and privilege to understand His Word?
2. What's the difference between intellectual understanding of Scripture and experiential knowledge of God's testimonies?
3. Are you actively seeking divine illumination as you study the Bible, or relying solely on human reason?

Interlinear Text

עָזָבָנִי תַּعֲבֹרְנִי תַּבְּנִי אֵדֶךָ תַּعֲדִלָּנִי
I am thy servant give me understanding that I may know thy testimonies
H5650 H995 H3045 H5713

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 116:16 (Parallel theme): O LORD, truly I am thy servant; I am thy servant, and the son of thine handmaid: thou hast loosed my bonds.

Psalms 119:34 (Parallel theme): Give me understanding, and I shall keep thy law; yea, I shall observe it with my whole heart.

Proverbs 14:8 (Parallel theme): The wisdom of the prudent is to understand his way: but the folly of fools is deceit.

James 1:5 (Parallel theme): If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.

2 Timothy 2:7 (Parallel theme): Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee understanding in all things.