

Psalm 119:58

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

I intreated thy favour with my whole heart: be merciful unto me according to thy word.

Analysis

I intreated thy favour with my whole heart: be merciful unto me according to thy word. The verb **intreated** (חִלַּת, chilliti) means 'sought earnestly' or 'implored,' carrying intensity and urgency. **Thy favour** (פָּנָקֵחַ, panekha)—literally 'thy face'—suggests seeking God's presence, not merely His gifts. Moses prayed similarly: 'Show me your glory' (Exodus 33:18).

With my whole heart (בְּכָל-לֶב, bekhol-lev) emphasizes undivided devotion—the same wholehearted commitment required in the Shema (Deuteronomy 6:5). The petition **be merciful unto me according to thy word** grounds the request in God's revealed promises, not human merit. This anticipates Hebrews 4:16: 'Let us come boldly to the throne of grace.'

Historical Context

Seeking God's face was central to covenant relationship. The Aaronic blessing pronounced God's face shining upon Israel (Numbers 6:25). Conversely, God hiding His face signified judgment (Deuteronomy 31:17). The temple represented God's dwelling where His face could be sought, making exile devastating—separated from God's manifest presence. Yet this verse affirms that God's word remains accessible even when His temple is distant.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 – Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 – God is love

Study Questions

1. Do your prayers primarily seek God's face (His presence) or merely His hand (His blessings)?
 2. What might 'wholehearted' prayer look like practically—how can you eliminate distraction and half-heartedness?
 3. How does grounding prayer in God's promises ('according to thy word') provide confidence without presumption?

Interlinear Text

חָלַתְּנִי	לְבָכֶל	פָּנֵי יְהָוָה	לְבָכֶל	חָלַתְּנִי
I intreated	thy favour	H3605	with my whole heart	be merciful

כְּמַרְתָּב:
unto me according to thy word

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 119:41 (Word): Let thy mercies come also unto me, O LORD, even thy salvation, according to thy word.

Hebrews 10:22 (Parallel theme): Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.

Psalms 119:170 (Word): Let my supplication come before thee: deliver me according to thy word.

Psalms 119:10 (Word): With my whole heart have I sought thee: O let me not wander from thy commandments.

Psalms 4:6 (Parallel theme): There be many that say, Who will shew us any good? LORD, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us.

Psalms 27:8 (Parallel theme): When thou saidst, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, LORD, will I seek.

1 Kings 13:6 (Parallel theme): And the king answered and said unto the man of God, Intreat now the face of the LORD thy God, and pray for me, that my hand may be restored me again. And the man of God besought the LORD, and the king's hand was restored him again, and became as it was before.

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