

119:17 Deal bountifully with your servant, that I may live, and keep thy word. **18 Open** my eyes, that I may behold wonderful things out of your law. **19** I am **a stranger** in the earth: hide not your commandments from me. **20** My soul **breaks** for the longing that it has unto your judgments at all times. **21 You have rebuked** the proud that are cursed, which do err from your commandments. **22 Remove [roll]** from me reproach and contempt; for I have kept your testimonies. **23** Princes **also** sat and speak together against me: but your servant meditated in your statutes. **24** Your testimonies **also** are my delight and my counsellors.

the first valley

Gimel (17-24) is the first valley section, since proud (21) princes (23) appear for the first time and the psalmist was reproached and treated with contempt (22). His rejection was so complete that he felt totally out of place (19). Though he was the Lord's servant (17), he was also a stranger in his own land (19).

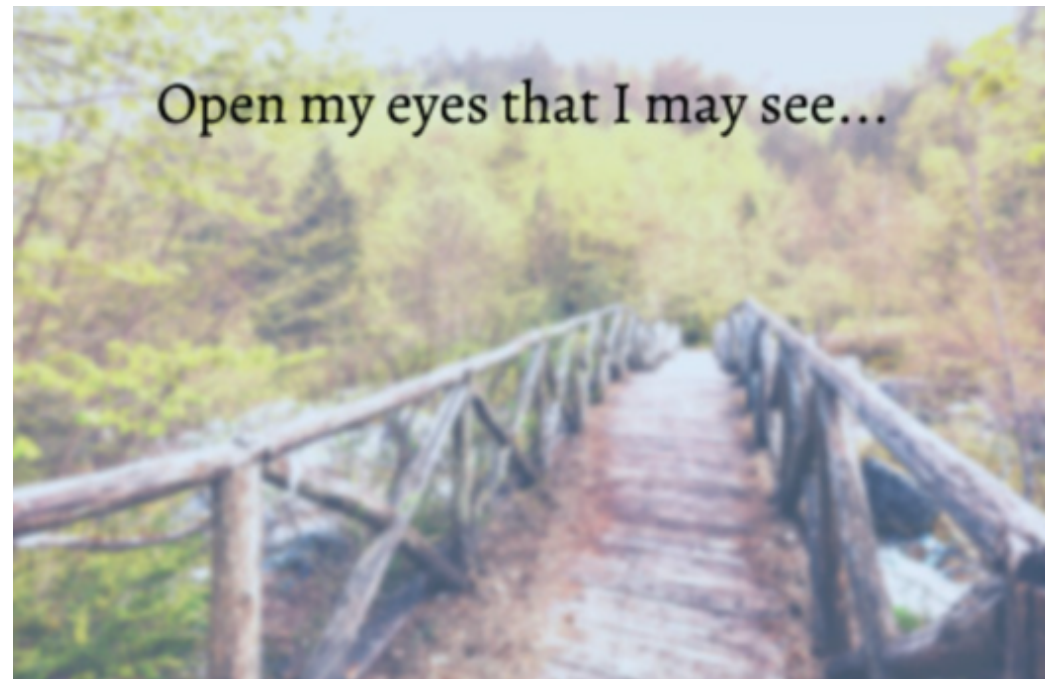
the persecuted prophet

Verses 20 and 46 show that the psalmist was a prophet, who was treated terribly by proud rulers (plural). There were various plots against Jeremiah which sound like what is said about the psalmist in verse 23.

the closing verses

In many sections of the Psalmist's Trail, first-in-verse terms are used multiple times, and this helps us discover the theme of the stanza. In Gimel, however, the only such repetition is "also" in verses 23 and 24. This shows that these verses go together in some way.

The rulers conferred together against the psalmist (23). Yet the psalmist did not feel totally alone because meditating on God's word was like enjoying the company of multiple delightful counselors (24).



What is the Gimel stanza (#3) like?

In one way, it is like an overflowing muddy river, full of dirt and debris. On the other hand, it is like a wonderful bridge which spans the river. Thus when the psalmist prayed in verse 18 to see wonderful things from God's law, it was like a traveler praying to find the one-and-only bridge across a dangerous river while hiking the trail on a foggy day (18-19).

Therefore?

When there is a coming together of proud and powerful men against you (23), turn with delight to God's word (24) and you will not be alone even if humanly speaking you seem to be so (19), praying that your eyes may be fully open to clearly see biblical and spiritual things (18) rather than just the opposition.