

119:25 My soul **clings** to the dust: preserve my life according to your word. **26** I have declared **my ways**, and you answered me: teach me your statutes. **27** Make me to understand **the way of your precepts**: so that I may meditate on your wondrous works. **28** My soul **melts** from heaviness: strengthen me according unto your word. **29** Remove from me **the way of lying**: and grant me your law graciously. **30** I have chosen **the way of truth**: your judgments I have laid before me. **31** **I have clung** unto your testimonies: O LORD, put me not to shame. **32** I will run **the way of your commandments**, when you shall enlarge my heart.

the weariness

The opposition and constant danger caused the psalmist to be weary. So he asked the Lord to preserve his life (25) in line with his promise. (Jer. 1:17-19?) However, protection was not all that the psalmist needed. He also asked the Lord to strength him, because living with heaviness, the lack of joy, is exhausting (28).

The heaviness was not because of ongoing personal sin (26) but was related to those around him (29). He had chosen the way of truth (30), but others had not (29).

the way

The Daleth section is about maintaining a biblical lifestyle for a long time in a difficult setting. So "way" is the first-in-verse term in five Daleth verses. It refers to ongoing ways. This is also why "*cling*" is the first-in-verse term in verse 31. The psalmist had to cling to the Lord's testimonies, like a football player holding firmly onto the ball while others are trying to strip it away.

the running

At the end, the psalmist confidently said that he would later be able to run the biblical path because the Lord would strengthen him (32). So he believed God would answer his prayer for strength (28).



What is the Daleth stanza (#4) like?

It is like a hiker dealing with the weariness that sets in after walking with a heavy pack for days, knowing that there are many more such days ahead. Eventually, long-distance hikers become stronger and are even able to run (32), but until then, they often feel like quitting or collapsing in the dust (25a).

Therefore?

Like the psalmist, we need to remember God's promise(s) (25) and pray for spiritual strength in the midst of the long, grinding process that we are in (28). Like him, we also need to believe that the Lord will strengthen us through his word (32). (Since this firm belief is future oriented, the NKJV rendering of verse 32 is probably better than the NIV's.)