

PSALM 119

Parts 1 and 2

Psalm 119 is the classic description of the beauty and power and helpfulness of the Word of God. The psalm was called "a holy alphabet for Zion's scholars" by one of the older commentators. Leupold calls it "The Golden ABC of Praise of the Word of God." The Psalmist sings the glories of God's Word as a lamp to guide, as a spring of comfort, and as a fountain of hope. He has laid down a fixed pattern for himself in that he proposed to make this psalm an acrostic, in which the first eight successive verses begin with the first Hebrew letter of the alphabet, the next eight successive verses with the second letter, and so on. There are 22 letters in the Hebrew alphabet, so there are 22 groups of eight verses. However, in our presentation here, the psalm has been divided to cover 11 days of family devotion--two groups of eight verses, in other words, two Hebrew letters for each day.

Note: the name of the Hebrew letter and the letter itself at the beginning of each group of eight verses is **not** like the ancient headings on many of the psalms; it is simply put at the beginning of the psalm by the translators of the various versions of the Bible.

There is no particular theme to follow, but each group of eight verses is for the most part a disconnected series of more or less striking pronouncements about Yahweh's law. The author, for the sake perhaps of variety, has used ten synonyms for that collective term "law," which are as follows: law, word, saying, commandment, statute, ordinance, precept, testimony, way, and path. Many superficial readers see only pious repetitions and redundancies, but those who have studied this psalm carefully are amazed at the variety and profundity of the thoughts. If the same sentiment recurs, it is placed in a fresh connection and thus exhibits another shade of meaning.

The remaining 10 days of family devotions on Psalm 119 will have no individual introductions, but there will be a brief observation to meditate upon by Charles Bridges on one verse of each part.

⌘ Aleph

- 1 How blessed are those whose way is blameless, who walk in the law of YAHWEH.
- 2 How blessed are those who observe His testimonies, who seek Him with all *their* heart.
- 3 They also do no unrighteousness; they walk in His ways.
- 4 You have ordained Your precepts, that we should keep *them* diligently.
- 5 Oh that my ways may be established to keep Your statutes!
- 6 Then I shall not be ashamed when I look upon all Your commandments.
- 7 I shall give thanks to You with uprightness of heart,

when I learn Your righteous judgments.

8 I shall keep Your statutes; do not forsake me utterly!

ב Beth

9 How can a young man keep his way pure? By keeping *it* according to Your word.

10 With all my heart I have sought You; do not let me wander from Your commandments.

11 Your word I have treasured in my heart, that I may not sin against You.

12 Blessed are You, O YAHWEH; teach me Your statutes.

13 With my lips I have told of all the ordinances of Your mouth.

14 I have rejoiced in the way of Your testimonies, as much as in all riches.

15 I will meditate on Your precepts and regard Your ways.

16 I shall delight in Your statutes; I shall not forget Your word.

PRAYER

Almighty God, you reveal the light of your truth to those who walk in error that they may return to the path of righteousness. You never fail to help and lead them in your steadfast fear and love. Keep us, we beseech you, under the protection of your good providence, and grant that we may always have a holy fear and love for your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.