



Psalm 119

This Psalm speaks of the writer's love for and dependance on the Word of God. His life depends on it.

Acrostic...

- ✘ each section of 8 verses is based on the next letter in the Hebrew Alphabet
- ✘ Each verse in the section begins with the same letter
- ✘ 22 letters in Hebrew alphabet. All Psalms with multiples of 22 verses are acrostics.

10 Words used through the Psalm...at least 6 from this list in each section. (*The English word used in this list is the one used on the Authorised - King James - Version*)

- ✘ **WAY** (*derek*) is from *darak, to tread with the feet*, and denotes *the act of walking*. Hence it is used of a *going*, or *way*, or *journeying*. The first occurrence is Genesis 3:24. It occurs in this Psalm thirteen times : verses 1, 3, 5, 14, 26, 27, 29, 30, 32, 33, 37, 59, 168.
- ✘ **TESTIMONIES** (*'eduth*) is from *'ud, to turn back again, to go over again, to reiterate*, hence, *to testify*. The first occurrence is Genesis 21:30 (*edah*). It occurs in this Psalm twenty-three times; nine times (*'eduth*), verses 14, 31, 36, 88, 99, 111, 129, 144, 157; fourteen times (*'edah*, feminine singular), verses 2, 22, 24, 46, 59, 79, 95, 119, 125, 138, 146, 152, 167, 168.
- ✘ **PRECEPTS** (*pikkudim*) is from *pakad, to take oversight or charge* : hence, *mandates enjoined on others*. It occurs only in the Book of Psalms (see 19:8; 103:18; 111:7). In Psalm 119 twenty-one times : verses 4, 15, 27, 40, 45, 56, 63, 69, 78, 87, 93, 94, 100, 104, 110, 128, 134, 141, 159, 168, 173.
- ✘ **COMMANDMENTS** (*mizvah*) is from *zavah, to set up, constitute*. Hence, *constitutional commands*. First occurrence Genesis 26:5. In Psalm 119 it occurs twenty-two times : verses 6, 10, 19, 21, 32, 35, 47, 48, 60, 66, 73, 86, 96 (singular), 98, 115, 127, 131, 143, 151, 166, 172, 176.
- ✘ **WORD** (*'imrah*) is from *'amar, to bring forth to light*; hence, *to say*. The verb is very regularly followed by the words used; hence *'imrah* means an utterance and what it means. Not the same as *dabar* (last one on list, below), which refers to the clarity of speech. The first occurrence is in Genesis 4:23, and is rendered "speech". In Psalm 119 it occurs in verses 11, 38, 41, 50, 58, 67, 76, 82, 103, 116, 123, 133, 140, 148, 158, 162, 170, 172. With *dabar* the two occur forty-two times.
- ✘ **LAW** (*torah*) is from *yarah, to project, issue* : hence, *to point out, to show* (Proverbs 6:13). Then, *to instruct, teach*. The Torah contains Jehovah's *Instructions* to His People, pointing out to them His will. First occurrence is in Genesis 26:5 (plural). In Psalm 119 it occurs twenty-five times : always in the singular : verses 1, 18, 29, 34, 44, 51, 53, 55, 61, 70, 72, 77, 85, 92, 97, 109, 113, 126, 136, 142, 150, 153, 163, 165, 174.
- ✘ **JUDGMENT** (*mishpat*) is from *shaphat, to set upright, erect* (compare English *right*, and German *richten* and *recht*); hence, *to judge*. *Mishpat* means judgment. Its first occurrence is in Genesis 18:19 (in Jehovah's mouth). In Psalm 119 it occurs twenty-

three times (always in plural, except four times): verses 7, 13, 20, 30, 39, 43, 52, 62, 75, 84, 91 (ordinances), 102, 106, 108, 120, 121, 132, 137, 149, 156, 160, 164, 175.

- ✘ **RIGHTEOUSNESS, RIGHT, etc. (*zedek*, masculine), is from *zadak*, to be right, upright, just, righteous.** Hence the noun means *rightness*. By comparing the first occurrence (Leviticus 19:15) with the second (Leviticus 19:36) we get the idea that the word has special reference to **equal balancing**. *Zedek* (masculine) occurs twelve times, and is rendered "righteousness" : verses 123, 142 (second), 144, 172; "right", verse 75 "righteous" verses 7, 62, 106, 138, 160, 164; "justice", verse 121. *Zedakah* (feminine), first occurrence, Genesis 15:6. In Psalm 119, "righteousness", verses 40, 142 (first). *Zaddik* (adj.), spoken of a king (2 Samuel 23:3), once, in verse 137. The three words fifteen times in all.
- ✘ **STATUTE (*hok* and *hukka*) is from *hakak*, to hew, cut in, engrave, inscribe; hence, to decree, or ordain.** The noun = a decree or ordinance. First occurrence, Genesis 26:5 (*hukkah* feminine). In Psalm 119 it occurs twenty-two times : verses 5, 8, 12, 16 (*hukkah*, feminine), 23, 26, 33, 48, 54, 64, 68, 71, 80, 83, 112, 117, 118, 124, 135, 145, 155, 171.
- ✘ **WORD, WORDS (*dabar*), is from *dabar*, to arrange in a row; hence, to set forth in speech.** It refers to the articulate form of what is said, whether spoken or written (compare *imrah* above); to the mode or manner by which matter is spoken. The first occurrence is in Genesis 11:1 ("speech"). In Psalm 119 it occurs twenty-four times, three of them in plural, verses 9, 16, 17, 25, 28, 42 (twice), 43, 49, 57 (plural), 65, 74, 81, 89, 101, 105, 107, 114, 130 (plural), 139 (plural), 147, 160, 161, 169.

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Reading through a few of the sections of Psalm 119 reveals just how deeply the writer valued God's Word. Why not spend a month taking one section a day and meditating on it?

How deeply do you value God's Word?

Challenge

Write an 8 verse poem using at least 6 of the above words. Each verse has to start with the same letter of the English Alphabet (your choice).

Psalm 19 is another Psalm reflecting on God's Word. When I were a lad, we used to sing some of it.

It gives us promises of the value of Bible reading, study, and memorisation.

I can still remember these verses almost word perfectly, because singing scripture helps with the memorisation.

The challenge of Psalms 19 & 119 is to deepen our

- ✘ Bible Reading
- ✘ Biblical Understanding
- ✘ Scripture Awareness

7 The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple.

8 The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes.

9 The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.

10 More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.

11 Moreover by them is thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward.