



PSALM 119

AN ODE TO THE WORD OF GOD

Psalm 119 is a wonderful psalm that is dedicated totally to the vast characteristics and attributes of the Word of God. Every verse is filled with God's wonderful love, knowledge, wisdom, encouragement, exhortation and comfort. Psalm 119 is comprised of 176 verses divided into 22 sections having 8 verses in each section. Each section is based on one of the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet. In each section, the first letter of every verse of a particular section begins with the same

letter which corresponds with a Hebrew letter. It is a form of writing called, "acrostic." In other words, to put it in simple terms – if it was the English language, the first section would be titled "A" and the first letter of the first word of each of the 8 verses in that section would be the letter "A." The next section would be titled "B" and the first letter of every verse would begin with the letter "B," and so on.

If we read Psalm 119 we see that the first "word" we read is "Aleph" (א). Aleph is actually the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet. All 8 verses in this first section begin with the letter "Aleph" (א). The next section is titled "Beth" (ב). "Beth" is the second letter of the Hebrew alphabet. All eight verses of this section begin with the letter "Beth" (ב); and so on.

The reason that this psalm was written in this way was to remind God's people that every aspect of the spoken language and everything in creation is representative of God and His ways. It points to the fact that God is in all living things and is found in everything that is known as well as things that are yet to be known. Everything is found in God and in His Word. At the time of its writing the author was literally referring to the Torah. Therefore, Psalm 119 can be considered an "ode," a tribute, to the Torah.

The "Torah" refers to the first 5 books of the Bible also known as the Pentateuch which includes Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. When we say, use or hear the word "Torah" we immediately think - the Law. This is not totally incorrect. The Law is included in the Torah. However, the Torah is much, much more.

The word "Torah" literally means "instructions and teachings." As well as containing "the Law," the Torah includes historical accounts and historical records. It is the foundation for the entirety of scripture. It is the basis from which we are taught what pleases our God and what is contrary to Him. It is fundamental to establishing and revealing what true worship unto the Lord is. It points us to the way of salvation as it is a "shadow" of things to come in, by and through Jesus. It also provides to every man and woman the opportunity to know the fundamentals of living a life of "moral excellence" that blesses the heart of God.

Psalm 119 uses various words in the verses contained in it that point directly to "the Torah." We see that every scripture refers to either, God's Law, His statutes, His testimonies, His ways, His precepts, His commandments, His righteous judgments, and His word. All of these refer to everything written in the Torah. Now that we have other "inspired scripture" such as the Writings, the Prophets, the Gospels and the entire New Testament, Psalm 119 speaks to the entirety of all our scriptures found within the Bible.

The writer of Psalm 119 truly reveals and declares His love, reverence and awe of God and His Word. In verse 97, the author clearly states, "*Oh how I love your law!*" Actually, the author invokes this sentiment 3 other times within this psalm (verses 113, 163, 165). Unfortunately, in some circles today, this statement or thinking would be viewed as "religious" or as being legalistic as well as giving into spiritual bondage. After all, it is "the Law" and the Law brings bondage. (sic) Oh, how incorrect that type of thinking is. Every verse in Psalm 119 as well as many, many other scriptures throughout the Jewish scriptures and the New Testament, declare how incorrect that way of thinking is.

We all understand that we need laws in our society because laws keep order. We must grasp the fact that the absence of any type of law is actually “lawlessness.” It is the same within the Kingdom of God. In the scriptures we see that the word “iniquity” is actually synonymous with the concept of “lawlessness.” The word “iniquity” comes from the Greek word “*anomia*” which means - being without law either because of being ignorant of it or because of willingly violating it; to be contemptuous of all law; to be in a state of wickedness. The Hebrew word for “iniquity” is *avah*, which means to be perverted and twisted within one’s inner being.

Therefore, when the Bible mentions the term “iniquity” it is stating that the condition of the individual’s inner being, their heart, is either ignorant of or is contemptuous **against** the “Law” of God – His Word in its entirety as written in both the Jewish and the New Testament scriptures. The individual’s inner being (spirit and soul) is perverted and twisted because of the absence of God’s Law – His Word. There is no “moral compass.” There is no order. There is no reverence, respect or appreciation for anything, much less the things of God. It opens the door to do whatever seems “right in one’s own eyes” regardless of how it affects others. It opens the door for a person to do whatever “feels good.” It does away with any and all concepts of what is right or wrong. It leads to the incorrect attitude of heart that there is no longer any need for repentance or changing one’s ways. This is what it means to be in the “state of lawlessness.”

In Paul’s final letter, he exhorts Timothy in 2Timothy 3:15-17, “*And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.*” The “scriptures” that the apostle Paul is referring to, are the Jewish scriptures which, believe it or not includes “the Law.” These scriptures, Paul writes, are invaluable for:

- DOCTRINE – They point us to what is right in the eyes of God.
- REPROOF – They let us know what is not right in the eyes of God.
- CORRECTION – They point us in the way of how to get right through repentance and the Blood of the “Final Sacrifice” - Jesus
- INSTRUCTION IN RIGHTEOUSNESS – They teach us how to stay right in living a Godly lifestyle that was role modeled for us by Jesus.

The writer of the Letter to the Hebrews teaches us in Hebrews 4:12, “*For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*”

The first word in verse 12 is “*For.*” It connects verse 12 with the preceding verses (4:1–11). Verses 1-11 speak to us concerning entering into true rest – that resting place that can only be found in and through Jesus. The writer continues this thought in verse 12. The true disciple of Jesus will enjoy and have the opportunity to enter into that rest to an even greater extent the more they read, study and live by, the entirety of the written scriptures – the Word of God.

Jesus teaches us in Matthew 5:17, “*Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill.*” Many take this to mean that Jesus put an end to the Law and everything in the Jewish scriptures and that they are no longer relevant to the believer today. However, that was not what Jesus was saying. Jesus did put an end to the sacrificial aspects of the Law for He became the “once and for all final sacrifice.” However, He did not put an end to the behavioral and moral aspects of the Law.

The word “fulfill” means not only to satisfy the Law but it also means to live it (the Law and all the scriptures) to its maximum and fullest by living a life of “moral excellence” by which the scriptures teach and instruct us in. Jesus lived the Word of God to its fullest by living a life of moral excellence that was and is expressed and found within the scriptures.

As Hebrews 4:12 teaches, this Word of God goes deep down within the spirit and soul and allows us to discern and make the correct choices based on the knowledge and wisdom found within the scriptures. Ultimately, this leads and brings us into true rest in Jesus. Through Jesus, the Holy Spirit is given to assist and lead us in living this life of “moral excellence” which thereby leads us into even a greater rest and intimacy with Jesus and with the Father.

Without the Word of God, without reading and studying the entirety of scripture as found in both the Jewish and New Testament scriptures, the believer is hindered in truly entering into that true rest and true intimacy that Jesus has opened the way for us to experience. This is also expressed in the scripture we read previously in 2Timothy 3:17, “*That the man of God may be **perfect**, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.*” The word “perfect” in this scripture means “to be complete.” The true believer is made complete in and through the manifested Word – Jesus, who is the Living Word of God. But as we can see, we are taught that the written scriptures (logos) are valuable for the true believer to continue to enter into that true rest and continue to walk in “completeness.”

Without the Word of God, there is iniquity and lawlessness. Iniquity and lawlessness also occurs when there is a misuse of God’s word. In 1Timothy 1:8, Paul teaches us that the Law (Word of God) is **GOOD**, only **IF** it is used “lawfully” - properly and legitimately.

- 1 Timothy 1:8-10 (KJV) – “*But we know that the law is good, **if a man use it lawfully**; Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, For whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for men stealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine....*”

He goes on to teach that the Law (Word of God) lets all the workers of disobedience and sin know what is contrary to “sound doctrine.” In other words the Law, the Word of God, reveals and exposes everything that is contrary and in opposition to God and His ways which is what lawlessness is. God’s Word reveals and exposes lawlessness and iniquity. When there is a void of the Word of God, referring to both the Jewish and the New Testament scriptures, it leads to lawlessness – both in society and in an individual’s life.

In a previous essay I discussed that I believed that the Lord is about to lead the Body of Christ into a “season of correction.” As we look around us we can see the works of lawlessness and iniquity rising up within our society in enormous proportions. There has always been enmity between God and the works of darkness. (Romans 8:7; James 4:4) The “carnal mind” and the “friendship of and with the things of this world” are at odds with the things of God as found in His Word. We as believers point fingers at those in the world and we can say and see how contrary they are to the things of God. However, I believe that is unfair. The unsaved are unable to be lead by the Holy Spirit because they do not have Jesus. They cannot help themselves but to be lawless and live in wickedness and sin. It is a different story for the believer.

As believers, we need to be looking inward within ourselves and not at others or the world. Paul states in 1Corinthians 11:28, “*But let a man examine himself...*” This is in reference to receiving the remembrance elements of the Last Supper which we refer to as “communion.” Paul is telling believers that we are to take a good look within ourselves. I believe that he is teaching each of us that there may be things within our own lives that if not dealt with, will lead us into areas of lawlessness and iniquity. There may be “things” that could possibly be leading us into areas that are contrary to the “moral excellence” that Jesus role modeled for us and that we are to walk in, and live out. We must examine our hearts through His Word.

As mentioned previously in Hebrews 4:12, the Word is sharper than any two edged sword and it will go down deep within to allow the true disciple to truly discern and know what the “attitude of their heart” really is. Hebrews 4:12 is directly linked to Proverbs 5:3-4. In Proverbs 5:3-4, it tells us that the “lips of the strange woman are as sharp as a two edged sword.” This is referring to the enemy who is deceptive and

entices even the believers with ways and words that “sound good.” But, as it says in Proverb 5:5, these enticing words bring death and are meant to lead us into the depths of hell. Notice that Hebrews 4:12 declares that God’s Word is sharper than the “sharp” counterfeit words of the enemy.

God’s Word brings life. It leads and points the way for us to salvation. It leads and points us to Jesus. 1Peter 1:23-25 confirms this thought, *“Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, **by the word of God**, which liveth and abideth for ever. For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: **But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.**”* The Gospel is all about salvation through Jesus who is the living and incarnate Word of God.

The above scriptures reveal to us that the reading and studying of the Word of God, both the Jewish scriptures and New Testament, is of paramount importance to the believer in Jesus. We are to have the same “attitude of heart” as the writer of Psalm 119. Our hearts should be declaring within us, *“Oh how I love your law!”* We should desire to *“hide His Word in our heart so that we will not sin against Him.”* (Psalm 119:11) We must truly allow His word to be *“a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.”* (Psalm 119:105) We must realize that the Word of God is truly the source for life.

I encourage you to read and meditate on Psalm 119. Allow it to permeate your very being – spirit, soul and body. I encourage all of us to feed on and get our nourishment from the source of true nourishment the Word of God. Deuteronomy 8:3 tells us that we cannot live on natural, physical bread alone but our daily sustenance comes from every word that proceeds from the mouth of our God as found within His holy scriptures. Yes Lord, *“Oh how I love your law!”* Amen!!!