

**Celebrating the Scriptures      Psalm 119**  
**Psalm 119    Introduction**

A few facts:

- The longest Psalm
- The longest chapter in the Bible.
- Anonymous author, David, Ezra and Jeremiah have all been suggested and all make sense. No final answer.
- 22 sections of 8 verses each. Each of the 8 verses in each section begin with the same Hebrew letter.
- There are 22 letters in the Hebrew alphabet; thus, there are 22 sections.
  
- The subject matter is the Word of God, the Bible.
- Several words are used to identify the Scriptures, such as:
  - Law
  - Commandments
  - Testimonies
  - Precepts
  - Word
  - Promise
  
- Chuck Smith said,
  - *“This psalm provides some of the most powerful arguments for studying the Bible that have ever been proposed.”*
  
- Pay attention to the following:
  - The psalmist’s attitude toward the Bible
  - The psalmist’s attitude toward God
  - The psalmist’s attitude in the midst of his circumstances, which are frequently difficult.
  - The psalmist’s intense desire to learn, take God’s word to heart, and then be obedient to it.

**Aleph    א    Psalm 119:1-8**

- 119:1-2    These first two verses are beatitudes, just like those in the Sermon on the Mount.
- If we want to be blessed, we should see to it that these verses describe us.
- Who seek him with their whole heart    This means we will apply diligent, conscious effort to draw close to God.
- The words “seek” or “sought” appear 6x in this psalm.

**Beth    ב    Psalm 119:9-16**

- 119:11    God’s word will keep us from sin. Sin can also keep us from God’s word.
- 119:12    teach me    This phrase appears 21x in the Bible (ESV), 17x in the Psalms alone.
- Over half – 11x – are in Psalm 119.
- The Lord’s disciples are people who learn from him.
- 119:14, 16    delight    This word appears 10x in this psalm. The psalmist delights in God’s word.

**Gimel** ג **Psalm 119:17-24**

- 119:18 This verse makes a good little prayer to offer up each time we read the Scriptures.
- 119:20 The word “rules” (ESV) can also be translated as “just decrees” or “judgments” (NKJV)
- 119:24 There is that word “delight” again. God’s word is delightful.

**Daleth** ד **Psalm 119:25-32**

- 119:27 make me understand similar to “teach me.”
- Meditate This means to ponder, to mull over the word, or to talk about it with others.
- God’s word should be the subject of our thoughts and conversation.

**He** ה **Psalm 119:33-40**

- 119:35 Incline my heart The word “heart” appears 15x in this psalm. We need to use our heads in the study of the Scriptures, but it must also go deeper than that.
- 119:37 We should consider what we take in by means of our eyes and how worthwhile it is.

**Waw** ו **Psalm 119:41-48**

- 119:47 Again, the psalmist finds delight in the commandments of God.
- 119:47-48 He loves them – something else we see repeatedly in this psalm.

**Zayin** ז **Psalm 119:49-56**

- 119:50 affliction We see repeatedly in this psalm that the psalmist is in deep trouble.
- This causes him to turn to God’s word – in this case to God’s “promise.”
- Holding onto the promises of God can a source of “life” when we find ourselves in great difficulty.

**Heth** ח **Psalm 119:57-64**

- 119:63 This verse reminds us how important it is that we choose our friends wisely.

**Teth** ט **Psalm 119:65-72**

- 119:67, 71 The psalmist learned something about obedience through affliction.
- Hebrews 5:8-9 indicate that Jesus, from the perspective of his humanity, could say something very similar.
- This is part of what makes him the perfect Savior.

**Yodh** י **Psalm 119:73-80**

- 119:79 This should be a prayer for all of us in this church – that people who would love to learn the Bible would be able to turn to us.
- We may not have everything they want, but at least we can give them God’s “testimonies.”

**Kaph** כ **Psalm 119:81-88**

- 119:88 give me life This phrase can also be translated “revive me.”
- The phrases “give me life” or “have given me life” appear 10x in this psalm.
- The psalmist knows that if he is personally in need of revival, the place to start is in his Bible.

**Lamedh ל Psalm 119:89-96**

- 119:89 God's word is eternal. It is the one thing we can connect with now that will last into eternity.
- 119:96 Everything in this world has its limitations. When we connect with God's word we tap into an unending, infinite resource.

**Mem מ Psalm 119:97-104**

- Every verse in this section is an unlimited wellspring of life and good sense to the Christian.
- If you want to be reminded how wonderful, how valuable and how useful the Bible is, come back to this section again and again and again.

**Nun נ Psalm 119:105-112**

- 119:105 In a world without streetlights, the portable lamp that a person would carry was the primary means of finding one's way in the dark.
- We live in a dark world. We need our Bible to light the way.

**Samekh ס Psalm 119:113-120**

- 119:114 hiding place The truth that we gain from God's word will protect us from all forms of spiritual attack.
- When the devil tempted Jesus in the wilderness, he responded with the Scriptures.

**Ayin ע Psalm 119:121-128**

- 119:123 The word "salvation" in this verse is *yeshua*, the Hebrew name of Jesus.
- This verse reads wonderfully in the ESV, becoming something akin to a Messianic prayer.

**Pe פ Psalm 119:129-136**

- 119:136 Does it make us sad when we see people turning away from God?
- Consider Christ's lament over Jerusalem in Matthew 23:37.

**Tsadhe צ Psalm 119:137-144**

- 119:143 In the midst of your deepest setbacks, fall back on what you know.
- We can delight in the God's word in the midst of trouble and anguish.

**Qoph ק Psalm 119:145-152**

- The psalmist's troubles seem to be getting more and more intense – and that leads him into more committed seasons or periods of prayer.

**Resh ר Psalm 119:153-160**

- 119:155 Salvation Again, the word is *Yeshua*, the Hebrew name of Jesus.
- 119:160 The enduring power of God's word.

### **Sin/Shin ו Psalm 119:161-168**

- The psalmist's relationship to his Bible:
- 119:161 He is in awe of it.
- 119:162 He rejoices at it.
- 119:163, 167 He loves it.
- 119:164 He praises God for it.
- 119:165 And in return he gets great peace (*shalom*).

### **Taw ת Psalm 119:169-176**

- 119:174 Again salvation is *Yeshua*.
- And again, he delights in the law.
- 119:176 The final verse has him seeing his own lost condition and asking the Lord to rescue him.

### **Psalm 119 Conclusions**

Three things the Bible is:

- A source of enduring riches (119:14 & 72)
- An eternally stable foundation (119:89, 160)
- A light in a dark place (119:105)

Three Things the Bible does:

- Teaches us God's will (119:33, 68)
- Give us life (119:50, 154)
- Guides us in a right course of action (119:9, 67, 133, 165)

Some final words from D.L. Moody, the great evangelist,

- *"I prayed for Faith, and thought that some day Faith would come down and strike me like lightning. But Faith did not seem to come. One day I read in the tenth chapter of Romans, "Now Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." I had closed my Bible, and prayed for Faith. I now opened my Bible, and began to study, and Faith has been growing ever since."*