

# An Exposition of Psalm 119

## Introduction to Psalm 119

- 1 Psalm 119 is a feast on and in the Word of God.
- 2 Psalm type
3. Structure
4. Purpose
5. Words for the Word in Psalm 119
  - "The Law" (*Torah*)
  - "The Word" (*Dabar*)
  - "The Testimonies" (*ʿeduʿt*)
  - "The Commands/ments" (*miswa*)
  - "Judgments" (*Mishpot*)
  - "The Decrees" (*Huqqim*)
  - "The Precepts" (*Piqqudim*)
  - "The Word" or "Promise" (*ʿimra*)

## Authorship

1. The authorship of this Psalm is important for interpreting a number of the sections (strophes). Although determining authorship is not ultimately important, it does add some significant interpretations and applications of the Psalm.
2. There is no superscription identifying the author in Psa 119. It is anonymous.
3. A few considerations make Daniel a good candidate.
4. Internal Evidence
  - Psa. 119:1-2 cf. Dan. 1:8-9
  - Psa. 119:9, 11, 30, 101 cf. Dan. 1:8
  - Psa. 119:19 cf. Dan. 1:3-4
  - Psa. 119:23, 78, 85, 86, 95, 110, 157, 161 cf. Dan. 3:8; 6:4-5
  - Psa 119:46 cf. Dan. 2:27-28
6. The "feel" of Daniel in Psalm 119
  - Examples: Psa. 119:17 cf. Dan. 1:12-16;

Psa 119:29 cf. Dan. 1:4;  
Psa 119:36-37 cf Dan 2:48; 5:16;  
Psa 119:63 cf. Dan 3:17-18;  
Psa 119:87 cf Dan. 6:10, 16;  
Psa. 119:98-100 cf Dan. 1:4, 17-20; 2:24;  
Psa 119:119 cf Dan 6:24;  
Psa. 119:136 cf Dan 9:5-6;  
Psa 119:18, 27, 169 cf Dan. 9:1-3

7. Conclusion  
The internal evidence seems to me to point *most consistently* to Daniel.

### **Themes of Psalm 119**

1. Attributes of the Word
2. Benefits of the Word
3. Response to the Word
4. Is the Psalmist's attitude toward God's Law the same as Paul's?  
Psa. 119:98 [25, 37, 40, 50, 88, 93, 107, 149, 154, 156, 159]  
Cf. Rom. 7:9-10; 2 Cor. 3:5-9; Gal. 3:21 (not to mention, Rom. 3:20; Gal. 2:16).  
Points to remember:
  1. The Psalmists have in view a broader view of Law than Paul does.
  2. The Psalmist rejoices in the Law's power to convict him of sin and turn him to God's mercy (Psa. 119:176). Paul rejoices in the same reality (Rom. 7:12, 22).
  3. The Psalmist rejoices in God's Law as a regenerate person. He sees that grace comes before and empowers obedience (E.g., Psa. 119:10, 32, 36, 37, 88). There is no legalism in his approach to God's Law.

So everything the Psalmist says, we should be able to say.

### Brief bibliography

See all the standard commentaries on the Psalms.

Charles Bridges, *Psalm 119*

Charles Spurgeon, *The Golden Alphabet*

John Calvin, *Sermons on Psalm 119*

Hwyel Jones, *Psalm 119 for Life*

James Boice, *Living by the Book*

George Zemek, *The Word of God in the Child of God:*

*Exegetical, Theological and Homiletical Reflections on Psalm 119* (knowledge of Hebrew is helpful).

**Exposition of Psalm 119**  
**Aleph (a) Stanza (1-8)**  
**The Christian's Cry and Commitment**

**Introduction**

**I. The Blessedness of Obedience (1-3)**

- A. Blessed are those
  
- B. Whose way is blameless/Who walk in the Law of the LORD  
Blameless (cf. Gen. 17:1; Job 1:1; Prov. 11:20; 13:6)
  
- C. Who keep His testimonies/Seek Him with the whole heart  
"His whole heart is engaged to know and love more and more" (Charles  
Bridges, 4)
  
- D. Do no wrong/Walk in His ways

**II. The Authority of the Word (4)**

- A. You have ordained Your precepts
  
- B. That they be kept diligently

**III. A Sincere Plea and Commitment (5-8)**

- A. Oh that my ways may be established (5)  
  
"This passionate exclamation pulsates with conviction, strong desire, and  
an acute awareness of dependence" (Zemek, 74).
  
- B. Then I shall not be ashamed (6)
  
- C. The I shall praise You with an honest heart/  
As I keep learning Your righteous judgments (7)
  
- D. I will/Do not (8)  
  
"Firm in his purpose, but distrustful of his strength" (Bridges, 14-15).

1. What are our priorities and desires?
2. “The first attempt to render spiritual obedience will quickly convince us of our utter helplessness. We might as soon create a world, as create in our hearts one pulse of spiritual life” (Bridges, 9).

Ezek. 36:27

Bridges, “He who commands our duty, perfectly knows our weakness, and he who feels his own weakness if fully encouraged to depend upon the power of the Savior” (10).

**Exposition of Psalm 119**  
**Beth (b) Stanza (9-16)**  
**The Believer's Path to Purity**

**Introduction:**

“All the basics of personal sanctification are variously integrated into the curriculum of real life: God, the gracious Teacher; the psalmist, the dependent disciple; and the Textbook, the sufficient Word” (Zemek).

**I. The Question and Answer Framework (9)**

A. How can a young man keep his way pure?

B. By keeping it according to Your Word

**II. Seek the Lord (10)**

A. With all my heart I seek you

B. Do not let me wander from Your commandments

“The man of God exerts himself, but he does not trust himself. His heart is in his walking with God; but he knows that even his whole strength is not enough to keep him right unless his King shall be his keeper, and he who made the commands shall make him constant in obeying them” (CHS).

**III. Treasure and Store His Word (11)**

A. Your Word I have treasured in my heart

Store up – Prov. 2:7; 10:14

Treasure – Prov. 2:1; 7:1

B. That I might not sin against You

**IV. Worship and learn (12)**

A. Blessed are You Yahweh

B. Teach me Your statutes

**V. Proclaim what is learned (13)**

A. With my lips I have told of all the ordinances

B. of Your mouth

**VI. Rejoice in the Word Lifestyle (14)**

A. I have rejoiced in the way of Your testimonies  
NET, *I rejoice in the lifestyle prescribed by your rules as if they were riches of all kinds.*

B. As much as in all riches  
Dan. 2:46-48  
Dan. 5:16-17, 29

**VII. Meditate on the Word (15)**

A. I will meditate on Your precepts

B. And fix my eyes on Your ways

**VIII. Delight in the Word (16)**

A. I will delight myself in Your statutes

B. I do not forget Your Word

**Application**

**Exposition of Psalm 119**  
**Gimmel (g) Stanza (17-24)**  
**Dealing with Hostility and Pressure**

**Introduction**

“The suppliant prays this whole prayer presupposing pressure and harassment”  
(Goldingay, 389).

**I. Petition for God’s Abundant Supply (17)**

- A. Petition: deal bountifully with Your servant
  
- B. Results
  - 1. That I may live
  
  - 2. And keep Your Word

**II. Petition for Illumination from the Word (18-20)**

- A. Open my eyes (18)
  
- B. I am exile in the land (19)
  
- C. Do not conceal

“But now I must ask myself whether I am so guided by my own principles that I might not even notice if God withdrew His living commandment from me one day” (Bonhoeffer).

- D. Desperation (20)

**III. How God Deals with the Arrogant (21)**

- A. God rebukes the arrogant the accursed ones  
Who wander from Your commands
  
- B. If this is an exile (Daniel) then he is talking about fellow Jews.  
Dan 9:7

**IV. Prayer for Deliverance from Hostile Opponents (22-23)**

- A. Take away scorn and contempt from me
  
- B. For I observe your testimonies (decrees/rules).  
Boice, “What is unique about these specific trials is that they seem to have come to the Psalmist because of his determination to adhere to God’s Word” (33).
  
- C. Princes plot and speak against me  
Cf. 161  
The princes are the policy-makers of the foreign land.  
Dan. 6:3-6
  
- D. Your servant meditates on Your statutes  
  
“(Meditation) is the digestive faculty of the soul, which converts the word into real and proper nourishment: so that this revolving of a single verse in our minds is often better than the mere reading of whole chapters.”  
Bridges

**V. Declaration of Confidence in the Word (24)**

- A. Your testimonies are my delight
  
- B. They are my counselors

**Application**



**Exposition of Psalm 119**  
**Daleth (d) Stanza (25-32)**  
**Grace to Stick When Stuck**

**Introduction**

**I. My soul is stuck to the dirt (25-27)**

A. The first lament: I am stuck to the dirt (25a)

B. The first petition: Revive me according to Your Word (25b)

“Breathe into me thine own life, that I may rise from the dust and cleave to thee. This cry for quickening grace is the exercise of faith” (Bridges, 57).

C. Recollection and second petition (26)

D. Third Petition and outcome (27)

**II. I am dissolved in tears (28-29)**

A. Second lament (28a)

B. First petition (28b)

Strengthen me according to Your Word

“The child of God was in desperate need of new strength, spiritual reinforcement, and again, on account of the precedent of promise, he was not hesitant to ask for it. So ask for it he did, both boldly and expectantly” (Zemek, 123).

“The blessed word will supply all their need – life for their quickening, light for their direction, comfort for their enjoyment, strength for their support” (Bridges, 67).

C. Second petition (29a)

D. Third petition (29b)

**III. I stick to Your Word (30-32)**

A. Expression of determination (30)

B. I stick to Your Word

C. Running with an enlarged heart (32)

**Exposition of Psalm 119**  
**He (h) Stanza (33-40)**  
**A New Covenant Prayer**

**Introduction**

**I. Lord Teach Me (33-34)**

- A. The petition
  - 1. Teach me/Give me understanding
  - 2. The way of Your statutes/Your Law
- B. The Consequences  
And I shall observe it to the end/  
Observe/keep with all my heart

**II. Lord Change My Heart (35-36)**

- A. The petition: Walk
  - 1. Make me walk
  - 2. In the path of Your commandments
  - 3. For I delight in it
- B. The petition: Incline
  - 1. Incline my heart
  - 2. To Your testimonies
  - 3. And not to material gain

**III. Lord, Protect My Eyes (37)**

- A. The petition: Turn my eyes
  - 1. Turn my eyes

2. From looking at vanity

B. The petition: Revive me

**IV. Lord Confirm Your Word (38)**

A. The petition

1. Confirm

2. Word

B. The result

As that which produces fear for You

**V. Lord Take Away My Disgrace (39)**

A. The petition: take away my disgrace

B. For Your ordinances are good

**VI. Lord, Revive Me (40)**

A. Desire: I long for Your precepts

B. Petition: Revive me through Your righteousness

Make this a prayer for yourself and for your loved ones.

**Exposition of Psalm 119**  
**Vav (w) Stanza (41-48)**  
**A Faithful Witness**

**Introduction**

1. Our witness
2. Daniel's witness  
"He prays for the grace of true fearlessly joyful confession" (Delitzsch, 249).

**I. God's love and a Good Response (41-42)**

- A. Appeal to experience Yahweh's *hesed*
- B. For the sake of a good response

**II. Put Your Word of Truth in My Mouth (43-44)**

- A. Do not take the Word utterly out of my mouth
- B. Whole-hearted obedience

**III. Freedom and No Shame (45-46)**

- A. I will walk at liberty (lit. in a wide open place)
- B. I am not ashamed

**IV. I Love and Meditate on Your Word (47-48)**

- A. I shall delight in Your commandments,  
Which I love
- B. I shall lift up my hands to Your commandments  
Which I love
- C. And I will meditate on Your statutes

**Exposition of Psalm 119**  
**Zayin (z) Stanza (49-56)**  
**God's Remembering and Ours**

**I. God's remembering (49-50)**

- A. Remember Your Word
  
- B. Comfort in Affliction (50)

**II. I have remembered Your ordinances (51-53)**

- A. The derision of the arrogant (51)
  
- B. The comfort of remembering (52)
  
- C. The anger over apostasy (53)

**III. I remember Your name (54-56)**

- A. Singing Your Word (54)
  
- B. Remembering Your name (55)
  
- C. Rekindled commitment (56)

Variety of translations

<sup>ESV</sup> **Psalm 119:56** This blessing has fallen to me, that I have kept your precepts.

<sup>NIV</sup> **Psalm 119:56** This has been my practice: I obey your precepts.

<sup>NJB</sup> **Psalm 119:56** This is what it means to me, observing your precepts.

Literally, This has become for me.

“It is not surprising, therefore, that such contemplations of the Person of the Word would consequently lead to a rekindled commitment to the precepts of the Word” (Zemek, 164).

**Conclusion**

**Exposition of Psalm 119**  
**Heth (x) Stanza (57-64)**  
**The Exile's Inheritance**

**I. The Lord is My Portion (57a)**

- A. Portion/inheritance in the OT
  
- B. The eyes of faith and the inheritance  
Psa. 16:5  
Psa. 73:25-26  
Lam 3:24

**II. Obedience, Grace and More Grace (57b-58)**

- A. I have said I would keep Your words
  
- B. I have sought Your face with all my heart  
Zech. 8:21-22
  
- C. Give me grace according to Your Word
  - 1. Show me favor, be gracious  
(Cf. 132) Ex. 33:19
  
  - 2. According to Your Word (utterance)  
Num 6:25; Isa 30:18-19

**III. Confession, Repentance and Obedience (59-60)**

- A. I considered my ways
  
- B. And turned my feet to Your testimonies

*He determined to make the word of God his rule, and to walk by that rule. He turned from the by-paths to which he had turned aside, and returned to God's testimonies. He turned not only his eye to them, but his feet, his affections to the love of God's word and his conversation to the practice of it (MH)*

- C. I hastened and did not delay

*When we are under convictions of sin we must strike while the iron is hot, and not think to defer the prosecution of them (MH)*

**IV. Rejoicing while Persecuted (61-62)**

- A. The cords of the wicked
  
- B. I have not neglected Your Torah
  
- C. Rising at midnight to give thanks

**V. Godly Companions (63)**

- A. I am a companion of all those who fear You  
And those who keep Your precepts  
Psa 1; 1 Cor. 15:33  
Prov. 28:24
  
- B. Daniel's friendships

**VI. The Lord's *Hesed* fills the earth (64)**

Bookends – Inheritance and *hesed*

- A. God's lovingkindness is better than life  
Psa. 63:3
  
- B. Once again, teach me Your torah!

“Out of the fullness of the loving-kindness of God, which is nowhere unattested upon the earth, he implores for himself the inward teaching concerning His Word as the highest and most cherished mercies” (Delitzsch, 251).



**Exposition of Psalm 119**  
**Teth (j) Stanza (65-72)**  
**God is Good and Does Good**

**I. God's Goodness in the School of Affliction (65-67)**

- A. God's goodness in restoring his child (65)
  
  
  
- B. Prayer to learn good discernment and knowledge (66)
  
  
  
- C. Confession of the benefits of God's discipline (67)

**II. God's Goodness in His Person and Actions (68-70)**

- A. God is good and does good (68)
  
  
  
  
  
- B. The heart of the arrogant and the humbled (69-70)  
An ABA<sup>1</sup>B<sup>1</sup> chiasm –
  - 1. The arrogant
  
  
  - 2. The Psalmist (humbled)

**III. Reflections on God's Goodness in Affliction (71-72)**

- A. A benefit of God's goodness in affliction (71)
  
  
  
  
  
- B. Another benefit of God's goodness in affliction (72)

## **Conclusion**

1. The Psalmist is reflective. His mood is retrospective.
2. His focus is not merely on his afflictions, but what God taught him in his afflictions.
3. This stanza points to the NT teaching of Rom. 5:3-5; Jas. 1:2-4; Heb. 12:5-11.  
  
“Our good and gracious God skillfully but lovingly employs affliction and adversity, pressure and pain, trials and tribulations, as crucial instruments in His process of maturing those who belong to Him” (Zemek, 182).
4. Can we say this about our own afflictions?

**Exposition of Psalm 119**  
**Yodh (y) Stanza (73-80)**  
**Suffering Serves the Saints**

**I. This is what I was made for (73)**

A. Your hands have made and fashioned me

B. Give me understanding that I may learn Your commandments

“What you are willing to do decides what you are willing and able to see”  
“If we are not prepared to do it, we will never let ourselves understand it.”  
(John Goldingay)

**II. Let Me Be a Visual Testimony (74-75)**

A. Those who fear You shall see me

B. Because I have hoped in Your Word

C. I know Your judgments are righteous

D. I know in faithfulness You afflicted me

“This disciple was not so utterly preoccupied with his personal problems that he thought of no one but himself” (Zemek).

**III. Your Grace is Sufficient for Me (76-77)**

A. Let Your lovingkindness comfort me

B. According to the promise to Your servant  
Isa. 49:13; 66:13

C. Let Your mercy come to me, that I may live

D. For Your Law is my delight

**IV. Take Care of the Insolent Liars (78)**

A. Put the insolent liars to shame

- B. I will mediate on Your precepts
- V. Let Me Be a Verbal Testimony (79)**
- A. May those who fear You turn to me
  - B. Even those who know Your testimonies
- VI. Help Me Live Above Reproach (80)**
- A. May my heart be blameless
  
  - B. That I may not be put to shame

*I'm in the plan  
I know where I stand*

*And I will lift my voice  
I will lift my hands  
I will lift my heart to the Great I Am  
I will share His Name  
I will sing His praise  
There is nothing more  
For this is, this is what I was made for  
(Considering Lily)*

**Exposition of Psalm 119**  
**Kaf (כ) Stanza (81-88)**  
**Facing the Breaking Point**

**I. My Soul and My Eyes are at their Breaking Point (81-82)**

“Rather than hearing the psalmist cry, ‘I... I... I...’ we encounter more arresting, but yet spontaneous designations of himself as ‘my soul’ and ‘my eyes’” (Zemek, 209).

A. My soul is spent regarding your salvation (81a)

B. For Your Word I wait (81b)

C. My eyes are spent regarding Your Word (82a)

Lam. 2:11 -

Psa. 69:3 -

D. When will You comfort me? (82b)

**II. Judge Soon before I Break (83-84)**

A. I have become like a wineskin in smoke (83a)

B. Yet I do not forget Your statutes (83b)

C. How long must I endure? (84a)  
OR, How many are the days of Thy servant?

D. When will you judge my persecutors? (84b)

**III. Hunted and Pursued to the Breaking Point (85-86)**

A. The arrogant hunt me (85)

B. Your Word is reliable and true (86a)

C. They persecute me, help me! (86b)

**IV. Almost Broken, but Not Destroyed (87-88)**

A. They almost destroyed me (87a)

B. But I did not abandon Your Word

C. Revive me so that I obey Your Word (88)

**Conclusion**

**Exposition of Psalm 119**  
**Lamed (1) Stanza (89-96)**  
***How Firm a Foundation!***

**I. The Firm Foundation (89-91)**

A. The Word forever stands in heaven (89)

B. God's faithfulness endures (90)

C. God's Word is sovereign over all (91)

**II. The Word is our Delight and our Life (92-93)**

A. Delighting in the Word (92)

“Joy in this ever-sure, all-conditioning Word has upheld the poet in his affliction” (Delitzsch, 255).

B. Revived by the Word (93)

**III. Salvation and Destruction (94-95)**

A. I am Yours, save me (94)

B. The wicked wait to destroy me (95)

**IV. The Perfection of the Word (96)**

A. I have seen a limit to all perfection

B. But Your commandment is without limit

**Exposition of Psalm 119**  
**Mem (m) Stanza (97-105)**  
**Loving the Sweetness of the Word**

- I. Declaration of Love and Dedication to the Law (97)
  - A. Love to the Law
  
  - B. Dedication to the Law
  
- II. The Word's Comparative Power (98-100)
  - A. Wiser than my enemies (98)
  
  - B. More insight than my teachers (99)
  
  - C. I understand more than the aged (100)
  
- III. The Word's Sanctifying Power (101-102)
  - A. Restraining my feet (101)
  
  - B. Keeping my feet (102)
  
- IV. Tasting the Word's Sweetness (103)
  - A. How sweet are Your Words to my taste
  
  - B. Sweeter than honey to my mouth
  
- V. Tasting the Word's Repulsing Power (104)
  - A. Understanding from the Word
  
  - B. Word inspired loathing

Conclusion



**Exposition of Psalm 119**  
**Nun (n) Stanza (105-112)**  
**Thy Word is a Lamp unto My Feet**

**Intro**

**I. Guidance from and Obedience to the Word (105-106)**

A. The Word is a Lamp and a Light (105)

Prov 6:23

Psa 27:1

Jn 8:12

*The pathway to a life of obedience born of hope is ultimately not something we follow but someone we encounter. Only knowing God Himself as He is revealed in His Word can create the kind of hope in His promises that brings about obedience to His will. (Scott Hafemann, The God of Promise and the Life of Faith, 184)*

2 Pet. 1:19

B. Determined obedience (106)

Deut. 21:21-23

**II. Afflicted Yet Praising and Learning Still (107-108)**

A. Exceedingly afflicted (107)

B. Accept my praise and teach me (108)

“All high flights of human responsibility depart from and return to the refuge of Divine resource” (Zemek, 251).

**III. At Risk but Undaunted (109-110)**

A. My life is continually in my hand (109a)

Though I constantly take my life in my hands (Psa 119:109 NIV)

1 Sam. 19:5; 28:21

B. The wicked have laid a snare for me (110a)

C. I do not forget, I have not strayed (109b, 110b)

**IV. Joy from and Obedience to the Word (111-112)**

A. My eternal inheritance (111)

B. I have inclined my heart to obey (112)

**Conclusion**

*The pathway to a life of obedience born of hope is ultimately not something we follow but someone we encounter. Only knowing God Himself as He is revealed in His Word can create the kind of hope in His promises that brings about obedience to His will.*  
(Hafemann, 184)

**Exposition of Psalm 119**  
**Samek (s) Stanza (113-120)**  
**Holy Hatred and the Fear of God**

1. Is there a place for anger and even hatred among God's people?
2. How do we square it with the teaching of Jesus to love our enemies?
3. Is there anything for us to learn from these expressions of holy hatred and righteous anger?

**I. The Dedicated versus the Divided (113-115)**

- A. Hate and Love (113)
  
- B. My Hiding Place (114)
  
- C. Depart, evildoers, so I can obey (115)

**II. Sustain Me and Uphold Me (116-117)**

- A. Sustain and not unashamed (116)
  
- B. Upheld and Devoted (117)

**III. Rejected and Removed (118-119)**

- A. You have rejected the wanderers (118)
  
- B. You have removed the wicked (119)

"I see what comes of sin; *therefore I love thy testimonies*, which warn me to take heed of those dangerous courses and *keep me from the paths of the destroyer.*" We see the word of Go fulfilled in his judgments on sin and sinners, and therefore we should love it" (Matthew Henry)

**IV. My Flesh Trembles for Fear of You (120)**

- A. Bristling flesh
  
- B. Afraid Your judgments

## Conclusion

1. Should we be angry and hate?
  - A. “No. The Psalms are sub-Christian.”
  - B. “No. We should hate the sin, but love the sinner.”
  - C. Yes, but with much caution and humble suspicion.
2. The Psalmist provides a model of righteous anger
3. Such holy hatred is a reflection and imitation of God Himself.  
To love God is to hate evil. To hate evil is to align oneself with God.
4. How does this square with Matt. 5:43?
5. To love God and His Word demands that we are not morally indifferent to evildoers and divided. To be sympathetic to those who are disloyal to God is to place the person above God.
6. In this Psalm, the Psalmist is not ultimately preoccupied with the wicked, he is preoccupied with God. God is His hiding place and shield; God sustains and upholds. When God does judge, the Psalmist doesn't click his heels, he trembles.

Robert Jones, *Uprooting Anger*  
D.A. Carson, *Love in Hard Places*

**Exposition of Psalm 119**  
**Ayin (י) Stanza (121-128)**  
**Guarantee Your Servant's Well-Being**

**I. Deliverance from his oppressors (121-122)**

- A. Justice and righteousness
  
- B. Do not leave me to my oppressors
  
- C. Be surety for Your servant
  
- D. Do not let the arrogant oppress me

**II. Yahweh's covenant faithfulness to His servant (123-124)**

- A. My eyes grow weary
  
- B. Do loyal love and teach statutes

**III. Yahweh's commitment to educate His servant (125)**

- A. Give me understanding
  
- B. So that I may know Your decrees

“Irrespective of conditions, however, to be taught the Word of God by the God of the Word should be every disciple's perennial desire.” Zemek

**IV. A call to Yahweh to act (126-128)**

- A. A time to act
  
- B. Love and obedience to the Word

**Exposition of Psalm 119**  
**Pe (p) Stanza (129-136)**  
**A Word and Prayer Mosaic**

- I. Wonderful Light and Longing (129-131)
  - A. Your testimonies are wonderful (129)

*The word of God gives us admirable discoveries of God, and Christ, and another world; admirable proofs of divine love and grace. The majesty of the style, the purity of the matter, the harmony of the parts, are all wonderful. Its effects upon the consciences of men, both for conviction and comfort, are wonderful; and it is a sign that we are not acquainted with God's testimonies, or do not understand them, if we do not admire them. Matthew Henry*

- B. The unfolding of Your words gives light (130)
    - C. I opened my mouth wide and panted (131)
- II. Petitions (132-135)
  - A. Turn and be gracious (132)
  - B. Establish my footsteps in Your Word (133a)
  - C. Do not let iniquity have dominion over me (133b)
  - D. Redeem me from oppression (134)

E. Make Your face shine on me (135a)

F. Teach me Your statutes (135b)

III. Grief (136)

A. My eyes shed streams of water

B. Because they do not keep Your law

*Commonly, where there is a gracious heart, there is a weeping eye, in conformity to Christ, who was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. (Matthew Henry)*

**Exposition of Psalm 119**  
**Tsade (צ) Stanza (137-144)**  
**The Righteousness of God and His Word**

**I. Righteous God, Righteous Words (137-138)**

- A. Righteous are You, O Yahweh (137a)  
Righteousness is an active, dynamic attribute, not just a static characteristic. Being and action (JF)  
Being: Deut. 32:4; Ezra 9:15; Psa 145:17  
Deeds: Gen. 18:25; Psa. 119:137; Rev. 15:3-4  
God's distributive justice is remunerative and retributive.
- B. Righteous are Your Word (137b, 138)  
And right are Your rules//Just are Your judgments (137b)  
Testimonies issued in righteousness and faithfulness (138)

**II. Interruption Cycle One (139-140)**

- Complaint/affirmation pattern
- A. My zeal consumes me (139)
- B. Your promise is tried and true (140)

**III. Interruption Cycle Two (141-142)**

- A. I am young and despised (141)
- B. Your righteousness is righteous forever (142)

**IV. Interruption Cycle Three (143-144)**

- A. Trouble and anguish have found me (143)
- B. Your testimonies are righteous forever (144)



**Exposition of Psalm 119**  
**Kof (q) Stanza (145-152)**  
**Crying to God with All our Heart**

“He who has been with God in the closet will find God with him in the furnace” (CHS, 401).

“The mood of relative tranquility is displaced by one of significant turmoil... Within Qof the first six verses are saturated with pleas and complaints” (Zemek, 325).

**I. I cried with all my heart (145-146)**

- A.<sup>1</sup> I cried with all my heart
- B.<sup>2</sup> Answer me, O Yahweh
- C.<sup>3</sup> That I may observe Your statutes
- D.<sup>1</sup> I cried out to You
- E.<sup>2</sup> Deliver me
- F.<sup>3</sup> So that I can keep your decrees

**II. Prayer and the Word in the Night (147-148)**

- A.<sup>1</sup> I rise before dawn, crying for help (147a)
- B.<sup>2</sup> I wait for Your Words (147b)  
Psa 130:5-6
- C.<sup>1</sup> My eyes anticipate the night watches (148a)  
My eyes are awake before the watches of the night,  
(ESV)
- D.<sup>2</sup> That I may meditate on Your Word (148b)

“He who is diligent in prayer will never be destitute of hope. Observe that as the early bird gets the worm, so the early prayer is soon refreshed with hope” (CHS, 402).

**III. The “According tos” of Crying to God (149)**

- A. Hear my voice according to Your lovingkindness (a)
- B. Revive me according to Your ordinances (b)

**IV. The Bigger Facts (150-152)**

- A. The wicked are near (150)
- B. Yahweh is near (151a)

Near to save (34:19; 145:18)

Kidner, “The threat is not glossed over; it is put in perspective by the bigger fact.”

- C. His Word is true and established (151b-152)

**Exposition of Psalm 119**  
**Resh (ר) Stanza (153-160)**  
**Jehovah Jireh**

Delitzsch, “The nearer it draws towards its end the more importunate does the Psalm become.”

Zemek, “The intense cries for help in verses 145-152 continue to echo with renewed amplification in the Resh stanza.”

**I. The Emotional Cycle (153-154)**

- A. See and Rescue (153)
  
- B. Defend and Redeem (154)

**II. The Theological Cycle (155-158)**

- A. The wicked and their salvation (155)
  
- B. Great compassions and revive me (156)
  
- C. The wicked and my salvation (157)
  
- D. The wicked and my response (158)

**III. The Balanced Cycle (159-160)**

- A. See me and revive me (159)
  
- B. Eternal truth (160)

**Exposition of Psalm 119**  
**Shin/Sin (v ֶ) Stanza (161-168)**  
**Celebrating the Great Spoils of the Word**

<b>Parallelisms</b>	<b>Words for the Word</b>	<b>Words of emotion</b>
161 – contrast	Your words	Awe/fear
162 – comparison	Your Word/promise	Rejoice
163 – contrast	Your Law	Hate, despise, love
164 – causal	Your righteous ordinances	Praise
165 – coordinate	Your Law	Love, peace
166 – coordinate	Your commandments	Hope
167 – coordinate	Your testimonies	Love exceedingly
168 – causal	Your precepts and Your testimonies	

**I. Celebrating the Spoils of the Word (161-164)**

- A. Awe (161)
- B. Miserly joy (162)
- C. Holy hatred and love (163)
- D. Full-orbed praise (164)

**II. Prescription for Great Shalom (165)**

- A. Those who love Your Law have great peace
- B. And nothing causes them to stumble

### **III. Practicing His Presence (166-168)**

#### **A. I hope and do (166)**

*God's actions of provision in the past lead to trust and hope in Him for the future, which in turn brings about obedience in the present. (168).*

#### **B. My soul keeps and loves (167)**

#### **C. I keep Your precept and Your testimonies (168) For all my ways are before You**

**Exposition of Psalm 119**  
**Tav (ט) Stanza (169-176)**  
**Pleas for Praise and Preservation**

George Zemek, “Indeed, this high flight of inscripturated poetry touches down with a most magnificent landing.”

**I. Abba Father Give Me Grace<sup>1</sup> (169-170)**

A. My resounding cry

B. Prayer for grace

**II. My Mouth Shall Praise Accord<sup>2</sup> (171-172)**

A. Lips gush praise

B. Tongue sings of Your Word

**III. Upheld By Thy Righteous, Omnipotent Hand<sup>3</sup> (173-174)**

A. Let Your hand be present

B. Three reasons

**IV. I'll Praise Him While I Live<sup>4</sup> (175)**

A. Let my soul live

B. Let Your ordinances help

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<sup>1</sup> To Thy Temple I Repair, James Montgomery

<sup>2</sup> God Be Merciful to Me, Richard Rehead

<sup>3</sup> How Firm a Foundation, uncertain

<sup>4</sup> I'll Praise Him While I Live, Fanny Crosby

**V. I Was a Wandering Sheep<sup>5</sup> (176)**

A. I have gone astray like a lost sheep

1. This is puzzling to many commentators (cf. 110)
2. This is not apostasy – this is true humility  
“This man would have taken his stance not the self-congratulating Pharisee of the parable, but with the publican who stood afar off, but went home justified.”  
(Kidner)
3. He makes himself small.

B. Seek Your servant

a’Brakel, The godly always think they are regressing

C. For I do not forget Your commandments  
Rom. 7:21-23

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<sup>5</sup> I Was a Wandering Sheep, Horatius Bonar