

SBC – Sept. 27, 2026

Psalm 119:17-32 (NKJV)

“Open My Eyes to Behold Wonderful Things”

Psalm 119 is the longest chapter in the Bible. It has as its theme the Word of God. In the NKJV it is mentioned in one fashion or another in all but 4 verses.

These are some of the key words used in reference to the Word of God.

Slide # 1

- **Law:** (torah) used 25 times = Commands
- **Testimonies:** (eduth) used 23 times = truths in keeping with God’s character
- **Precepts** (piqqudim) used 21 times = divine instructions
- **Statutes** (huqqim) used 21 times = fixed decrees
- **Commandments** (mitzvah) used 22 times = divine directives
- **Judgments** (mishpat) used 19 times = judicial edicts
- **Word** (dabar) used 25 times = the spoken Word

The 176 verses in the Psalm are divided up as an acrostic corresponding to the 22 letters of the Hebrew Alphabet. Eight verses are devoted to each letter in which those verse all start with the same letter. Tonight we are considering the 3 and 4 letters in the Hebrew Alphabet, namely the letter Gimel (the 3rd letter) and the letter Daleth (the 4th letter).

Slide # 2

Psalm 119:17-32

“Open My Eyes to Behold Wonderful Things”

Gimel

- vv. 17-24 God’s Word as a Source of Comfort

Daleth

- vv. 25-32 God’s Word as a Source of Strength

Psalm 119:17–32 (NKJV)

17 Deal bountifully with Your servant, That I may live and keep Your word.

The writer knows that He serves a GREAT and FAITHFUL God, and so he asks BIG! The request to deal bountifully means to deal generously or abundantly. He is asking for a lot – for great things from His great God.

It is good in all our asking to realize that with God all things are possible.

Slide # 3

Ephesians 3:20 (NKJV)

20 Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us,

Whatever you ask, He is able to do far more! But as James says it is important that we ask in a way that is not amiss (Ja. 4:3), and as Jesus said, “in My name”, and as John says, “anything according to His will (1 Jn. 5:14-15). But with that in place, it is appropriate to ask BIG!

And note that the Psalmist here asks humbly as God’s “servant.”

And he does not ask selfishly. He asks to the end that he may live and keep God’s word. That is a very God-glorifying prayer.

Evidently he was in a life-threatening situation, and he is asking for God to intervene in a BIG way to the end that he might live out God’s word. I think God is pleased to answer this type of request.

18 Open my eyes, that I may see Wondrous things from Your law.

This is one of the standout verses in Psalm 119. What a great prayer. Every time we open our Bibles, this would be appropriate to pray. He is asking God for enlightenment to see wonderful things from the Law (God’s word).

The adjective “wondrous” is often applied to God’s mighty miracles in Egypt and other places. – **Henry Morris**

The Bible reveals God’s wondrous supernatural workings in a life-changing way.

The psalmist didn't need new revelation; he needed to see the revelation that was already given. ... There are **wondrous things** in Scripture; but they can only be seen when the eyes are opened by God. This means that *prayer* is an important (and often neglected) part of Bible study. – **David Guzik**

19 I am a stranger in the earth; Do not hide Your commandments from me.

As a stranger on earth, the writer realizes he is just passing through, and this is not his home. Therefore, he seeks enlightenment in keeping with guidance from the divine homeland.

“If you are trying to follow God, the world is going to treat you as an alien, for that is what you will be. You cannot expect to be at home in it, and if you are, well, it is an indication that you really do not belong to Christ or at least are living far from him.”

– **James Montgomery Boice**

20 My soul breaks with longing For Your judgments at all times.

This ties with being a foreigner in a strange land. It is not easy living here.

The word translated **breaks** means “wears down.” The psalmist is being worn away little by little rather than crushed by a single blow.

– **David Jeremiah**

Living here wears on your soul. It's like when it says Lot's soul was tormented from day to day in living in the midst of a depraved society (2 Pet. 2:8). In 1st Peter 2:11, Peter speaks of fleshy lusts which war against the soul. These things wear on the soul, causing the believer to long for God's judicial intervention.

And that day will come; it's just a matter of timing. The writer knows this in principle, for he says...

21 You rebuke the proud—the cursed, Who stray from Your commandments.

Take note of what happened to Cain, Pharaoh, Haman, Nebuchadnezzar, and Herod. The record is long and clear that God indeed rebukes the proud – the cursed who stray from His commandments.

It eventually catches up with them.

22 Remove from me reproach and contempt, For I have kept Your testimonies.

The writer has sought to faithfully keep God's testimonies, that is, His truth in keeping with His character.

The Hebrew word translated testimonies is derived from the Hebrew verb meaning "to witness" or "to testify." It refers to the Ten Commandments called the "two tablets of the Testimony (Ex. 31:18). The commandments were a testimony because they were a witness to the Israelites of their faithfulness or unfaithfulness to the covenant (Deut. 31:26). – ***Nelson Study Bible***

Because of his faithfulness to God's commands, he is now asking God to honor this and remove the reproach and contempt he is experiencing.

Reproach is the idea of disapproval, disappointment, or blame. Contempt is even stronger, having no regard for someone – considering them worthless or useless.

We are not told WHY this stigma of reproach and contempt was hanging over him, but he is asking God to remove it.

23 Princes also sit and speak against me, But Your servant meditates on Your statutes.

Even those in the highest positions or royalty speak against him.

Slander goes with our "stranger" status. The world thinks we are strange and recognizes we don't belong. And so they slander us, telling lies about us and falsely accusing us.

What is his response? Note the word "But". In contrast to their slander, he, as God's servant, meditates on God's statutes (His decrees), what God has sovereignly determined. He puts His focus on God's Word.

Whatever the power players are doing, focus on the Word! Put your mind on God. That is what the psalmist did! That is the place of refuge and comfort.

24 Your testimonies also are my delight And my counselors.

The psalmist delighted and trusted in God's word much more than in the high people of this earth (such as princes). – **David Guzik**

God's testimonies (His commands that testify of His character) are His delight. And they serve as his counselors.

There is no better counselor than God's Word.

The chief means of biblical counseling is the application of God's Word by God's Spirit to the heart of a believer. – **John MacArthur**

It is like stating the obvious to say that the main basis for biblical counseling is the Bible. Those in the best position to counsel biblically are those who know the Bible well.

One of the titles for the Messiah is "Wonderful Counselor," as seen in Isaiah 9:6. God rebukes His people as being sinful rebels when, instead of looking to God, they looked to other worldly sources of counsel.

Slide # 4

Isaiah 30:1 (NKJV)

1 "Woe to the rebellious children," says the LORD, "Who take counsel, but not of Me, And who devise plans, but not of My Spirit, That they may add sin to sin;

There is this human tendency to want to look to other sources for spiritual counsel instead of to God. When it comes to life and godliness the Word of God is totally sufficient.

Slide # 5

2 Peter 1:3–4 (NKJV)

3 as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue,

4 by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

The other great text on the sufficiency of Scripture is found in 2 Timothy.

Slide # 6

2 Timothy 3:15–17 (NKJV)

15 and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise through faith which is in Christ Jesus. **for salvation**

16 All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, **17** that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped **for every good work.**

For salvation and for every good work -that is total sufficiency! The counselors called the truths of Scripture are adequate. In the harshness of life, let the Word be your counselor.

Of course, God uses people, but He uses people who know Him and His Word. The Word is primary in helping people with all matters of sin, salvation, and sanctification.

25 My soul clings to the dust; Revive me according to Your word.

He is really down! The dust is a low place, near to death. And in that place, he asks God to revive him according to His word.

It is God's Word that He uses to revive His people who are down for the count (so to speak). There we find promises, strength, and encouragement to go on.

Slide # 7

Acts 20:32 (NKJV)

32 "So now, brethren, I commend you to God and to **the word of His grace, which is able to build you up** and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified.

26 I have declared my ways, and You answered me; Teach me Your statutes.

The idea behind **I have declared my ways** is that the psalmist told God *everything* about himself and his life. He confessed fully and freely before God. – **David Guzik**

“We should look over each day, and sum up the errors of the day, and say, ‘I have declared my ways,’ – my naughty ways, my wicked ways, my wandering ways, my backsliding ways, my cold, indifferent ways, my proud ways.” – **Charles Spurgeon**

“I have declared my ways” is the sense of open confession. He is very transparent with God. When the Bible says, “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive,” the idea of confession is “to agree with God” concerning our sin. We admit it! We declare it. We name it!

Slide # 8

Psalm 32:3–5 (NKJV)

3 When I kept silent, my bones grew old Through my groaning all the day long.

4 For day and night Your hand was heavy upon me; My vitality was turned into the drought of summer. Selah

5 I acknowledged my sin to You, And my iniquity I have not hidden. I said, “I will confess my transgressions to the LORD,” And You forgave the iniquity of my sin. Selah

Confession frees the soul, and it takes the wind out of the devil’s sails.

Upon getting right through confession, the writer’s testimony is that God answered him. And now he wants God to further teach him His statutes.

27 Make me understand the way of Your precepts; So shall I meditate on Your wonderful works.

In the restoration process, the psalmist wants to know more of God’s ways, which is key to growth and staying on track. So he says, he shall meditate on God’s wonderful works. Meditation on the Lord and His works guards our steps.

28 My soul melts from heaviness; Strengthen me according to Your word.

In verse 20, his soul breaks; in verse 28, his soul melts from heaviness. The difficulties of life were weighing him down. And so again he asks that the word would strengthen him.

Slide # 9

v. 25 “Revive me according to Your word.

v. 28 Strengthen me according to Your word.

The psalmist knows the secret to getting back on his feet is the Word! And so he prays accordingly.

If you need to be revived spiritually, if you need to be strengthened, ask God, but more specifically, ask God to revive and strengthen you through His Word. That is a very specific request. And then open your Bible and let God work.

29 Remove from me the way of lying, And grant me Your law graciously.

Being human, the temptation to lie can still be a challenge in all sorts of ways. The writer asks for God to help him be a consistent “truth-teller.” You say, I am above it.

The most natural thing in the world is for people to lie.

Slide # 10

Numbers 23:19 (NKJV)

19 “God is not a man, that He should lie...

Jeremiah 17:9 (NKJV)

9 “The heart is deceitful above all things, And desperately wicked; Who can know it?

We don’t even know the depth of our lying hearts. For those honest to God this is a great prayer. Even David, a man after God’s own heart, in the pressures of life caved to the pressure of lying.

The sense of “***grant me Your law graciously***” is better stated as “***graciously teach me Your law.***”

The full thought is, If we are to be kept from sin, it must be by the grace of God exercised through the teaching of his Word.”

– **James Montgomery Boice**

30 I have chosen the way of truth; Your judgments I have laid before me.

To go in the way of truth (versus lying) involves a definite CHOICE!

“Men do not drop into the right way by chance; they must choose it, and continue to choose it, or they will soon wander from it.”

- **Charles Spurgeon**

And involved in this choice were the judgments of God, the rulings of God that govern life.

31 I cling to Your testimonies; O LORD, do not put me to shame!

Slide # 11

v. 25 “My soul clings to the dust...”

v. 31 “I cling to Your testimonies...”

When you can’t get any lower, cling to the Word of God like a drowning man clings to a floating plank.

And as he clings to the testimonies of God, he pleads for God to not let him be put to shame. He is desperately looking to God to bring him through this.

And in the fit of desperate prayer, he is revived and confidently asserts...

32 I will run the course of Your commandments, For You shall enlarge my heart.

He realizes that it is God who is going to make this happen. He is confidently dependent upon God to enlarge his heart, making it possible for him to run the course of God’s commandments – which is a way of saying that God will help him to walk in obedience as a way of life.

It is when God gives us big hearts, not big heads, that we hasten to keep His commandments. It is more a matter of affections than of the intellect. -**William MacDonald**

In saying this he once again emphasizes these themes:

The faithfulness of God to work.
 It's all about the Word.
 His dependence upon God.

After beginning low in the dust, now the psalmist is *running*. He has moved in a beautiful progression, from confessing to choosing to clinging to running. – **David Guzik**

It is amazing how God works in regard to His Word. He providentially shows us just what we need just when we need it. He shows us wondrous things! He providentially works in life in relation to His word. So often just what we need in life is what the Spirit brings out in the study. It constantly bestows on us wondrous things in terms of comfort and strength. And sometimes the wonders are breathtaking to behold.

George Wishart was the Bishop of Edinburgh in the 17th century. Wishart was condemned to death for his faith. But when he was on the scaffold, he made use of a custom that allowed the condemned person to choose one psalm to be sung, and he chose [Psalm 119](#). Before two-thirds of the psalm had been sung, his pardon arrived, and his life was spared. (As told by David Guzik)

Talk about a wondrous work in relation to the Word. It actually happened!

Let us continually pray: “**Open my eyes, that I may see wondrous things from Your Word.**”

And then see awesome God things that cause you to worship!