

SENIOR BIBLE FELLOWSHIP ASSIGNMENT: OCTOBER 28, 2025

We are off and going! I hope you are as excited as I am.

Like Psalm 119, our journey will be long and if we rid ourselves of our biases and preconceived thoughts, of how the journey should go or end, God will reveal more and more of his character to us.

If you are wondering why we are looking at Psalm 119 in great detail... I too would have voice a similar thought before. Why take this poem apart? Why not just read it and let your thoughts wander? Being self-involved, I tend to spin facts to make me look good. Folks is a dangerous place to be, and the man who wrote Psalm 119 "gets it". So, inspired by the Holy Spirit he writes this poem about one main topic... all 176 verses on God's word. If you just read or skim through it, it will seem repetitive and somewhat boring. However, the person who meditates on it, verse by verse, will come away with the Holy Spirit's leading a person with God's word in their heart.

The psalmist was a godly man. Many believe it was David, but since it's not recorded in Scripture, we cannot say for sure... I don't think it really matters. All the commentaries I've studied say that the more you dive into this most wonderful of psalms, the more you will get out of it. This is the core of our journey. It's not to be a study for knowledge sake, but to understand the relationship between a godly man and God. A relationship which God will use to grow our relationship with him.

As I study Psalm 119, I am overwhelmed! But, like any journey, I am resolved to take it one step at a time, trusting God will lead us to the right place.

ASSIGNMENT:

So far we've looked at the first 8 verses of Psalm 119... the stanza called "Aleph". Here's my quick summary on this stanza:

Psalm 119:1 – 8, Aleph, "The blessedness of those who walk in God's word and the longing to do so."

Verses 1-2: Blessing is declared

Verse 3: Blessing is described

Verses 4-8: The Blessing is desired (longing)

For this assignment we will be looking at Psalm 119:9 – 16, Beth.

Before we dive into Question 1, I'm going to introduce a concept which you may have already noticed about Psalms. Psalms are written as poetry... specifically Hebrew Poetry. Is this important?

The short answer is yes, and here are some reasons why:

1. 2Tim 3:16 – 17: "All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be

complete, equipped for every good work". God inspired men to write poetry to teach, reproof, correct, and train us in righteousness.

2. The Old Testament is full of Hebrew poetry... all of Psalms, most of Proverbs, and it's included in Job, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, Lamentations, the Prophets, Genesis, Exodus, Deuteronomy, and the historical books.

3. It helps a person memorize Scripture.

4. It is a basic principle of hermeneutics (theory and methodology of interpretation), where you interpret scripture by scripture.

5. Poetry, especially the Psalms is a medium which shows us that a person's relationship with God is not all about facts and data. God ultimately molds our heart to love. The Psalms is a place where we know that God can deal with our emotional highs and lows.

Hebrew poetry is different from traditional English poetry. English poetry uses meter/rhythm: rhyming, alliteration, and assonance (vowels/consonant sounds repeat). Hebrew poetry has rhythms too, but they depend not on sound, but on symmetry and variation determined by emotion and sentiment. The hearer needs to understand the author's meaning and emotional impact to make sense out of the poem.

One of the main tools of Hebrew poetry is repetition, which is also called parallelism. So, Hebrew parallelism is equivalent to English rhyme. An example of Hebrew parallelism is:

"O God, do not keep silence; do not hold your peace or be still, O God!" (Psalm 83:1)

In this verse, the psalmist is using parallelism three times. He is asking God: not to keep silent, not to hold his peace, not to be still. If you read the rest of Psalm 83, the first verse makes perfect sense in the psalmist desire for God to unleash his wrath on the bad guys. The parallelism helps me "hear" the psalmist's voice get louder and louder as he talks to God... he is hopping mad.

Understanding Parallelism in Psalms is of utmost importance. It will open up passages which previously seemed repetitive and boring to interesting and insightful. With that, let's go to our questions.

QUESTIONS:

1. Now that you are experts in Hebrew poetry, let's try out your new found knowledge. The psalmist uses parallelism between the Aleph and Beth. Take a look at Psalm 119:1 and Psalm 119:9.

- Do you see the parallelism between verses 1 and 9? What does the combination of verses reveal that each one separately does not?

- Does the parallelism between verse 1 and 9, help you understand the verses better?

2. The psalmist begins the Beth stanza talking about a “young man”. Notice the point of view is in the 3rd person in verse 9. I believe the psalmist is past his youthful prime and now is a mature man. He, like Solomon wants to impart wisdom to young people. Solomon wrote a lot of the Proverbs, which are seen as practical wisdom.

Proverb 1:4, “to give prudence to the simple, knowledge and discretion to the youth” is a good example of dispensing wisdom to the youth.

- This mature psalmist would like to impart wisdom to men who are young, however this Psalm is applicable to both mature and young. Why do you think the psalmist starts his psalm with a section aimed at young people?

- Assuming you would listen to yourself, what are some kernels of wisdom would you give to your young self?

- Do you believe your faith walk now is stronger now than when you were young? What are some things which stand out to you?