

SENIOR BIBLE FELLOWSHIP ASSIGNMENT: JANUARY 13, 2026

Happy New Year!

I trust that you have recovered from all holiday meal food comas. Since I'm still munching on holiday cookies, my waistline is telling me that I should stop munching or extend my walks.

Let's start the New Year by diving back into God's word. There is a lot to be thankful for and giving God the glory is a good way to walk on the path of righteousness. We will continue with Psalm 119 as I feel we are just beginning to mine its treasures. If you are like me, I lost a little momentum in Psalm 119, so here's a short refresher on this wonderful Psalm.

PSALM 119 REFRESHER:

In a nutshell Psalm 119 is on the Word of God. Almost all of the 176 verses of Psalm 119 contains "the word of God": law, word, promises, judgements, testimonies, decrees, commandments, statutes, precepts. If these words were just a list, the Psalm would be pretty short, and if I may say... boring. However, God chose this psalmist to skillfully live out God's word and inspired him to write them for our sanctification. The word of God is central to the life of God's people. Our God is a God who speaks and it is the possession of that verbal revelation which marks his people off from all other on earth.

Psalm 119 is an acrostic poem which is divided into 22 stanzas, each beginning with a letter of the Hebrew alphabet. We've looked at the first 2 stanzas: Aleph and Beth. Next is the stanza called Gimel.

Psalm 119, like most psalms are Hebrew poetry. Like English poetry, the poem is to be taken as a whole. If you remove a line, or sometimes just a word, the poem becomes incomplete. English poetry uses rhyme, but Hebrew poetry uses ideas or thoughts to tie the poem together. We were introduced to the concept of "parallelism" where words/thoughts are repeated throughout the poem to grow in richness. These can occur in the same verse, same stanza, or in subsequent stanzas.

The first stanza, Aleph (119:1 – 8), declared what it is to be blessed, different ways to describe blessing, and to show the psalmist's longing for God's blessing.

The second stanza, Beth (119: 9 – 16), spoke of the way a young man could keep his way pure, the psalmist's pray to keep God's word and not sin, a prayer for God's help, and declares his commitment to meditate and delight in God's word.

LESSON:

The lesson for January 13th will be on the first 4 verses of Gimel, Psalm 119:17 – 20.

Psalm 119:17, 18, 19, 20

17 Deal bountifully with your servant, that I may live and keep your word.

18 Open my eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of your law.

19 I am a sojourner on the earth; hide not your commandments from me!

20 My soul is consumed with longing for your rules at all times.

For this session, I'd like to allow you to use all your mind, heart, soul, and experiences and share whatever comes to mind as you read these verses. Remember that the psalm is a sum of all the parts. How would you feel if you were reading a book and came across a missing page. Although the individual verses can have meaning, when taken in the context of the whole psalm adds a richness which God wants us to see. Here are some hints to think about as you meditate on these verses:

HINTS:

- Psalm 119 is about God's Word and how we use them in our faith walk.
- Psalm 119 is an acrostic poem.
- The psalmist uses the technique of "parallelism". This helps the reader understand the full intent of the thoughts when the verses are tied together. For this psalm, it seems like parallelism is used between verses of like position in the stanza.
- Be aware of maturity of the psalmist. It is thought that the psalm was written where the psalmist is recollecting a big chunk of his walk with God. Like Solomon writing Ecclesiastes.
- Think about your faith walk and if some of what is written might be something you would write.
- Think about the relationship between your obedience to God, godly knowledge, submission to God, prayers, loving God and others.
- When you go outside of Psalm 119, please include which part of the Bible you are getting your thought from... like John 3:16.

QUESTIONS:

1. Please share your thoughts/questions/comments on verse 17.

2. Please share your thoughts/questions/comments on verse 18.

3. Please share your thoughts/questions/comments on verse 19.

4. Please share your thoughts/questions/comments on verse 20.

I'm looking forward to hear your thoughts on these verses!

Blessings,
Dean