



The Authority of God's Word

By Shannon Ford on May 9, 2024

TODAY'S READING: Psalm 119:1-40

Our next five daily readings come from the same chapter. Psalm 119 shows us that the Word of God should have top priority in our lives. It stands as the giant among the psalms. It is the longest psalm and the longest chapter in the Bible with 176 verses. The psalm is an acrostic or alphabetic psalm, with 22 paragraphs that contain 8 verses each and begin with one of the 22 letters from the Hebrew alphabet. The heading for each paragraph is the actual Hebrew letter that every verse in that paragraph starts with. The verses in the first section (Psalm 119:1-8) begin with *aleph* (= A). The verses in the next session (Psalm 119:9-16) begin with *beth* (= B), etc. It is the A to Z of God's Word.

We could easily spend six months working through this psalm. Spurgeon has 398 pages on it in his *Treasury of David*. I am just going to skim a few themes under the overall theme. Because the Bible is God's authoritative, reliable, and powerful Word, we should make it top priority in our lives. In Psalm 119:1-40, we see that God's Word is authoritative. When God speaks, He does not mumble. The Bible is not a book of "helpful hints for happy living." It speaks with authority. The terms used as synonyms for the Bible in this psalm convey the concept of authority. We see this clearly in the first section.

Law (v. 1) - The law reveals God's will for how His people are to live. Since it comes from God the law is not just for academic interest, but for obedience.

Testimonies (v. 2) - It points to the dependability of the Bible as a witness of things of God. It also has the nuance of warning.

Ways (v. 3) - Refers to God's characteristic manner of acting, as contrasted with our ways.

Precepts (v. 4) - Means to oversee or pay close attention to instructions of the Lord.

Statutes (v. 5) - It comes from a word meaning "to engrave in stone" and thus speaks of the permanence of Scripture.

Commandments (v. 6) - Points to the idea of giving orders.

Rules (v. 7) - These are the decisions of the all-wise Judge about common human situations.

Word (v. 9) - This the most general term of all, emphasizing the fact that God has spoken.

The sum effect of these terms is that the scriptures speak with God's authority. They are not Reader's Digest type hints on how to live or suggestions for success. What the Bible says, God says. Obedience is not optional for us as believers.

PRAYER: Lord, help me to stand firm in this unstable world. I pray that I will fix my eyes on Your commandments by studying Your Word and obeying it. Lord, whenever we face difficulty today, I pray that we will turn to the Bible and let You counsel us. I pray that we will let God's Word saturate our mind, heart and will. Amen.

TOMORROW'S READING: Psalm 119:41-72

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