

A person with a backpack stands on the peak of a rocky mountain, arms raised in triumph. The background shows a vast valley with green fields, a small town, and distant mountains under a blue sky with white clouds.

*"Praise the Lord,
oh my soul"*
Psalms

Embracing Biblical Womanhood Conference 2024

7th Annual 2024 Embracing Biblical Womanhood Conference

Celebrating God's Law

Psalm 119: 97-104

Kimberlee Falkenstine

"Praise the Lord, oh my soul"

Road Map

- Introduction
- Overview of the book of Psalms and Psalm Ch. 119
- Structure of Ch. 119 and Poem for Hebrew letter mem (verses 97-104)
- Examining the text Psalms 119:97-104
- Practical application
- Discussion

Overview of Psalms; Celebrating God's law throughout the Psalms

The theme of celebrating God's Law can be found throughout the book of Psalms. In fact, it is the very first theme that greets us as we open the book and read chapter one.

Psalm 1:1-2 Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on His law he meditates day and night.

Psalm 19:7 The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple

Psalm 119 is the ultimate chapter dedicated to expressing delight, love, and celebration of God's teaching and instruction to His people.

Overview of Psalm 119

- Context
- Structure

Context: Author and time frame

- Possible author is David.
- Other potential author is Israelite who lived during the Babylonian Exile and return to Jerusalem.
- The consensus is that these poems were written over many years and then later compiled into Psalm 119.

Structure of Psalm 119; the ultimate chapter celebrating God's Law

- 119 is an acrostic poem consisting of 22 smaller poems.
- Each poem begins with a different letter of the Hebrew alphabet.
- Each poem consists of 8 lines.
- Some form of the term "God's Law" exists in almost EVERY ONE of the 176 verses.

What is an Acrostic structure?

ACROSTIC

Poetry for Kids

Arial
Birds
Call
Down.
Earthbound.
Flying
Gracefully.
Hovering
In mid-air.

ABECEDARIAN

א Aleph v. 1-8	Blessed Are They Whose Ways Are Blameless	י Lamed v. 89-96	Your Word O LORD Is Eternal
ב Beth v. 9-16	How Can a Young Man Keep His Way Pure?	כ Mem v. 97-104	I See More Clearly Than the Ancients
ג Gimel v. 17-24	I Am a Stranger on Earth	ל Nun v. 105-112	Your Word Is a Lamp Unto My Feet
ד Daleth v. 25-32	I Am Laid Low in the Dust	ס Samek v. 113-120	Away From Me You Evildoers
ה He v. 33-40	Turn My Eyes Away from Worthless Things	ע Ayin v. 121-128	It Is Time For You to Act O LORD
ו Waw v. 41-45	I Will Talk About Your Statutes Before Kings	פ Pe v. 129-136	Streams of Tears Flow From My Eyes FEATURED
ז Zayin v. 46-56	Your Decrees Are the Theme of My Song	צ Tsadde v. 137-144	Your Promises Have Been Thoroughly Tested
ח Heth v. 57-64	You Are My Portion, O LORD	ק Qoph v. 145-152	I Rise Before the Dawn and Cry for Help FEATURED
ט Teth v. 65-72	It Was Good for Me to Be Afflicted	ר Resh v. 153-160	Your Salvation is Far From the Wicked
י Yod v. 73-80	Let Your Compassion Come to Me	ש Shin v. 161-168	Great Peace Have They Who Love Your Law
כ Kaph v. 81-88	How Long Must Your Servant Wait?	ת Tau v. 169-176	I Have Strayed Like a Lost Sheep

The mem, the letter of "water" (mayim) symbolizes the fountain of the Divine Wisdom of Torah. Just as the waters of a physical fountain (spring) ascend from their unknown subterranean source (the secret of the abyss in the account of Creation) to reveal themselves on earth, so does the fountain of wisdom express the power of flow from the superconscious source. In the terminology of Kabbalah, this flow is from keter ("crown") to chochmah ("wisdom"). The stream is symbolized in Proverbs as "the flowing stream, the source of wisdom."

Meaning of God's Law as used in Psalm 119

- God's Law = Torah or Law of Moses. The first five books of the Bible.
- God's Law = The revelation of God's heart and mind to man, His teaching or instruction.
- Note for N.C. believers: We have the benefit of the full revelation so we also bear in mind that Jesus gave us a "New Commandment" in John 13:34 "...love one another just as I have loved you..." and Matthew 22:37-40 he summarizes the law and prophets with "Love the Lord your god with all your heart, and all your soul, and with all your mind...love your neighbor as yourself."

ESV Definition chart for psalm 119

<u>English</u>	<u>Hebrew</u>	<u>Meaning</u>
Law	Torah	Instruction
Testimonies	'edot	What God solemnly testifies to be his will
Precepts	Piqqudim	What God has appointed to be done
Statutes	Khuqqim; khuqqot	What the divine Lawgiver has laid down
Commandments	Mitswot	What God has commanded
Rules	Mishpatim	What the divine Judge has ruled to be right
Word	'imrah; dabar	What God has spoken



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Verse or Word(s) ESV

← → COPY COPY OPTIONS

Outline of Biblical Usage [?]

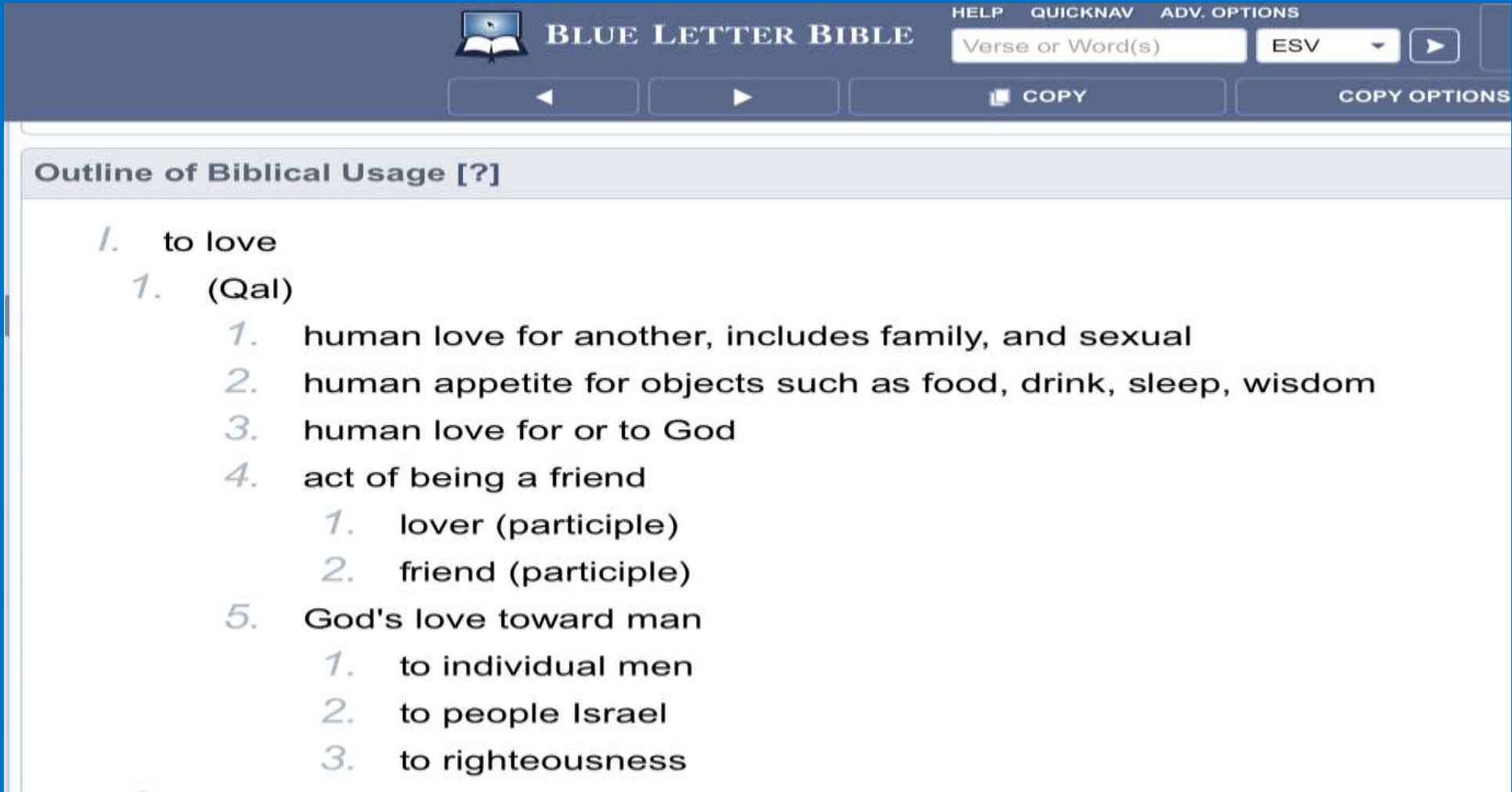
1. to love
 1. (Qal)
 1. human love for another, includes family, and sexual
 2. human appetite for objects such as food, drink, sleep, wisdom
 3. human love for or to God
 4. act of being a friend
 1. lover (participle)
 2. friend (participle)
 5. God's love toward man
 1. to individual men
 2. to people Israel
 3. to righteousness

PSALM 119:97-104 (MEM)

97 Oh how I love your law! It is my meditation all the day. 98 Your commandment makes me wiser than my enemies, for it is ever with me. 99 I have more understanding than all my teachers for your testimonies are my meditation. 100 I understand more than the aged for I keep your precepts. 101 I hold back my feet from every evil way, in order to keep your word. 102 I do not turn aside from your rules, for you have taught me. 103 How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth! 104 Through your precepts I get understanding; therefore I hate every false way.

Verse 97

Oh how I love your law! It is my meditation all the day.




The screenshot shows the Blue Letter Bible website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the site logo, the text 'BLUE LETTER BIBLE', and links for 'HELP', 'QUICKNAV', and 'ADV. OPTIONS'. Below this is a search bar containing 'Verse or Word(s)', a dropdown menu set to 'ESV', and a search button. A secondary bar contains navigation arrows, a 'COPY' button, and a 'COPY OPTIONS' button. The main content area is titled 'Outline of Biblical Usage [?]' and contains a hierarchical list of usage categories for the word 'love'.

Outline of Biblical Usage [?]

- I.* to love
 - 1. (Qal)
 - 1. human love for another, includes family, and sexual
 - 2. human appetite for objects such as food, drink, sleep, wisdom
 - 3. human love for or to God
 - 4. act of being a friend
 - 1. lover (participle)
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Verse 97

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Outline of Biblical Usage [?]

- 1. law, direction, instruction
 - 1. instruction, direction (human or divine)
 - 1. body of prophetic teaching
 - 2. instruction in Messianic age
 - 3. body of priestly direction or instruction
 - 4. body of legal directives
 - 2. law
 - 1. law of the burnt offering
 - 2. of special law, codes of law
 - 3. custom, manner
 - 4. the Deuteronomic or Mosaic Law

Verse 97

Oh how I love your law! It is my meditation all the day.

- Love begets action
- Meditation is the appropriate action
- What meditation means to believers
- The result is that he consistently abides in God's teachings

Verse 98

Your commandment makes me wiser than my enemies, for it is ever with me.

- Enemies = influence contrary to what God affirms to be true and right.
- Knowing and obeying God's teaching produces wisdom that protects us from enemies.
- Meditation is what keeps God's Word "ever with" us.

Verses 99-100

I have more understanding than all my teachers for your testimonies are my meditation. I understand more than the aged for I keep your precepts.

- Understanding translates; to have clear comprehension, wise insight, to ponder, to be prudent.
- Teachers is used in the same way we use the word today. Aged is literally a person who has lived many years and has much experience.
- The reason the Psalmist has more understanding than his teachers or the aged is that he meditates on what God solemnly testifies to be his Will and he does what God has appointed to be done.

Verses 101-102

I hold back my feet from every evil way, in order to keep your word. I do not turn aside from your rules, for you have taught me.

- Holding back the feet not only refers to our physical movements but also addresses the reasoning and motivation behind what he is choosing to do.
- The “evil way” could be anything that draws our focus and actions away from God and God’s Will for our lives.
- The Psalmist models discipline for us. His motivation is to please the One who taught him by obeying Him.

Verses 103-104

How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth! Through your precepts I get understanding; therefore I hate every false way.

- Like sweetness, God's law should bring satisfaction and delight
- Study of what God has appointed to be done grants insights that allow us to recognize truth and reject all falsehood

Practical application

- **Cultivating a Love for God's Word**
 - Daily practices for meditation and study
 - Ways to develop a deeper appreciation for God's commands
- **Implementing God's Wisdom in Daily Life**
 - Applying biblical insights to personal decisions
 - Using the divine wisdom of God's Word to navigate challenges and conflicts

“Familiarity with the word of God breeds affection, and affection seeks yet greater familiarity.”

-C.H. Spurgeon

Discussion questions

does anyone feel they have experienced growth in the area of meditation?

Psalmist highlights personal responsibility. Is there anywhere God has grown you in “holding back your feet”?

Sweeter than honey is that true for you? God allows me to come to desperation before I can say that with full honesty.