

THE B.I.B.L.E.
(Yes! That's The Book for Me!)
Studies in Psalm 119

'The Authorized Version'

For many people the phrase, *authorized version* when applied to the Bible is a reference to the King James Version of the Bible. To some them the KJV is the only approved Bible version that was 'authorized' by translators appointed by King James in AD 1604. In their opinion the ancient texts used by the King James' translation committees, were and still are the only acceptable manuscripts that are accurate copies of the original '*autographs*'. Therefore, the KJV, in their view, is superior to any and all other manuscript scholarship and translation work used in all subsequent translations. This complicated debate is interesting and will be further examined in this course at a later time, but in one respect, all true Christian students of the Scriptures agree that the Bible is the only spiritual writing on earth that is *authorized* by the Lord God.

Thus, the Bible must be heard, read, and studied as the ultimate *authority* in regard to all that it addresses. Some translations are better than others, but whatever version is being used, the Bible is to be seen as the only book to be received as *the authoritative Word of the Living God: "Forever, O LORD, Your Word is settled in heaven" (Psalm 119:89)*. Because Scripture is so incredibly special, it must be *received* into our minds, hearts, and souls prayerfully and accurately. Therefore, wise evangelical Christians implement the following principles for their proper Bible study, interpretation and understanding:

The Literal, Historical, Grammatical, Synthesis Method:
(from the MacArthur Study Bible Introduction, xxi)

1. **The Literal Principle**. Scripture should be understood in its literal, normal and natural sense. While the Bible does contain figures of speech and symbols, they were intended to convey literal truth. In general, however, the Bible speaks in literal terms and we must allow it to speak for itself.
2. **The Historical Principle**. This means that we interpret a passage in its historical context. We must ask what the text meant to the people to whom it was first written. In this way, we can develop a contextual understanding of the original intent of Scripture.
3. **The Grammatical Principle**. This requires that we understand the grammatical structure of each sentence in the original language. To whom do the pronouns refer? What is the tense of the main verb? You will find that when you ask some simple questions like those, the meaning of the text immediately becomes clearer.
4. **The Synthesis Principle**. This means that the Bible doesn't contradict itself. If we arrive at an interpretation of a passage that contradicts a truth taught elsewhere in Scripture, our interpretation cannot be correct. Scripture must be compared with Scripture to discover its full meaning.

PtL Note: To these helpful principles of Bible interpretation '**the Dispensation Principle**' should also be included. Biblical knowledge is *cumulative* throughout history. God's revelation has been given gradually and it's important to not *read into a passage* information not yet given to a particular generation. It's good to bear in mind what accumulated revelation is actually known to the original

readers and not just assume they clearly understood anything more than that (*Ephesians 3:2-5*). One exemption to this is any future prophetic revelation people may have received (*1 Peter 1:10-12*).

‘Revive Me Again & Again & Again!’

(Prayers of a truly revived, repentant soul)

Psalm 119:33-40

Delight for God’s Way

(Prayer for more righteousness)

“Teach me, O LORD, the way of Your statutes and I shall keep it to the end.

Give me understanding and I shall keep Your law. Indeed, I shall observe it with my whole heart.

Make me walk in the path of Your commandments, for I delight in it.”

119:33-35

In the previous section (*daleth/ vs 25-32*), the psalmist (probably David, had sinned grievously (probably his devastating *lying incident* in *1 Samuel 21-22*). He sincerely repented and God then answered his prayer for revival (*v 25*). This next section (*he/ vs 33-40*) seems to be the proof of true revival – earnest desire to stay revived!

- Talk about the above 3 imperative requests (Teach me...! Give me...! Make me...!).
- How are these urgent pleas proof of true repentance and revival?
- He wants God to ‘forcefully intervene’ to keep him on track, but what must he do?
- How can these verses help when you (or someone you are helping) stay on track?

Disgust for My Weakness

(Prayer for moral restriction)

“Incline my heart to Your testimonies and not to covetousness.

Turn away my eyes from looking at worthless things and revive me in Your way.”

119:36-37

- The writer is aware of his primary areas of weakness (*covetousness and vain desires*).
- Why is covetousness such a universally serious sin (*Romans 7:7-8, Ephesians 5:5, Hebrews 13:5*)?
- What does the writer want God to do him to help him overcome his ‘flesh weaknesses’?
- How does this work when we pray like this about our ‘besetting sins’? What happens?
- We see what he wants God to do, but what part do we have in overcoming temptation?
- What are your ‘entry level weaknesses in the flesh’? Do you want the above to overcome?

Desire for God’s Word

(Prayer for more reverence)

“Establish Your word to Your servant, who is devoted to fearing You.

Turn away my reproach which I dread, for Your judgments are good.

Behold, I long for Your precepts; revive me in Your righteousness.”

119:38-40

- For his desire to ‘fear God’ (greater reverence) to happen, what must be more true of him?
- What do you think his ‘reproach’ was (*see previous verses*)? What is it that he ‘dreads’?
- Discuss why it is right and good to pray like this about shameful tendencies in our lives.
- Note the ‘revival progression’ (25, 37, 40). Note the difference ‘according to Your Word’,

in Your way, *'in Your righteousness'*. What does this teach about true revival?