

TEACHING GOAL

To Study the function of the Law of God in the lives of regenerate people.

DOCTRINAL STANDARDS

- Q. What did God at first reveal to man for the rule of his obedience?
- A. The rule that God at first revealed to man for his obedience, was the moral law.
- Q. Where is the moral law summarily comprehended?
- A. The moral law is summarily comprehended in the Ten Commandments.
- S.C. 40-41, L.C. 97, W.C. of F. XIX, Savoy 19, Young 78

SCRIPTURAL BASIS

Study Passage: Psalm 119

Support Passages: Psalms 1, 19, 111, 112; Matthew 10:28

BIBLE STORY

Acts 5:12-42; The Apostles are imprisoned because they loved the Law of God.

.MEMORY ASSIGNMENT

"Through your precepts I get understanding; therefore I hate every false way." (Psalm 119:104, ESV)

APPLICATION

The keeping of God's Law brings great happiness and peace to the believer. The Law of God is the only means to acquire true wisdom, therefore, we must learn it and obey it at all cost.

SUMMARY

Psalms 119 is a most unusual chapter in the Bible. It is not only acrostic but doubly so. An acrostic is a composition usually in verse in which sets of letters (as the initial or final letters of the lines), taken in order, form a word or phrase or the sequence of the letters of the alphabet. Psalms 111 and 112 are examples of a single acrostic. Each line of these Psalms (two lines to a verse) begins with a successive letter of the Hebrew alphabet. It is not possible to translate this feature of the Psalms into English, yet we certainly must be aware of this detail because God inspired it. Psalm 119 is unusual because it is a double acrostic. It comprises 22 sections of 8 verses each, one section for each of the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet. Each verse in the first section begins with a word, the first letter of which is aleph. The second section, similarly, begins with beth, and so forth.

It may also be observed that except for verse 122, one or more of the ten fundamental words for the Law of God are utilized in each verse. Notice these in the following verses: ways - 3; statutes 8; word of truth - 43; Torah (Pentateuch) - 97; commandments - 98; testimonies - 99; precepts 100; word - 101; ordinances - 102; sayings - 103. We believe that the unusual features of this Psalm serve to draw our attention to the importance of God's Law and to its Divine source.

"I have **stored up** your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you." (Psalm 119:11, ESV) Thus we are instructed as to our heart's attitude toward God's Law. Here we are taught that God's word must be treasured in our hearts. God's Law is utterly necessary for the peace and prosperity of God's people in particular and the world in general.¹ Nations and individuals, who despise the Law of God, live under a special curse and their idolatries, food production methods, industries, economies, and governments bring nothing but famine and tyranny.² It is a fact that no Communist nation is able to feed its people and in nations like India, famine is rampant due particularly to their idolatrous worship of animals.

The proper use of the Law of God is also essential to one's education. Apart from the Law, true wisdom and understanding are impossible³ because our faith "does not rest on the wisdom of men, but on the power of God."⁴ The whole pedagogical process depends solely on the Law, "Through Your precepts I get understanding; Therefore I hate every false way."⁵ True education must include the education of the soul as well as the mind as a part of the body, "I have more understanding than all my teachers, For Your testimonies *are* my

meditation."⁶ Humanistic teachers and institutions of learning teach the body alone and ignore the soul, "For what will a man be profited, if he gains the whole world, and forfeits his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?"⁷

On the negative side, keepers of God's Law bring hostility to themselves⁸, yet peace between a man and his God is more important than all the hostility of the enemies of the cross. "And do not fear those who kill the body, but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."⁹ We may love peace but in the end this is only attained by the treasuring of God's Law in our hearts and those who do so, who find them "sweeter than honey and the drippings of the honeycomb"¹⁰, have the only basis for the peace of God that surpasses all understanding.

How shall we give answer to our tormenters, to those who reproach us for Christ's sake? We shall say, "So shall I have an answer for him who reproaches me, for I trust in Your word."¹¹ Thus is God's Law our answer to all hostility and the daily problems that we as Christians face.

¹ Psalm 1:1-3; 119:45, 165

² Psalm 119:21, 78, 92, 118, 119, 150

³ Psalm 119:27, 97-104, 130

⁴ I Corinthians 2:5

⁵ Psalm 119:104

⁶ Psalm 119:99

⁷ Matthew 16:26

⁸ II Timothy 3:12, Psalm 119:51

⁹ Matthew 10:28

¹⁰ Psalm 19:10

¹¹ Psalm 119:42