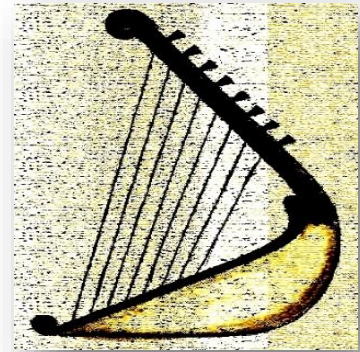


PSALM 119 vs 49

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There is no title to this Psalm, nor is any author's name mentioned. It is **the Longest Psalm**, and this is a sufficiently distinctive name for it. It equals in bulk twenty-two Psalms of the average length of the Songs of Degrees. It equally excels in breadth of thought, depth of meaning, and height of fervor. — Charles Spurgeon.



The Psalm is alphabetical. Eight stanzas begin with one letter, and then another eight with the next letter, and so the whole Psalm proceeds by eight-line sections through the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet. The one theme is **the word of the Lord**. Like Luther, David had shaken every fruit-tree in God's garden, and gathered golden fruit from it. It is evident, the earlier verses are of such character to lend to the hypothesis that the author was young, while the later passages suggest themselves to age and wisdom. The psalmist uses 10 different terms for the law or Word of God. Every verse except verses 90, 122 and 132 mention one of these terms: law, testimonies, ways, advisories, rules, instructions, orders, word, path and promises.

Zayin. ז

⁴⁹ Remember the word to Your servant, on which You cause me to hope.

⁵⁰ This is my comfort in my affliction: for Your promise has enlivened me.

⁵¹ The proud greatly deride me: yet from Your law I will not turn aside.

⁵² I remember Your orders of old, O LORD; and find comfort.

⁵³ Horror seized me, because the wrongdoers forsake Your law.

⁵⁴ Your rules have been my songs in the house of my journey.

⁵⁵ I remember in the night Your name, O LORD; and **keep Your law.**

⁵⁶ This has become mine, that I watch over Your advisories. / this octrain deals with the comfort of the word. It begins seeking consolation: the Lord's fulfilment of His promise. We are shown songs for pilgrims and memories for night-watchers; and comfort that arises from keeping the rules of the Lord. He asks for no new promises, but to have the old ones fulfilled. He is grateful to receive such good word, embracing it with all his heart, asking the Lord to deal with him according to it. He does not say, "remember my service to You," but, "Remember Your word to me." If God's word to us as His servant is precious, what will we say of His word to us as His child? The psalmist said, "Lord, remember David and all his afflictions": Job prayed that the Lord would set a time, and remember him. The present prayer is as personal as the thief on the cross who said: "remember me", and there is no fear, the Lord has never forgotten a single promise to a single believer. — Charles Spurgeon.

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Heth. 𐤇

⁵⁷ My portion -- O LORD: and I said, **keep** Your words,

⁵⁸ entreating Your favor with all my heart: be merciful according to Your word;

⁵⁹ **thinking about my ways**, I turned my feet to Your testimonies

⁶⁰ in a hurry, and with no delay to **keep** Your instructions.

⁶¹ The cords of the wrongdoers caught me: but I did not forget Your law.

⁶² At midnight, I arise giving thanks to You, for Your righteous orders.

⁶³ I am a friend of all who fear You, and who **keep** Your advisories.

⁶⁴ Your **mercy** O LORD, fills the **earth**: Your rules teach me. / here, the psalmist takes hold of God; crying out for Him; returning to Him "My portion, the Lord." A broken sentence. The translators tried to mend it, but it is better to leave it alone; it is an exclamation! We do not always look back with comfort upon what we said, but in this instant this one spoke well. While studying the word he was led to study his own life, and this caused a mighty revolution. First we must rethink, and then we turn; when the mind reconsiders ill ways, the feet are soon led into good ways. He made all speed to get back onto the royal road from where he had wandered... where whole bands of cowards assailed him; like gladiators with net and sword, endeavoring to ensnare anyone who comes near; they hemmed him in, and cut him off from all help; but he could not be bribed or bullied. – Charles Spurgeon.

Teth. 𐤈

⁶⁵ You dealt well with Your servant, O LORD; according to Your word.

⁶⁶ Teach me good orders and knowledge: for I lean on Your instructions.

⁶⁷ Before I was afflicted, I went astray: but now Your promise I **keep** .

⁶⁸ You are good, and do good; teach me Your rules.

⁶⁹ The arrogant lied against me: but with all my heart, I watch over Your advisories,

⁷⁰ **fat and greasy is their heart**; but I delight in Your law.

⁷¹ It is good for me that I was humbled; that I learn Your rules.

72 Better for me is the law You spoke; than thousands of gold and silver.

/ this ninth section is the witness of experience, testifying to the goodness of God, the graciousness of His dealings, and the value of His word. Verse 65 is the text of the entire octave. He tells the Lord the verdict of his heart: he cannot be silent; he speaks his gratitude in the presence of the Lord his God. Again he asks for orderly instruction... and he uses God's mercy as an argument. Perhaps David would never have known and confessed his own straying, if he had not smarted under the rod; doubtless we have imitated him in his straying. Why is it that little ease works in us so much disease? Can we never rest without rusting?

Men grow fat through carnal luxuries, and this makes them prouder still. They riot in their prosperity, and fill their heart till they become self-indulgent. A greasy heart is something horrible; it is what makes a man fatuous; a fatty degeneration of the heart leads to feebleness. The fat in such men is killing the life in them. Dryden wrote: O souls! In whom no heavenly fire is found; Fat minds are ever groveling on the ground. David oiled the wheels of life with his delight in God's law, and not with the fat of self-indulgence. A lean heart is a hungry heart; there is no room for the word of God in the fat heart, they cannot digest it; it will not go down well; it will not gratify their strong desires; – Charles Spurgeon.

Yodh. ' ,

73 Your hands made and formed me: give me understanding, to learn Your instructions.

74 Those who fear You, see me and are glad; because I wait for Your word.

75 I know, O LORD, that right are Your orders, and in faithfulness You humble me.

76 O let Your mercy be my comfort, as You spoke to Your servant.

77 Your compassion is to me, that I may live: for Your law is my delight.

78 Let the arrogant be ashamed for their crooked lies: I will meditate on Your advisories.

79 Those who fear You, see me; because they know Your testimonies.

80 Let my heart be sound in Your rules; that I am not ashamed. / we have now come to the tenth portion; its subject seems to be personal experience and its influence on others. This is the anxious cry of one who is afflicted by those who go on prosperously and undisturbed, yet do not abstain from violence and oppression; so, he makes this appeal to God as his only friend. It is good to remember our creation; that the divine hand takes a personal interest in us, making us with His own hands. He is represented both as making and molding us. God will not allow those to be shamed who wait for His word. David did not provoke them. Lying forged an accusation against him; to bend his actions out of shape before they could assail him. Sometimes he mentions the proud and sometimes the wrongdoers, but he always means the same people; the words are interchangeable; he who is proud is sure to be a wrongdoer; and proud persecutors are the worst of men. David left the proud in God's hands; they are not worth a thought. . – Charles Spurgeon.

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Kaph. 𐤑

⁸¹ My soul faints for Your salvation: but for Your word I wait.

⁸² My weary eyes look for Your word, saying, When will You comfort me?

⁸³ for I am like a withered wineskin in smoke; yet Your rules I do not forget.

⁸⁴ How many days for Your servant, until You make orders on my persecutors?

⁸⁵ The arrogant dug pitfalls for me, who are not in accord with Your law.

⁸⁶ All Your instructions are faithful: they deceitfully persecute me -- help me!

⁸⁷ they almost destroyed me on earth; but I did not forsake Your advisories,

⁸⁸ with Your mercy enlivens me, to keep the testimony of Your mouth / in the eleventh section the psalmist says, in his weariness, still he will guard to protect the words the Lord spoke to us. To the blackness of a goat-skin bottle, it has little dimension, moisture or beauty. Thus does God debase and empty His people, while He exercises them with trouble and the unrest of hoping and waiting. The ancients mellowed the wine by gradual increase of heat and smoke from the fire over which the skin was suspended. The glory and eagerness of the soul must be emptied, that the divine gifts may find room. It seems strange that a proud man would be a digger of pits; but it is so; for a time pride can submit itself to gain a greater vantage over him who is tread under foot. The wrongdoer is so arrogant, he does not seek God, yet he crouches and bows to cause lots of the poor to fall by his might (Psalm 10) -- William Cowper, 1731-1800.

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