

An Exposition of Psalm 119

Introduction to Psalm 119

- 1 Psalm 119 is a feast on and in the Word of God.
- 2 Psalm type
3. Structure
4. Purpose
5. Words for the Word in Psalm 119
 - "The Law" (*Torah*)
 - "The Word" (*Dabar*)
 - "The Testimonies" (*ʿeduṯ*)
 - “The Commands/ments” (*miswa*)
 - "Judgments" (*Mishpot*)
 - "The Decrees" (*Huqqim*)
 - "The Precepts" (*Piqqudim*)
 - "The Word" or "Promise" (*ʿimra*)

Authorship

1. The authorship of this Psalm is important for interpreting a number of the sections (strophes). Although determining authorship is not ultimately important, it does add some significant interpretations and applications of the Psalm.
2. There is no superscription identifying the author in Psa 119. It is anonymous.
3. A few considerations make Daniel a good candidate.
4. Internal Evidence
 - Psa. 119:1-2 cf. Dan. 1:8-9
 - Psa. 119:9, 11, 30, 101 cf. Dan. 1:8
 - Psa. 119:19 cf. Dan. 1:3-4
 - Psa. 119:23, 78, 85, 86, 95, 110, 157, 161 cf. Dan. 3:8; 6:4-5
 - Psa 119:46 cf. Dan. 2:27-28
6. The “feel” of Daniel in Psalm 119
 - Examples: Psa. 119:17 cf. Dan. 1:12-16;

Psa 119:29 cf. Dan. 1:4;
Psa 119:36-37 cf Dan 2:48; 5:16;
Psa 119:63 cf. Dan 3:17-18;
Psa 119:87 cf Dan. 6:10, 16;
Psa. 119:98-100 cf Dan. 1:4, 17-20; 2:24;
Psa 119:119 cf Dan 6:24;
Psa. 119:136 cf Dan 9:5-6;
Psa 119:18, 27, 169 cf Dan. 9:1-3

7. Conclusion
The internal evidence seems to me to point *most consistently* to Daniel.

Themes of Psalm 119

1. Attributes of the Word
2. Benefits of the Word
3. Response to the Word
4. Is the Psalmist's attitude toward God's Law the same as Paul's?
Psa. 119:98 [25, 37, 40, 50, 88, 93, 107, 149, 154, 156, 159]
Cf. Rom. 7:9-10; 2 Cor. 3:5-9; Gal. 3:21 (not to mention, Rom. 3:20; Gal. 2:16).
Points to remember:
 1. The Psalmists have in view a broader view of Law than Paul does.
 2. The Psalmist rejoices in the Law's power to convict him of sin and turn him to God's mercy (Psa. 119:176). Paul rejoices in the same reality (Rom. 7:12, 22).
 3. The Psalmist rejoices in God's Law as a regenerate person. He sees that grace comes before and empowers obedience (E.g., Psa. 119:10, 32, 36, 37, 88). There is no legalism in his approach to God's Law.

So everything the Psalmist says, we should be able to say.

Brief bibliography

See all the standard commentaries on the Psalms.

Charles Bridges, *Psalm 119*

Charles Spurgeon, *The Golden Alphabet*

John Calvin, *Sermons on Psalm 119*

Hwyel Jones, *Psalm 119 for Life*

James Boice, *Living by the Book*

George Zemek, *The Word of God in the Child of God:*

Exegetical, Theological and Homiletical Reflections on Psalm 119 (knowledge of Hebrew is helpful).