

“The Word of God” (Ps. 119)

ALEPH (1-8)

1. Structure

- a. Greatest Alphabetic Acrostic Psalm
- b. It's the Hebrew alphabet (22 letters) which each have 8 lines (verses) (octonaries) for each letter.

2. Content

- a. Theme is God's Word
- b. As there are 8 lines for each Hebrew letter, there are 8 predominant terms used to describe a facet, emphasis, or characteristic of God's revealed Word.
- c. Briefly, they are as follows:
 - i. Law – or here in verse 1, ‘teaching’ (yarah) similar to Torah. It is generally speaking God's revealed instruction.
 - ii. Testimony – witness i.e. God's own personal witness about himself! We can read God's Word for information and instruction but supreme is the intent to know Him! *Longing.
 - iii. Precepts – detailed application of His Word
 - iv. Statutes – permanence of His Word
 - v. Commandments – issued for obedience
 - vi. Ordinances – Judgments i.e. righteous principles which command adherence. Vs. 7b judgments & righteousness = principles and practice of them.
 - vii. Word – the revealed truth of YHWH spoken by YHWH himself
 - viii. Promise – also translated as ‘word.’ However, promise (imrah) is different form “word” (dabhar). See e.g. v. 11. From the root verb “to say.” Everything God says (His Word) is purely true and hence a promise!
- d. Of course there are other terms to describe God's revelation and others are found in this Psalm.
- e. It is the longest Psalm and it is as weighty as it is bulky, as noted in the commentary “The Treasury of David Vol. 3” Spurgeon. Though His Word to us has been rightly canonized, it is paradoxically eternal. And though this may be the a-z Psalm of His Word; it is like a “sea of glass before the eternal throne, it yet contains within its depths an ocean of fire, and those who devoutly gaze into it shall not only see the brightness, but feel the glow of sacred flame” (noted in same commentary).
- f. What is of more urgency than to know thy Creator? And we can only know Him via His revealed Word. Therefore, this is not merely to receive instruction but to learn of the One behind the Word and who is the WORD!

3. Practice (Objective)

- a. The Word is not stagnant nor dead but alive and interactive. We thus read the Word (God to us) and then pray the Word (us to God). Prayer is thus an exercise which is largely dependent upon us knowing the Word because we are speaking with the Word! Therefore we can and should pray the Psalter and more Scripture back to God. After all God does not verbally answer us but He has given us His Revelation! What can we say or pray that is wiser than His Word?
- b. Not mere Information but Transformation!
 - i. To see God more clearly
 - ii. Follow God more nearly
 - iii. Love God more dearly

“The Word of God” (Ps. 119)

iv. Trust God more freely