

"By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God..."
Hebrews 11:3

"The Bible is alive, it speaks to me; it has feet, it runs after me; it has hands, it lays hold of me. The Bible is not antique or modern. It is eternal."
Martin Luther

"On the glorious splendor of your majesty,
and on your wondrous works,
I will meditate."
Psalm 145:5

Lesson 4: Psalm 119: 89-104

“Oh, how I love your law!
It is my meditation all the day.”
Psalm 119:97

Steep: to soak in a liquid at a temperature under the boiling point (as for softening, bleaching, or extracting an essence) 2: to cover with or plunge into a liquid (as in bathing, rinsing, or soaking)

Day 1

1. Read Psalm 119:89-104

Notice the abrupt change of thought and tone as the psalmist begins this stanza. In the previous stanza, verses 81-88, the psalmist is at his lowest point. He is wondering when he will be comforted and groaning over persecution and pitfalls. Now, this worshipper is exclaiming and declaring amazing truths about God and His Word!

Using these verses as your guide, what is the foundation for his confidence? Jot down specific phrases that help you come to this conclusion:

It seems that reminding himself of the Lord's steadfast love (verse 88) renews his mind, lifts his gaze upward, and creates spontaneous praise, adoration, and declarations of God's character! He has once again found his footing and foundation in and on the Word.

2. What are the declarations the author makes about God and His Word in verses 89-91? Take time to steep in these verses - they are ripe with meaning!

Declarations

The first declaration the psalmist makes is this: “Forever, O Lord, your Word is firmly fixed...” Look up the following passages to see similar declarations Scripture makes regarding the eternal Word:

Psalm 138:1-2.

What declaration does David make regarding God and His Word?

Isaiah 40:6-8

What are the contrasts mentioned here?

Matthew 24:35

What is fleeting? What is eternal?

One of my favorite college professors used to regularly make this statement. It has stayed with me for 35 years, "Only two things in this life are eternal, God's Living Word and the souls of people. Spend your life investing in these things."

The Word of God is eternal and exalted!

What application does this have for your present life, as well as for your life purpose and vision?

Matthew 5:17-18

Before reading ahead, put in your own words what you think Jesus is saying here:

Reading this verse in several translations helped me understand the magnitude, power, and awesomeness of Jesus' words. Take a look:

- Matthew 5:18 (CEB): "I say to you very seriously that as long as heaven and earth exist, neither the smallest letter nor even the smallest stroke of a pen will be erased from the Law until everything there becomes a reality."
- Matthew 5:18 (NRS): "For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth pass away, not one letter, not one stroke of a letter, will pass from the law until all is accomplished."
- Matthew 5:18 (MSG): "God's Law is more real and lasting than the stars in the sky and the ground at your feet. Long after stars burn out and earth wears out, God's Law will be alive and working."
- Matthew 5:18 (KJV): "For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled."

We don't use *jot* or *tittle* much these days in our everyday conversation! Take a couple of minutes to look up their definitions. Or, if time is short, here's what I found:

"Jot, or smallest letter, iota, is the *yodh*, the tiny mark of a letter that begins each verse of the tenth stanza of Psalm 119. It's like an apostrophe."

"Tittle, or stroke of pen, dot, is part of a letter, a small protrusion called a serif."

"Jesus was teaching that not even the smallest mark of the sacred text will be lost from Scripture until every single portion of it is fulfilled. And not even then!" -James M. Boice

3. Not only is God's word firmly fixed in the heavens for all eternity, God **is** and **will be** faithful to His Word forever!

Read Matthew 24:35

What are Moses' parting words to the Israelites just before he takes his last breath?
Joshua 23:14

What are God's promises regarding His Word?
Isaiah 55:10-11

4. Although Jesus' name isn't ever mentioned in Psalm 119, His presence permeates verses 119:89-91. Do you see Him?

Look up the following passages and use them to answer the following questions:

- What truths about our eternal Savior are declared in these passages?
- How are these passages similar to or different from what Psalm 119:89-91 tells us regarding the Word?

John 1:1-18

2 Corinthians 1:18-20

Hebrews 1:8-12

Luke 24:44

Jesus' throne is forever and ever! His years will have no end!
Do you realize that over 300 references to 61 specific Old Testament prophecies regarding the Messiah were fulfilled in Jesus Christ? Fulfilled down to the letter, even the apostrophe! God is committed to His Word. No single prophecy concerning His Son will be left unfulfilled. No promise God makes will ever be broken!

5. Let's end our time today in the same vein as the psalmist began in stanza Lamedh—with declaration and adoration! "The One who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy" deserves our eternal praise! (Isaiah 57:15)

“This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it.”
Joshua 1:8

“I saw that the most important thing I had to do was to give myself to the reading of the word of God, and to meditation on it ... What is the food of the inner man? Not prayer, but the word of God; and ... not the simple reading of the word of God, so that it only passes through our minds, just as water runs through a pipe, but considering what we read, pondering over it, and applying it to our hearts.”
George Müller

“... For your testimonies are my meditation ...”
Psalm 119:97b

Day 2

1. Read Psalm 119:89-96

It is worth noticing again, for the benefit of our own souls, the multiple truths regarding the eternal Word that the psalmist declares and meditates on. These meditations help him turn from the despair of the previous stanzas to a place of praise and rejoicing.

*What are the 3 things the psalmist declares the eternal Word has done for him?

v. 92:

v.93:

94,95:

The eternal Word has rescued, renewed, and saved him! The understanding the psalmist has gained from the Word does not come from quick, cursory "check the box" kinds of readings. The psalmist has most certainly studied, stored up, and meditated on the statutes and promises of His God previously in order for these truths to make a difference in his current mental and emotional state. It's the Word with the help of the Spirit that enables him to change his way of thinking and focus on truths that stay forever unchanged in the midst of changing circumstances. In order for the Word to have an effect on our way of thinking, and in order for it to intersect with our circumstances, we must spend time steeping ourselves in the Word.

Our spiritual practice for this lesson is: meditate. For the purpose of keeping with the "s" theme, I'm going to use the word steep.

Steep: to soak in a liquid at a temperature under the boiling point (as for softening, bleaching, or extracting an essence) 2: to cover with or plunge into a liquid (as in bathing, rinsing, or soaking)

"The word meditation in Hebrew means basically to speak or to mutter. When this is done in the heart, it is called musing or meditation. So, meditating on the Word of God day and night means to speak to yourself the Word of God day and night and to speak to yourself **about** it- to mull it over, to ask questions about it and answer them from the Scripture itself, to ask yourself how this might apply to you and others and to ponder its implications for life..." John Piper

2. Circle or highlight the many times "meditate" is used in Psalm 119.

(v. 15, 23, 27, 48, 78, 97, 99, 148)

*For what purposes and in what situations does the psalmist use meditation?

Situations for meditation

Purposes or benefits of meditation

Here are just a few (of the many) additional verses from God's Word that teach or command us to meditate. Use the chart above to add any additional insights you glean from the following verses:

Joshua 1:8

Psalm 19:14

Psalm 104:34

Psalm 143:5

Meditation in our modern world has many connotations and sometimes refers to an emptying of the mind. Scriptural meditation involves **filling**, saturating, and steeping our minds in the eternal, inerrant, God breathed Word and then speaking those truths back to ourselves.

“Have you realized that most of your unhappiness in life is due to the fact that you are listening to yourself instead of talking to yourself? Take those thoughts that come to you the moment you wake up in the morning. You have not originated them, but they are talking to you, they bring back the problems of yesterday, etc. Somebody is talking. Who is talking to you? Yourself is talking to you. Now this man's treatment... was this: instead of allowing this self to talk to him, he starts talking to himself. “Why art thou cast down, O my soul?” he asks. His soul had been depressing him, crushing him. So he stands up and says, “Self, listen for moment, I will speak to you.” Martin Loyd Jones

3. Read verses 89-104.

Spend some time answering these questions and speaking truth back to yourself:

*What are the gifts of God declared in this section?

*How can these gifts make a difference in my thoughts and actions today?

*What specific truths in this passage bring help, wisdom, or encouragement to my heart and life today?

*Recount and name specific ways the Word has helped you in the past.

*How can or does the Word bring perspective to your past?

*What is one specific way you desire/need the Word to help you presently?

4. Take time to fellowship with your God about these things. Praise Him for the gift of His Word and His Son. Repent of ways you have neglected or cheapened His Word. Humbly bring your questions to God. Listen for His loving response.

"The Bible is the Word of a living Person, Jesus Christ, who is our God and Savior. Therefore, read and meditate and memorize with a view to seeing him in the words that he records and the works he recounts. He is as near as your own breathing and is infinitely merciful and mighty."
John Piper

"Our minds are vaults especially designed to stockpile the seeds of God's Word. ...the simple seeds of Scripture are priceless assets in times of drought, doubt and difficulty. We can leave our children no inheritance more valuable than the legacy of God's Word."

Robert Morgan

"You have established the earth, and it stands fast.
By your appointment they stand this day, for all things are Your servants."

Psalm 119:90b-91

"Maker, and sov'reign Lord
Of heav'n and earth, and seas!
Thy providence confirms thy Word,
And answers thy decrees."

Isaac Watts

Day 3

I am convinced that multiple lesson studies could be written on verses 89-91 alone! The implications of the psalmist's declarations about God and His Word are boundless, urgent, and of great importance!

On Day 1 we focused on the eternal character of God's Word. Today we will focus on the sovereignty of God and His Word. I believe understanding this eternal attribute of God (as best as our finite minds are able) is of the utmost importance as we journey by faith through this pilgrim land. What we believe about God's control, or lack of, will and does have an immense impact on how we interpret and respond to everything that happens to us and our loved ones, as well as how we interpret the various circumstances that take place all around the world.

Here's how The Westminster Confession of Faith defines God's sovereignty: "God, from all eternity, did, by the most wise and holy counsel of His own will, freely, and unchangeably ordain whatever comes to pass."

"The sovereignty of God represents the ability to exercise His holy will or supremacy. The Most High, Lord of Heaven and earth, has unlimited power to do what He has resolved. Being absolutely independent, God does as He pleases. None can deter Him, none can hinder Him. In His Word, God declares: "I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me...I say: 'My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please'" ([Isaiah 46:9-10](#)).

Divine sovereignty signifies that God is the One who sits on the Throne of the universe. He is God in name as well as in all things, directing all things, and "who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will" ([Ephesians 1:11](#))"

1. The truth of God's absolute sovereignty is a recurring theme throughout both the Old and the New Testament. Take time to read, make notes, and meditate on two or more of the following passages:

[Isaiah 44:24-28](#)

[Isaiah 48: 12-13](#)

[Daniel 2:20-22; 4:34-35](#)

[I Chronicles 29:10-16](#)

Look again at the psalmist's declarations in verses 90 and 91.

"...You have established the earth, and it stands fast. By your appointment they stand this day, for all things are your servants."

The author of Psalm 119 is standing firm on the unshakable rock of God's sovereignty and His eternal Word. If God was not a "gracious and merciful God, slow to anger and abounding in love," we would have cause to fear His sovereignty. But our God IS all of those things and much more! He is completely trustworthy as our Sovereign King.

Just as the author of Psalm 119 declared in verse 68, we can also declare: "In your sovereignty, Lord, 'You are good and do good.'"

Once again, Jesus' sovereign power and presence is strong in this stanza. Can you hear the song of praise the psalter is singing to Jesus?

2. Use the following passages to answer these questions:

Colossians 1:15-20

Hebrews 1

*Specifically, Who "established the earth and holds it fast"?

*What role did Jesus have in creation?

*What is Jesus doing now, while He waits to return to Earth and bring His children home?

3. Take some extended time to steep yourself in Psalm 119 and other passages from this lesson. Praise our Eternal, Sovereign King for His good and loving control. Declare your trust in His sovereign plan for your life- past, present, and future.

4. Continue memorizing your chosen verses/stanzas. Engage with, chew on, and store up His eternal Word.

“Great is thy faithfulness,
O God my Father
There is no shadow of turning with Thee
Thou changest not
Thy compassions they fail not
As Thou hast been
Thou forever will be
Great is Thy faithfulness
Great is Thy faithfulness
Morning by morning new mercies I see
And all I have needed Thy hand hath provided
Great is Thy faithfulness
Lord unto me”
Thomas O. Chisholm

“For the word of the Lord is upright, and all his work is done in faithfulness”

Psalm 33:4

“I pray, O God, that I may know You and love You, so that I may rejoice in You....May I receive what you promise through Your truth so that my “joy may be complete”. God of truth, I ask that I may receive so that my joy may be complete. Until then let my mind meditate on it, let my tongue speak of it, let my heart love it, let my mouth preach it. Let my soul hunger for it, let my flesh thirst for it, my whole being desire it, until I enter into the “joy of the Lord, who is God. Three in One, “blessed forever. Amen.”
Anselm

Day 4

1. Read Psalm 119: 89-104

I am having trouble moving past verses 89-91!

Verse 90 highlights yet another of God's attributes, His faithfulness.

The psalter sings and shouts loudly, 'Your faithfulness endures to all generations', Psalm 119:90. The author, having reminded himself of the abundant life found in the steadfast love of the Lord, (verse 88) is declaring and proclaiming the awesome attributes of His eternal, sovereign and faithful God!!

"The psalmist affirms over and over, the Lord's certainty and stability". David Powlison

David, the author of Psalm 36, proclaims a similar truth in verse 5, "Your faithfulness, O God, extends to the clouds." The writer of Psalm 89 is so confident in God's faithfulness that he wants to declare it to others: v.1 ..." with my mouth I will make known your faithfulness to all generations."

Do the roots of God's Word go down deep enough in our souls that we will remain confident in our God even when He chooses to be silent in our present situation? Are we consistently steeping ourselves in the truths of God's character, so that we will have the faith and confidence necessary to stand on His eternal promises, His faithfulness, His sovereignty, even when

disappointments and sufferings come? "O, Lord, we believe; help our unbelief." Mark 9:24

In order to build our faith in our Lord's faithfulness, let's spend some time today steeping ourselves in the truth of His faithfulness.

2. God is faithful to His Word:

Deuteronomy 32:4 What words are used here to describe our God?

Using the passages below, record the many repeated words used to describe the degree to which God is faithful to His Word:

Joshua 21:45

Joshua 23:14

1 Kings 8:56

Ezekiel 12:25

Hebrews 6:13-18 What are the two unchangeable things highlighted here?
In what specific ways does this passage bring hope and encouragement to you?

3. God is faithful to His children:

Deuteronomy 7:6-9 Record the phrases that declare His faithfulness

Using the following verses, in what specific and active ways is He faithful to you, His child?
I Corinthians 10:13

I Thessalonians 5:23-24

II Thessalonians 3:3

Hebrews 10:23

4. Let's conclude our time today by steeping ourselves in Revelation 19:11-16 .

Jesus, our Eternal and Sovereign Savior, is known by hundreds of names in Scripture. Some scholars say Jesus has over 700 different names!
What 5 beautiful, powerful names is Jesus given, known and called by in this passage?

5. Shout, sing, and worship at the feet of Him who is called "The Word of God"!

"Praise befits the upright." Psalm 33:1

"The one who offers thanksgiving as his sacrifice glorifies me" Psalm 50:23

"Sing to the Lord a new song.... Let the godly exult in glory; let them sing for joy on their beds. Let the high praises of God be in their throats..." Psalm 149: 1, 5-6

Let everything that has breath praise the Lord!"! Psalm 150:6

"It is he who made the earth by His power,
who established the world by His wisdom,
by His understanding stretched out the heavens."
Jeremiah 10:12

"Meditation means reading the Bible and chewing on it to get the sweetness and the nourishment from it that God designs to give. It should involve memorizing the Word so that you can chew on it and be strengthened by it day and night. Think and mull and ponder and chew until you see God as precious and valuable and beautiful and desirable."
John Piper

"If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God,
who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him."
James 1:5

Day 5

1. Read the *mem* stanza, Psalm 119: 97-104.

The entire book of psalms regularly employs a structure often used in Hebrew poetry, called parallelism. Parallelism simply means: the words of two or more lines of text are directly related in some way."

The psalmist uses parallelism in verses 98-100 to help us understand the first of several reasons why the author loves God's Word, and why we should love it, also. In these three verses, the psalmist declares in three different ways, that loving and meditating on God's law (the whole counsel of God) brings understanding and **wisdom** beyond his years!

2. Go ahead and search verses 101-104 to see and record several other reasons why the psalmist loves the Word of God:

Who is our Teacher when we study and meditate on the Word? v. 102b

Notice the NIV translation for this verse. ..." for you *yourself* have taught me." (italics added) We really can't remind ourselves too often of this truth, that when we read the Word, God, Himself, is actually speaking to us! Because of and through the Lord's mercy, grace and kindness, we are students in the classroom of the Eternal, Sovereign, and Faithful God!

"All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching....." II Timothy 3:16.

Since we will take extended time in future lessons to highlight many of the other benefits declared here, today we will focus on the high value the Lord places on gaining wisdom.

"Wisdom is more precious than jewels, and nothing you desire can compare with her."
Proverbs 3:15

3. Proverbs chapters 1 through 9 are overflowing with pictures of what wisdom looks like and how we are to pursue it, and "search for it as for hidden treasures." Proverbs 2:4 If you have the time, steep yourself in these chapters. If your time is limited, Look up these specific passages:

Proverbs 2:1-10

Where does wisdom come from?

What is our responsibility in gaining wisdom?

What actions should a person take to gain wisdom?

Proverbs 4:20-27 Our ears, eyes, mouth, feet and hearts have a role in obtaining wisdom. What are the specific things our ears, eyes, mouth, feet and hearts are to do on this journey to gain wisdom?

Ears:

Eyes:

Mouth:

Feet:

Heart:

Proverbs 2:22, 4:10-19

What is the opposite of wisdom?

Proverbs 2:6-8; 3:5-7

In what ways are we to be dependent upon the Lord in our pursuit of wisdom?

Proverbs 8:12- 21

Not down a few of the many benefits gained by having wisdom.

Using all of the above passages to formulate your answers, write down several characteristics of a wise person:

4. Let's take time and ask the Lord to "search us and know our hearts." Psalm 139:23

- In what areas of life am I demonstrating wisdom?
- Are there areas where I am practicing folly or wickedness? Take the opportunity to get feedback from someone who knows you well.

- Do I have specific areas of my life where I am wise in my own eyes?
- How would my husband, sister, or friend say I receive instruction and/or reproof?
- Can I call to mind times when I have ignored, rejected, justified or scorned instruction or reproof from the Lord or fellow believers?

Ask your patient and long-suffering Savior, the One who sympathizes with your weaknesses, what practical step or steps He wants you to take in repenting, and/or gaining and loving wisdom:

5. Lest we go away in despair, **remember** and **respond** to this spoken Word from our wise Teacher:

"Whoever conceals his transgressions will not prosper, but he who confesses and forsakes them will obtain mercy." Proverbs 28:13

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." 1 John 1:9

Ask the Lord for grace to: Confess. Repent. Receive His cleansing mercy and forgiveness.

Then Read Proverbs 8:22-36.

Ponder, stand in awe, and rejoice in Jesus Christ, Wisdom personified!

"For whoever finds me finds life and obtains favor from the Lord." Proverbs 8:35

"....to the only wise God be glory forevermore through Jesus Christ! Amen." Romans 16:27

1 Timothy 1:17 (KJV) Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen. KJV