

Read the Bible in A Year: Chronological

Readings for July 12-18, 2020

Psalm 119-121; 123; 125-126; 128-130; 134-136; 146-150

This week's readings, like last week, come from the Psalms, focusing on several Psalms written during this time in Israel and Judah's history in which the threat of conquest and exile was all too real...

We begin with Psalm 119. This psalm was probably written as instruction for young people. And while its timing is uncertain, it likely was used as catechism during the time of exile to keep the law in the hearts of God's people, and pass it on to the next generations. It's format is interesting. It is divided into 22 stanzas, titled by each of the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet. And the first word of each stanza begins with its title letter. Each stanza contains 8 verses. This format would have served well as a teaching aid and memory aid- "what does aleph stand for?"

Psalm 119

א Aleph

Blessed are those whose ways are blameless, who walk according to the law of the LORD.

Blessed are those who keep his statutes and seek him with all their heart—
they do no wrong but follow his ways.

You have laid down precepts that are to be fully obeyed.

Oh, that my ways were steadfast in obeying your decrees!

Then I would not be put to shame when I consider all your commands.

I will praise you with an upright heart as I learn your righteous laws.

I will obey your decrees; do not utterly forsake me.

ב Beth

How can a young person stay on the path of purity? By living according to your word.

I seek you with all my heart; do not let me stray from your commands.

I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.

Praise be to you, LORD; teach me your decrees.

With my lips I recount all the laws that come from your mouth.

I rejoice in following your statutes as one rejoices in great riches.

I meditate on your precepts and consider your ways.

I delight in your decrees; I will not neglect your word.

ג Gimel

Be good to your servant while I live, that I may obey your word.

Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your law.

I am a stranger on earth; do not hide your commands from me.

My soul is consumed with longing for your laws at all times.

You rebuke the arrogant, who are accursed, those who stray from your commands.

Remove from me their scorn and contempt, for I keep your statutes.
Though rulers sit together and slander me, your servant will meditate on your decrees.
Your statutes are my delight; they are my counselors.

ט Daleth

I am laid low in the dust; preserve my life according to your word.
I gave an account of my ways and you answered me; teach me your decrees.
Cause me to understand the way of your precepts, that I may meditate on your wonderful deeds.
My soul is weary with sorrow; strengthen me according to your word.
Keep me from deceitful ways; be gracious to me and teach me your law.
I have chosen the way of faithfulness; I have set my heart on your laws.
I hold fast to your statutes, LORD; do not let me be put to shame.
I run in the path of your commands, for you have broadened my understanding.

ה He

Teach me, LORD, the way of your decrees, that I may follow it to the end.
Give me understanding, so that I may keep your law and obey it with all my heart.
Direct me in the path of your commands, for there I find delight.
Turn my heart toward your statutes and not toward selfish gain.
Turn my eyes away from worthless things; preserve my life according to your word.
Fulfill your promise to your servant, so that you may be feared.
Take away the disgrace I dread, for your laws are good.
How I long for your precepts! In your righteousness preserve my life.

ו Waw

May your unfailing love come to me, LORD, your salvation, according to your promise;
then I can answer anyone who taunts me, for I trust in your word.
Never take your word of truth from my mouth, for I have put my hope in your laws.
I will always obey your law, for ever and ever.
I will walk about in freedom, for I have sought out your precepts.
I will speak of your statutes before kings and will not be put to shame,
for I delight in your commands because I love them.
I reach out for your commands, which I love, that I may meditate on your decrees.

ז Zayin

Remember your word to your servant, for you have given me hope.
My comfort in my suffering is this: Your promise preserves my life.
The arrogant mock me unmercifully, but I do not turn from your law.
I remember, LORD, your ancient laws, and I find comfort in them.
Indignation grips me because of the wicked, who have forsaken your law.
Your decrees are the theme of my song wherever I lodge.
In the night, LORD, I remember your name, that I may keep your law.
This has been my practice: I obey your precepts.

n Heth

You are my portion, LORD; I have promised to obey your words.
I have sought your face with all my heart; be gracious to me according to your promise.
I have considered my ways and have turned my steps to your statutes.
I will hasten and not delay to obey your commands.
Though the wicked bind me with ropes, I will not forget your law.
At midnight I rise to give you thanks for your righteous laws.
I am a friend to all who fear you, to all who follow your precepts.
The earth is filled with your love, LORD; teach me your decrees.

o Teth

Do good to your servant according to your word, LORD.
Teach me knowledge and good judgment, for I trust your commands.
Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I obey your word.
You are good, and what you do is good; teach me your decrees.
Though the arrogant have smeared me with lies, I keep your precepts with all my heart.
Their hearts are callous and unfeeling, but I delight in your law.
It was good for me to be afflicted so that I might learn your decrees.
The law from your mouth is more precious to me than thousands of pieces of silver and gold.

· Yodh

Your hands made me and formed me; give me understanding to learn your commands.
May those who fear you rejoice when they see me, for I have put my hope in your word.
I know, LORD, that your laws are righteous, and that in faithfulness you have afflicted me.
May your unfailing love be my comfort, according to your promise to your servant.
Let your compassion come to me that I may live, for your law is my delight.
May the arrogant be put to shame for wronging me; but I will meditate on your precepts.
May those who fear you turn to me, those who understand your statutes.
May I wholeheartedly follow your decrees, that I may not be put to shame.

o Kaph

My soul faints with longing for your salvation, but I have put my hope in your word.
My eyes fail, looking for your promise; I say, "When will you comfort me?"
Though I am like a wineskin in the smoke, I do not forget your decrees.
How long must your servant wait? When will you punish my persecutors?
The arrogant dig pits to trap me, contrary to your law.
All your commands are trustworthy; help me, for I am being persecuted without cause.
They almost wiped me from the earth, but I have not forsaken your precepts.
In your unfailing love preserve my life, that I may obey the statutes of your mouth.

7 Lamedh

Your word, LORD, is eternal; it stands firm in the heavens.
Your faithfulness continues through all generations; you established the earth, and it endures.

Your laws endure to this day, for all things serve you.
If your law had not been my delight, I would have perished in my affliction.
I will never forget your precepts, for by them you have preserved my life.
Save me, for I am yours; I have sought out your precepts.
The wicked are waiting to destroy me, but I will ponder your statutes.
To all perfection I see a limit, but your commands are boundless.

n Mem

Oh, how I love your law! I meditate on it all day long.
Your commands are always with me and make me wiser than my enemies.
I have more insight than all my teachers, for I meditate on your statutes.
I have more understanding than the elders, for I obey your precepts.
I have kept my feet from every evil path so that I might obey your word.
I have not departed from your laws, for you yourself have taught me.
How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth!
I gain understanding from your precepts; therefore I hate every wrong path.

ı Nun

Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path.
I have taken an oath and confirmed it, that I will follow your righteous laws.
I have suffered much; preserve my life, LORD, according to your word.
Accept, LORD, the willing praise of my mouth, and teach me your laws.
Though I constantly take my life in my hands, I will not forget your law.
The wicked have set a snare for me, but I have not strayed from your precepts.
Your statutes are my heritage forever; they are the joy of my heart.
My heart is set on keeping your decrees to the very end.

o Samekh

I hate double-minded people, but I love your law.
You are my refuge and my shield; I have put my hope in your word.
Away from me, you evildoers, that I may keep the commands of my God!
Sustain me, my God, according to your promise, and I will live; do not let my hopes be dashed.
Uphold me, and I will be delivered; I will always have regard for your decrees.
You reject all who stray from your decrees, for their delusions come to nothing.
All the wicked of the earth you discard like dross; therefore I love your statutes.
My flesh trembles in fear of you; I stand in awe of your laws.

⚡ Ayin

I have done what is righteous and just; do not leave me to my oppressors.
Ensure your servant's well-being; do not let the arrogant oppress me.
My eyes fail, looking for your salvation, looking for your righteous promise.
Deal with your servant according to your love and teach me your decrees.
I am your servant; give me discernment that I may understand your statutes.
It is time for you to act, LORD; your law is being broken.
Because I love your commands more than gold, more than pure gold,
and because I consider all your precepts right, I hate every wrong path.

⚡ Pe

Your statutes are wonderful; therefore, I obey them.
The unfolding of your words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple.
I open my mouth and pant, longing for your commands.
Turn to me and have mercy on me, as you always do to those who love your name.
Direct my footsteps according to your word; let no sin rule over me.
Redeem me from human oppression, that I may obey your precepts.
Make your face shine on your servant and teach me your decrees.
Streams of tears flow from my eyes, for your law is not obeyed.

⚡ Tsadhe

You are righteous, LORD, and your laws are right.
The statutes you have laid down are righteous; they are fully trustworthy.
My zeal wears me out, for my enemies ignore your words.
Your promises have been thoroughly tested, and your servant loves them.
Though I am lowly and despised, I do not forget your precepts.
Your righteousness is everlasting and your law is true.
Trouble and distress have come upon me, but your commands give me delight.
Your statutes are always righteous; give me understanding that I may live.

⚡ Qoph

I call with all my heart; answer me, LORD, and I will obey your decrees.
I call out to you; save me and I will keep your statutes.
I rise before dawn and cry for help; I have put my hope in your word.
My eyes stay open through the watches of the night, that I may meditate on your promises.
Hear my voice in accordance with your love; preserve my life, LORD, according to your laws.
Those who devise wicked schemes are near, but they are far from your law.
Yet you are near, LORD, and all your commands are true.
Long ago I learned from your statutes that you established them to last forever.

ג Resh

Look on my suffering and deliver me, for I have not forgotten your law.
Defend my cause and redeem me; preserve my life according to your promise.
Salvation is far from the wicked, for they do not seek out your decrees.
Your compassion, LORD, is great; preserve my life according to your laws.
Many are the foes who persecute me, but I have not turned from your statutes.
I look on the faithless with loathing, for they do not obey your word.
See how I love your precepts; preserve my life, LORD, in accordance with your love.
All your words are true; all your righteous laws are eternal.

ו Sin and Shin

Rulers persecute me without cause, but my heart trembles at your word.
I rejoice in your promise like one who finds great spoil.
I hate and detest falsehood but I love your law.
Seven times a day I praise you for your righteous laws.
Great peace have those who love your law, and nothing can make them stumble.
I wait for your salvation, LORD, and I follow your commands.
I obey your statutes, for I love them greatly.
I obey your precepts and your statutes, for all my ways are known to you.

ח Taw

May my cry come before you, LORD; give me understanding according to your word.
May my supplication come before you; deliver me according to your promise.
May my lips overflow with praise, for you teach me your decrees.
May my tongue sing of your word, for all your commands are righteous.
May your hand be ready to help me, for I have chosen your precepts.
I long for your salvation, LORD, and your law gives me delight.
Let me live that I may praise you, and may your laws sustain me.
I have strayed like a lost sheep. Seek your servant, for I have not forgotten your commands.

These next psalms are ones that would have been sung, either as worshippers approached the temple for worship, or as part of their liturgical worship. They would have been passed down through the generations, sung with emotion as the temple was threatened by invading forces and siege, and with longing in the days after the temple was destroyed and the people were in exile far from Jerusalem and from home.

Psalm 120

I call on the LORD in my distress, and he answers me.
Save me, LORD, from lying lips and from deceitful tongues.
What will he do to you, and what more besides, you deceitful tongue?
He will punish you with a warrior's sharp arrows, with burning coals of the broom bush.
Woe to me that I dwell in Meshek, that I live among the tents of Kedar!
Too long have I lived among those who hate peace.

I am for peace; but when I speak, they are for war.

Psalm 121

I lift up my eyes to the mountains— where does my help come from?
My help comes from the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth.
He will not let your foot slip—he who watches over you will not slumber;
indeed, he who watches over Israel will neither slumber nor sleep.
The LORD watches over you—the LORD is your shade at your right hand;
the sun will not harm you by day, nor the moon by night.
The LORD will keep you from all harm— he will watch over your life;
the LORD will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore.

Psalm 123

I lift up my eyes to you, to you who sit enthroned in heaven.
As the eyes of slaves look to the hand of their master,
as the eyes of a female slave look to the hand of her mistress,
so our eyes look to the LORD our God, till he shows us his mercy.
Have mercy on us, LORD, have mercy on us, for we have endured no end of contempt.
We have endured no end of ridicule from the arrogant, of contempt from the proud.

Psalm 125

Those who trust in the LORD are like Mount Zion, which cannot be shaken but endures forever.
As the mountains surround Jerusalem,
so the LORD surrounds his people both now and forevermore.
The scepter of the wicked will not remain over the land allotted to the righteous,
for then the righteous might use their hands to do evil.
LORD, do good to those who are good, to those who are upright in heart.
But those who turn to crooked ways the LORD will banish with the evildoers.
Peace be on Israel.

Psalm 126

When the LORD restored the fortunes of Zion, we were like those who dreamed.
Our mouths were filled with laughter, our tongues with songs of joy.
Then it was said among the nations, “The LORD has done great things for them.”
The LORD has done great things for us, and we are filled with joy.
Restore our fortunes, LORD, like streams in the Negev.

Those who sow with tears will reap with songs of joy.
Those who go out weeping, carrying seed to sow,
will return with songs of joy, carrying sheaves with them.

Psalm 128

Blessed are all who fear the LORD, who walk in obedience to him.
You will eat the fruit of your labor; blessings and prosperity will be yours.
Your wife will be like a fruitful vine within your house;
your children will be like olive shoots around your table.
Yes, this will be the blessing for the man who fears the LORD.
May the LORD bless you from Zion;
may you see the prosperity of Jerusalem all the days of your life.
May you live to see your children's children—peace be on Israel.

Psalm 129

“They have greatly oppressed me from my youth,” let Israel say;
“they have greatly oppressed me from my youth, but they have not gained the victory over me.
Plowmen have plowed my back and made their furrows long.
But the LORD is righteous; he has cut me free from the cords of the wicked.”
May all who hate Zion be turned back in shame.
May they be like grass on the roof, which withers before it can grow;
a reaper cannot fill his hands with it, nor one who gathers fill his arms.
May those who pass by not say to them,
“The blessing of the LORD be on you; we bless you in the name of the LORD.”

Psalm 130

Out of the depths I cry to you, LORD; Lord, hear my voice.
Let your ears be attentive to my cry for mercy.
If you, LORD, kept a record of sins, Lord, who could stand?
But with you there is forgiveness, so that we can, with reverence, serve you.
I wait for the LORD, my whole being waits, and in his word I put my hope.
I wait for the Lord more than watchmen wait for the morning,
more than watchmen wait for the morning.
Israel, put your hope in the LORD,
for with the LORD is unfailing love and with him is full redemption.
He himself will redeem Israel from all their sins.

Psalm 132

LORD, remember David and all his self-denial.
He swore an oath to the LORD, he made a vow to the Mighty One of Jacob:
“I will not enter my house or go to my bed, I will allow no sleep to my eyes
or slumber to my eyelids, till I find a place for the LORD,
a dwelling for the Mighty One of Jacob.”

We heard it in Ephrathah, we came upon it in the fields of Jaar:
“Let us go to his dwelling place, let us worship at his footstool, saying,
‘Arise, LORD, and come to your resting place, you and the ark of your might.
May your priests be clothed with your righteousness; may your faithful people sing for joy.’”

For the sake of your servant David, do not reject your anointed one.

The LORD swore an oath to David, a sure oath he will not revoke:
“One of your own descendants I will place on your throne.
If your sons keep my covenant and the statutes I teach them,
then their sons will sit on your throne for ever and ever.”

For the LORD has chosen Zion, he has desired it for his dwelling, saying,
“This is my resting place for ever and ever; here I will sit enthroned, for I have desired it.
I will bless her with abundant provisions; her poor I will satisfy with food.
I will clothe her priests with salvation, and her faithful people will ever sing for joy.

“Here I will make a horn grow for David and set up a lamp for my anointed one.
I will clothe his enemies with shame, but his head will be adorned with a radiant crown.”

Psalm 134

Praise the LORD, all you servants of the LORD who minister by night in the house of the LORD.
Lift up your hands in the sanctuary and praise the LORD.
May the LORD bless you from Zion, he who is the Maker of heaven and earth.

Psalm 135

Praise the LORD. Praise the name of the LORD;
praise him, you servants of the LORD, you who minister in the house of the LORD,
in the courts of the house of our God.

Praise the LORD, for the LORD is good; sing praise to his name, for that is pleasant.
For the LORD has chosen Jacob to be his own, Israel to be his treasured possession.
I know that the LORD is great, that our Lord is greater than all gods.

The LORD does whatever pleases him, in the heavens and on the earth,
in the seas and all their depths.

He makes clouds rise from the ends of the earth;
he sends lightning with the rain and brings out the wind from his storehouses.
He struck down the firstborn of Egypt, the firstborn of people and animals.
He sent his signs and wonders into your midst, Egypt, against Pharaoh and all his servants.
He struck down many nations and killed mighty kings—
Sihon king of the Amorites, Og king of Bashan, and all the kings of Canaan—
and he gave their land as an inheritance, an inheritance to his people Israel.

Your name, LORD, endures forever, your renown, LORD, through all generations.
For the LORD will vindicate his people and have compassion on his servants.

The idols of the nations are silver and gold, made by human hands.
They have mouths, but cannot speak, eyes, but cannot see.
They have ears, but cannot hear, nor is there breath in their mouths.
Those who make them will be like them, and so will all who trust in them.

All you Israelites, praise the LORD; house of Aaron, praise the LORD;
house of Levi, praise the LORD; you who fear him, praise the LORD.
Praise be to the LORD from Zion, to him who dwells in Jerusalem.
Praise the LORD.

Psalm 136

Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good. *His love endures forever.*
Give thanks to the God of gods. *His love endures forever.*
Give thanks to the Lord of lords: *His love endures forever.*
to him who alone does great wonders, *His love endures forever.*
who by his understanding made the heavens, *His love endures forever.*
who spread out the earth upon the waters, *His love endures forever.*
who made the great lights—*His love endures forever.*
the sun to govern the day, *His love endures forever.*
the moon and stars to govern the night; *His love endures forever.*
to him who struck down the firstborn of Egypt *His love endures forever.*
and brought Israel out from among them *His love endures forever.*
with a mighty hand and outstretched arm; *His love endures forever.*
to him who divided the Red Sea asunder *His love endures forever.*
and brought Israel through the midst of it, *His love endures forever.*
but swept Pharaoh and his army into the Red Sea; *His love endures forever.*
to him who led his people through the wilderness; *His love endures forever.*
to him who struck down great kings, *His love endures forever.*
and killed mighty kings— *His love endures forever.*

Sihon king of the Amorites *His love endures forever.*
and Og king of Bashan—*His love endures forever.*
and gave their land as an inheritance, *His love endures forever.*
an inheritance to his servant Israel. *His love endures forever.*
He remembered us in our low estate *His love endures forever.*
and freed us from our enemies. *His love endures forever.*
He gives food to every creature. *His love endures forever.*
Give thanks to the God of heaven. *His love endures forever.*

Psalm 146

Praise the LORD. Praise the LORD, my soul.

I will praise the LORD all my life; I will sing praise to my God as long as I live.
Do not put your trust in princes, in human beings, who cannot save.
When their spirit departs, they return to the ground; on that very day their plans come to nothing.

Blessed are those whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the LORD their God.

He is the Maker of heaven and earth, the sea, and everything in them—

he remains faithful forever.

He upholds the cause of the oppressed and gives food to the hungry.

The LORD sets prisoners free, the LORD gives sight to the blind,
the LORD lifts up those who are bowed down, the LORD loves the righteous.
The LORD watches over the foreigner and sustains the fatherless and the widow,
but he frustrates the ways of the wicked.

The LORD reigns forever,
your God, O Zion, for all generations.

Praise the LORD.

Psalm 147

Praise the LORD.

How good it is to sing praises to our God, how pleasant and fitting to praise him!

The LORD builds up Jerusalem; he gathers the exiles of Israel.

He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.

He determines the number of the stars and calls them each by name.

Great is our Lord and mighty in power; his understanding has no limit.

The LORD sustains the humble but casts the wicked to the ground.

Sing to the LORD with grateful praise; make music to our God on the harp.

He covers the sky with clouds; he supplies the earth with rain and makes grass grow on the hills.
He provides food for the cattle and for the young ravens when they call.

His pleasure is not in the strength of the horse, nor his delight in the legs of the warrior;
the LORD delights in those who fear him, who put their hope in his unfailing love.

Extol the LORD, Jerusalem; praise your God, Zion.

He strengthens the bars of your gates and blesses your people within you.
He grants peace to your borders and satisfies you with the finest of wheat.

He sends his command to the earth; his word runs swiftly.
He spreads the snow like wool and scatters the frost like ashes.
He hurls down his hail like pebbles. Who can withstand his icy blast?
He sends his word and melts them; he stirs up his breezes, and the waters flow.

He has revealed his word to Jacob, his laws and decrees to Israel.
He has done this for no other nation; they do not know his laws.

Praise the LORD.

Psalm 148

Praise the LORD.

Praise the LORD from the heavens; praise him in the heights above.

Praise him, all his angels; praise him, all his heavenly hosts.
Praise him, sun and moon; praise him, all you shining stars.
Praise him, you highest heavens and you waters above the skies.
Let them praise the name of the LORD, for at his command they were created,
and he established them for ever and ever— he issued a decree that will never pass away.
Praise the LORD from the earth, you great sea creatures and all ocean depths,
lightning and hail, snow and clouds, stormy winds that do his bidding,
you mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars,
wild animals and all cattle, small creatures and flying birds,
kings of the earth and all nations, you princes and all rulers on earth,
young men and women, old men and children.
Let them praise the name of the LORD, for his name alone is exalted;
his splendor is above the earth and the heavens.
And he has raised up for his people a horn,
the praise of all his faithful servants,
of Israel, the people close to his heart.
Praise the LORD.

Psalm 149

Praise the LORD.

Sing to the LORD a new song, his praise in the assembly of his faithful people.

Let Israel rejoice in their Maker; let the people of Zion be glad in their King.
Let them praise his name with dancing and make music to him with timbrel and harp.
For the LORD takes delight in his people; he crowns the humble with victory.

Let his faithful people rejoice in this honor and sing for joy on their beds.

May the praise of God be in their mouth, and a double-edged sword in their hands,
to inflict vengeance on the nations and punishment on the peoples,
to bind their kings with fetters, their nobles with shackles of iron,
to carry out the sentence written against them— this is the glory of all his faithful people.

Praise the LORD.

Psalm 150

Praise the LORD.

Praise God in his sanctuary; praise him in his mighty heavens.

Praise him for his acts of power; praise him for his surpassing greatness.
Praise him with the sounding of the trumpet, praise him with the harp and lyre,
praise him with timbrel and dancing, praise him with the strings and pipe,
praise him with the clash of cymbals, praise him with resounding cymbals.

Let everything that has breath praise the LORD.

Praise the LORD.