The Greatness of God's Word An Inductive Hebrew Grammar Psalm 119:41-48 – WAW

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• Gary Staats

Lesson 1: Psalm 119:41

1.1 **<u>Text</u>**

וִיבֹאֻנִי חַסָדֶךּ יְהוָה תְּשׁוּצַתְדָ כְּאָמְרָתֶדָ:

1.2 Vocabulary

בּוֹא	verb	"to come"
<u>ָת</u> ֶסֶד	noun	"mercy"
יְהוָה	noun	"the LORD" (the holy tetragrammaton)
הְשׁוּעָ ה	noun	"salvation"
אָמְרָה	noun	"word"

1.3 Grammar

In our study of the Psalms, especially Psalm 119, we come to **1** (waw), verses forty-one to forty-eight. This is an acrostic Psalm, in which the letters of the Hebrew alphabet are used for eight verses, all the way through. We begin in forty-one:

וִיבֹאֻנִי חֲסָדֶךּ יְהוָהֵ

"And let your mercies come unto me, O Lord..." 'יבאָרָי] is from the root אוב, "to come", and notice it has a ' prefix, showing that it is an imperfect, and here it is functioning as a jussive. It is a Qal

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imperfect/jussive, third person plural, with the , , the **qibbus**, giving it away as a plural verb. The J is a hinge, and the '. is a pronominal suffix first person singular. The l is not the **waw consecutive**, but just the **waw conjunctive**, the simple use of the l. Historically it would have been 'יָרָאָרָ'], where the **shewa** under the ' would have elided or dropped out, hence leaving a **hireq-yod**. *"Let your mercies come to me*..." דֹרָתָ סָרָן is from TO, the great noun meaning *"mercy"* or *"loyal love"*. Notice with the **seghol** under the T, it is showing a plural form, and the T is a pronominal suffix, second masculine singular. *"Let your mercies come ..., O Lord…"* מון יוסיר is simply a proper name for the LORD, of direct address.

<u>ה</u>ְשׁוּצָתְךּ כְּאָמְרָתֶך

1.4 **Translation**

"And let your mercies come unto me, O Lord, even your salvation, according to your word."

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1.5 Application/Interpretation

What he is really saying is, "Let Your mercies come unto me, O Lord, and I will find it in Your word. Your salvation, Your deliverance, according to Your word, as I study Your word, it tells me of Your kindness, of Your loyal love. Let it come to me, let me experience it, and let me also experience Your deliverance, Your salvation, that comes to me according to the teaching of Your word."

One of the most important things we as believers can do is to study the word of God, for we learn about God's mercies, and we learn of His salvation. As a Christian especially we learn of this in the New Testament, where we see the Lord Jesus Christ providing deliverance according to the word of the Lord. All the way through the New Testament, there is this emphasis on the salvation that He brings and the word of God is what teaches us that. This is why we need to spend time in the word of the Lord, and let it teach us and encourage us concerning the Lord's loyal kindnesses that have been given to us.

In verse forty-two, the Psalm continues...

Lesson 2: Psalm 119:42

2.1 <u>Text</u>

וְאֶעֶנֶה חֹרְפִי דָבָרָ כִּי־בָטַחְתִּי בִּדְבָרֶךּ:

2.2	Vocabulary

<i>עַ</i> נָה	verb	"to answer"
ŋŢŨ	verb	"to reproach"
ŢŢ	noun	"word"
בָּטַח	verb	"to trust"

2.3 Grammar

ןאָ*עֶנ*ָה

This I here can be translated "that", as sometimes it can mean "in order that", "that", or "and". It is possible we can translate it, "*That I may give answer (or) answer a word to my taunter (or)the one who is taunting me*..." It is just the conjunction "and", followed by the verb $\Pi_{\mathcal{Y}}$, which is from the root "to answer". The \aleph prefix shows this is a first person singular form of the verb here, a Qal imperfect first person singular from the root $\Pi_{\mathcal{Y}}$, meaning "to answer". Notice under the \mathcal{Y} , there is a "hurried" seghol or hateph-seghol, since the \mathcal{Y} cannot take a simple shewa. The hateph- or composite shewa with the seghol under the \aleph . There is also a

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seghol as the final vowel here, because historically this root had a final `, ``גָּעָ יֹגָעָ'. These *final yod* forms, which are called *"lamed yod"*, had a **n** added later, and the ` historically preferred the *seghol* in the last syllable, so that is why there is a *seghol* here. This reads differently, say, from '`גָּעָׂעָ', *"I will keep"*, with an O-class vowel. That probably is because the historic ` of this root preferred a *seghol*.

חּרְפִי דָבָר

"That I may answer a word... " רָבָרָ is just a masculine singular noun meaning "word". 'בָרָ הָרָ is from the root הווי to reproach". "So that I may answer a word to (understood here) the one reproaching me... "There is an O-class vowel a **holem**, after the Π , which shows this is a participle. Remember the participial form הווי שָׁבָּל, using the verb הווי is an O-class vowel followed by a **sere**. Here is the O-class vowel in הוויק yod suffix, which is a first person singular pronominal suffix. "So that I may answer a word to the one who is reproaching me (or) taunting me..."

כִּי⁻בָטַחְתִּי בִּדְבָרֶ**ך**ּ:

"...for I have trusted in your word." Notice P is the conjunction "for" or "because". P, P, P, P is from the root $\square \square \square \supsetneq \supsetneq$, "to trust". The P, suffix shows this is a first person singular. This is a Qal perfect first person singular from $\square \square \supsetneq ⊇$, "to trust". "...for I have trusted in your word." : \fbox{P} , \fbox{P} , \Huge{P} has the inseparable preposition ⊇, "in", with the noun \urcorner , which means "word", a singular noun with the second masculine singular pronominal suffix \fbox{P} , "your".

2.4 **Translation**

"That I may give an answer to the one who is taunting me, for I have trusted in Your word."

2.5 Application/Interpretation

The Psalmist is saying, "Lord, let Your salvation come to me according to Your word, that I might give an answer to the one who is taunting me with Your word, that Your word might be what I give an answer to the one taunting me, for I have trusted in Your word."

One of the most important things that we can do as believers is to understand that God's word is where we need to put our trust. We can give an answer to everyone who might ask us of the hope that is within us, we are told in the New Testament, with meekness and gentleness. When one is taunted because of the word of God, one answers with God's word. This is what the Psalmist is saying. "So I will answer a word for I have trusted in your word, and it gives me hope and security in the midst of a situation where perhaps I am being taunted for my faith."

Having said that, the Psalmist goes on in verse 43:

Lesson 3: Psalm 119:43

3.1 <u>Text</u>

3.2 Vocabulary

נָצַל	verb	"to take"
פָּה	noun	"mouth"
<u>רָּ</u> בָר	noun	"word"
אֱמֶת	noun	"truth"
מְאוָד	adverb	"exceedingly"
ָ <i>מִ</i> שְׁפָּט	noun	"ordinance"
יַחַל	verb	"to hope"

3.3 Grammar

וְאַל-תַּצֵל מִפִּי

"And do not take away from my mouth..."] again is the conjunction "and", and 5 s is the negative particle "not". "...do not cause to be taken from

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me... (or) be delivered from me... "The root is לְצָלָ , a *pe nun* verb. The has assimilated into the ¥, becoming לאָלָ חַ. The *a-i* vowel pattern, a *pathah* followed by a *sere*, is indicative of a Hiphil imperfect second masculine singular from לָצָל "...*do not cause to be delivered or taken away from my mouth*... "The ֹחָ in 'יָּהָ is from the preposition ', "from". The J has assimilated into the 'יָּ, the word "mouth". The *hireq-yod* is a pronominal suffix first person singular.

דְבַר־אֶמֶת *עַ*ד־מְא**ָ**ד

כִּי לְמִשְׁפָּטֶךּ יִחָלְתִּי:

"...for to your ordinance I have hoped. " יֹם is the preposition, bringing a causal effect, and יֹז is the inseparable preposition "to". עם יֹז is the noun meaning "ordinance" or "judgment", and ין is the pronominal suffix second masculine singular. יָחַלָּתִי is from the verb יָחַלָ, "to hope". It is Piel perfect first person singular from יָחַלָּתַי, "to hope".

3.4 **Translation**

"And do not take away from my mouth your word of truth, for I hope in your ordinances."

3.5 Application/Interpretation

Notice the word that the text is saying here, "Do not cause to take away from my mouth the word that is truth exceedingly (or) utterly. Don't take it utterly away, for I hope in your ordinances. It is in your truth and in your ordinances of truth that I cast my hope." \mathfrak{VPP} is probably a singular having a collective plural idea or meaning. "...for I am hoping in your ordinance or ordinances..."

Notice the hope of the Psalmist is in the ordinances of the Lord. He does not want God's word to be taken from him in any way. He wants to constantly have it. To have it taken away, he would be deprived of being able to give testimony before one mocking him. He wants God's word to always be with him.

One of the most important things we can do is to constantly meditate in the word of the Lord, so that we can keep it as a part of our heart, and in our mind, and in our soul. I remember, *"Your word have I hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against you,"* but also in order to give a hope again of what is for us. We find that in the word of God. If we do not use the word of God, if we do not spend time in it, in Scripture, then we lose it. I think there is a wonderful application here of not letting the word of truth slip away, and begin to lose control over it by not spending time in it, for it is in the word of God that our hope is found, the Psalmist is saying.

Then he goes on in verse 44:

Lesson 4: Psalm 119:44

4.1 **<u>Text</u>**

וְאֶשְׁמְרָה תוֹרָתְדָ תָמִיד לְעוֹלָם וַעֶּד:

שָֿמַר	verb	"to keep"
תּוֹרָה	noun	"Torah"
תָּמִיד	adverb	"continually"
עוֹלָם	noun	"age"
עַד	preposition	"unto"

4.3 Grammar

וְאֶשְׁמְרָה תוֹרָתְדָ

"So shall I keep (or) observe your Torah..."] is the conjunction followed by the verb $\neg \underline{\rho} \dot{\underline{\nu}}$, meaning "to observe" or "to keep". $\neg \underline{\rho} \dot{\underline{\nu}}$ has an \aleph prefix, showing that it is a first person singular. It is a Qal imperfect first person singular verb from $\neg \underline{\rho} \dot{\underline{\nu}}$. It has the emphatic Π_{-} ending, drawing an emphatic emphasis, "so shall I" or "that I might". We might render this, "So shall I observe your Torah..." Notice Π_{-} in can mean "instruction", and Π_{-} in construct with \neg . "So that I might observe your Torah..."

תַמִיד לְעוֹלָם וַעֶּד:

"So shall I observe your Torah continually." "גָּלִיך is the adverb meaning "continually." "I want to observe your Torah continually." "גָּעוֹלָם גָּעוֹלָם" ...forever and ever." לְעוֹלָם means literally "for the age", and ביי ווג and ever". It is a way of saying "continually" or "forever".

4.4 **Translation**

"So shall I observe your Torah continually."

4.5 Application/Interpretation

How important it is to constantly be in the Torah the whole of our lives, to study God's Law, God's instruction from scripture. He says, "*I want to observe it. I want to keep it.*"

Jesus, in the Sermon on the Mount, in chapter seven of Matthew said, "Blessed is the one that does the things that I have said." So we want to keep the word of the Lord. We need to be in it, but then we want to observe it, and we want to do it all the days of our life, the Psalmist is saying, "forever and for ever". We need to grow old and gray over the Torah, as **Pirke Aboth** says, and never stir from it. **Pirke Aboth** is a little tractate in the Mishnah, and in the sixth chapter of that tractate, we have that exhortation to be in Torah continually and grow old over it and gray over it.

How true that is for a believer in Jesus Christ, a Christian! We need to spend our time in the word of the Lord, and we need to grow old and gray over it, so that we can observe it continually.

Then he goes on in verse 45:

Lesson 5: Psalm 119:45

5.1 <u>Text</u>

וְאֶתְהַלְכָה בָרְחָבָה כִּי פִקֶדְיִד דְרָשְׁתִּי:

5.2 Vocabulary

<u>הַלַ</u> ך	verb	"to walk"
רָחָב	adjective	"broad, roomy, wide"
פּקוּד	noun	"precept"
ײַרַשׁ	verb	"to seek"

5.3 Grammar

וְאֶתְהַלְכָה בָרְחָבָה

"And I will walk (literally) in a broad place (understood), for your precepts I have sought." Notice] again is the conjunction "and", and $\exists \downarrow \downarrow \downarrow \uparrow$, is from the root $\exists \downarrow \downarrow \uparrow \uparrow$, "to walk". The $\restriction i \downarrow \downarrow \uparrow \uparrow$, "to walk". The $\restriction i \downarrow \downarrow \uparrow \uparrow$, "to walk". "So that I his prefix the preposition $; i \uparrow \downarrow \uparrow \uparrow \uparrow$, "So that I will walk..." This is followed by the preposition $; i \uparrow \downarrow \uparrow \uparrow \uparrow$, which is a phrase that actually means "in a broad place". It is from the root $2 \uparrow \uparrow \uparrow$, an adjective meaning a "broad, wide, or spacious (place)." What he is wanting is that the Lord would have a roomy space, a wide space that he might walk in. The idea here is that of being free from restrictions that would keep one

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from obeying the Lord and walking in a roomy place. That is what the Psalmist believes the word of God gives him: a roomy place.

כּי פּקֶדֶיךּ דָרָשְׁתִּי:

"...for I have sought your precepts." " ָ is the causal use of the conjunction, and דָרָקָדָרָ is from דוּפָקָ, meaning "precept". The segholyod puts it into the plural construct with דָ. "...for your precepts I have sought. " יָּקָשָׁרָ דָ is from the root שָׁרַ דָ. "to seek", a Qal perfect first person singular from שָׁרַדָ.

5.4 **Translation**

"And I will walk in a broad place, for your precepts I have sought."

5.5 Application/Interpretation

Notice the Psalmist wants to be free from worry and different anxieties and problems so that he can have a broad space where he can walk in obedience to the Lord, and to be at ease without being restricted by fears and anxieties, for he says, "I have sought your precepts." Since I have sought your precepts, make that road that I am walking on a broad, spacious road.

We might say that when a Christian desires to follow the Lord, he is given a broad road as he follows the Scripture, in the sense that one's anxieties can be cast upon the Lord, instead of being hemmed in by them, and we can have this broader way of movement, a spacious way of walking rather than being hemmed in by fears and anxieties. I think that is what he is really saying, that it frees us from that when we are in the precepts of the Lord.

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It is interesting that people often have the other idea; they think that the precepts of the Lord bind us. But in reality, the precepts of the Lord free us, and allow us to have a spacey road that we are walking on without being encumbered by fears and anxieties that we have without knowing these precepts and following them.

Then going on in verse forty-six:

Lesson 6: Psalm 119:46

6.1 **Text**

וַאַדַבְּרָה בְעֵדֹתֶיךּ נֶגֶר מְלָכִים וְלֹא אֵבוֹשׁ:

- 6.2 Vocabulary
 - <u>דָ ב</u>ַר "to speak" verb עַרַה "testimony" noun נֶגֶר preposition "before" מֶלֶך "king" noun לא negative particle "not" ψia "to be ashamed" verb

6.3 Grammar

<u>וְאַדַ</u>בְּרָה בְצֵדֹתֶיף

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נָגָד מְלָכִים

"...before kings..." אָלָרָים is the preposition "before", and קלָרָים is from קלָרָים, meaning "king", and the " ending makes it a masculine plural. "I will speak your testimonies before kings..."

וְלֹא אֵבְוֹשׁ:

"...and I will not be ashamed."] is the conjunction "and", \aleph is the negative particle "not", and ϑ is from the root ϑ is a bi-radical root, "to be ashamed". The \aleph puts it into the first person, so it is simply a Qal imperfect first person singular from ϑ is a simple set of the sind set o

6.4 **<u>Translation</u>**

"I will speak with your testimonies before kings, and I will not be ashamed."

6.5 Application/Interpretation

Even though he is before kings, he is not going to be embarrassed, he said, to speak God's testimonies before them, no matter how great those kings may be. One of the things we have to understand is that God's word is greater than all the majestic greatness of kings. We need to realize when we

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are in the word that we are in the highest royal authority that we could ever be in. Even before kings he is not ashamed to speak the Lord's testimonies, because He is the King of kings. I am reminded how that Jesus is מָלָרָ ים

T, the "King of kings", and His word will judge kings some day, and every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord and kings will bring their glory into His kingdom (in Revelation 21:24). We as believers need not be afraid to speak the Lord's testimonies even among those of high rank or high authority in this world, because there is no higher authority than the King of the Universe. The King of kings, which we as Christians believe to be Jesus, so we need not to be embarrassed to speak his word and his testimonies as we read this text through New Testament lenses.

He goes on in verse forty-seven:

Lesson 7: Psalm 119:47

7.1 <u>Text</u>

ּוְאָשְׁתַּעֲשׁע בְּמִצְוֹתֶיךּ אֲשֶׁר אָהָבְתִּי

7.2 Vocabulary

<u>שָׁעַ</u> ע	verb	"to delight"
מִצְוָה	noun	"commandment"
אָהַב	verb	"to love"

7.3 Grammar

וָאָשְׁתַּעַשַׁע בְּמִצְוֹתֶיך

"And I will delight in your commandments..." $\mathcal{Y} \dot{\mathcal{Y}} \dot{\mathcal{Y}} \dot{\mathcal{Y}} \dot{\mathcal{Y}} \dot{\mathcal{Y}} \dot{\mathcal{Y}} \dot{\mathcal{X}}$ is from the root $\mathcal{Y} \dot{\mathcal{Y}} \dot{\mathcal{Y}}$, which is a *double ayin* root, and it is the Hithpalpel imperfect first person singular from $\mathcal{Y} \dot{\mathcal{Y}} \dot{\mathcal{Y}}$. There is something interesting going on here. First of all, we have what is called *metathesis*, that is, the \mathcal{F} and the $\dot{\mathcal{V}}$ have interchanged. Instead of $\mathcal{Y} \dot{\mathcal{Y}} \dot{\mathcal{Y}}$

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person singular from אָשָׁעָל. "I will delight in your commandments..." לָּשָׁעַל. "I will delight in your commandments..." לָּשָׁנוּ the preposition "in" and לָצְוָה means "commandment". לו is the feminine plural suffix to the singular לָצְוָה In לָצְוָה, the seghol-yod puts it into plural construct with לָ the pronominal suffix second masculine singular. "I will delight myself..." The Hithpalpel has a reflexive idea here. "...in your commandments..."

ָאַשֶּׁר **אָהָ**כְתִּי:

"...which I love". אָשָׁר is the relative pronoun "which", and אָשָׁר is the Qal perfect first person singular with the ' ח ending, indicating the suffix of the first person. "And I am going to delight myself in your commandments, which I love."

7.4 **Translation**

"And I will delight myself in your commandments, which I love."

7.5 Application/Interpretation

What a beautiful statement that is made here! The Psalmist delights himself in the Lord's commandments, because he loves them. I believe that we as believers need to love the Lord's commandments and we need to delight ourselves in them every day, and we do it because we love them. He loves to be in the word of God. This is really what the Psalmist is saying.

Let us be people that love the book. I remember years ago when Dr. John Mitchell used to come to Dallas Seminary and he would say, "Are you reading your Bibles? Get in the closet and read your Bible. Do you love your Bible?" He told me one time that he read through a book of scripture forty times before he began to study it to preach it, following G. Campbell Morgan's advice. We need to love the word of the Lord. We need to want to be in it. It should be the passion of our heart. We need to delight ourselves in

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the Lord's commandments. What greater joy is there than meditating in the Torah, the Lord's word?

We continue to verse forty-eight:

Lesson 8: Psalm 119:48

8.1 <u>Text</u>

וְאֶשָּׂא־כַפַּי אֶל־מִצְוֹתֶיךּ אֲשֶׁר אָהָבְתִּי וְאָשִׂיחָה בְחֻקֶּידָ:

8.2 **Vocabulary** נשא "to lift up" verb ٦⊇ "hand" noun מִצְוָה "commandment" noun אָהַב "to love" verb שׂי∏ "to meditate" verb Π̈́ς "statute" noun

8.3 Grammar

וְאֶשָׂא⁻כַפַּי אֶל־מִצְוֹתֶיף

"And I will lift up my hands unto your commandments..."] is the simple conjunction, and $\aleph \psi \aleph$ is from the *pe nun* verb $\aleph \psi \downarrow$. The J has assimilated in this *pe nun* verb, $\aleph \psi \downarrow \aleph$ becoming $\aleph \psi \aleph$, and that *daghesh forte* is showing the assimilation of the J of the root having gone into the ψ , sort of like Pac Man. This is the Qal imperfect first person singular from $\aleph \psi \downarrow$. "I

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אֲשֶׁר אָהָכְתִּי

"...which I love..." $\forall \psi \dot{\chi}$ is the relative pronoun "which", and " $\dot{\chi} \dot{\chi} \dot{\chi}$ is the Qal perfect first person singular from the verb $2 \bar{\car{2}} \dot{\chi}$. When I "lift up the hands", it is looking at prayer or devotion and a longing to take in the commandments of the Lord, which the Psalmist says, "I love."

וְאָשִׁיחָה בְחַקֵּיךּ:

"...and I will meditate in your statutes." Π, Ψ, Ψ, Π is from the verb Π, Ψ, Ψ, Π "to meditate". The \uparrow is just the conjunction again. The \aleph gives it away as a first person singular, so it is a Qal imperfect first person singular, emphatic with the Π , suffix, and Π, Ψ, Π is the root. It is a middle weak, a middle yod root, a bi-radical root. "...so I will meditate in your statutes." Ξ is the preposition, and Π, Π is the word for "statute", and in the plural it becomes Π, Π, Π . It is in construct, a plural noun in construct again with Π , the pronominal suffix second masculine singular.

8.4 **Translation**

"And I will lift up my hands unto your commandments, which I love. And I will meditate on your statutes."

8.5 Application/Interpretation

"I am going to keep meditating in your statutes. I have a devotion and longing for them, because I love them." We are to love again the word of the Lord, and because we do love His commandments, his 'etched-in' or 'carved-in' statutes found in His word, the permanent statutes of the Lord and His instructions, we want to meditate continually there.

I am reminded of Psalm 1, verse 2:

כִּי אָם בְּתוֹרַת יְהוָה חֶפְצוֹ וּכְתוֹרָתוֹ יֶהְגֶה יוֹמָם וַלָיְלָה:

"But his delight is in the Torah of the Lord, and in this Torah he constantly meditates (he mumbles under his breath) day and night."

So we are to spend our days and our nights and our life meditating in the Lord's statutes, because we love His commandments. We, as Christians who know Jesus as our Lord and Savior, need to spend time meditating on what He has taught us and how in Scripture we can find Him, and we want to obey Him and we want to do His will. God's word is what guides us into that understanding.

This is a great series of verses, using each verse beginning with 1, looking again at the high elevation of the word of God, of Scripture. How much do we need to be people of the book, and spend our days and nights meditating in it, that we might know Christ in a deeper way, and the power of his resurrection, as Paul said, and the fellowship of his sufferings, as he spoke of in Philippians chapter three.