



# The Greatness of God's Word

An Inductive Hebrew Grammar

Psalm 119:33-40 – HE

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- Gary Staats

Lesson 1: Psalm 119:331.1 Text

הוֹרֵנִי יְהוָה דְרֹךְ חֻקֶיךָ וְאֶצְרְנָה עֵקֶב:

1.2 Vocabulary

יָרָה	verb	“to teach”
חֻק	noun	“statute”
נָצַר	verb	“to keep”
עֵקֶב	noun	“step”

1.3 Grammar

As we are working through Psalm 119, this great Psalm on the Word of God from the Hebrew, we come to ה of the Hebrew alphabet, in which each verse begins with ה, in verses thirty-three down to verse forty. And so we begin at thirty-three:

הוֹרֵנִי יְהוָה דְרֹךְ חֻקֶיךָ

“Teach me O Lord the way of your statutes, and I will keep it at every step.”

הוֹרֵנִי is from the root יָרָה, “to teach”, and notice we have a Hiphil

imperative second masculine singular with the pronominal suffix נִי, first common singular. We begin with “cause me to be taught” or “teach me”.

יָרָה, “to teach”, is from historically what is no doubt a *pe waw* verb, וָרָה,

and in the Hiphil imperative הוֹרְנֵי became הוֹרְנֵי, the *aw* changing to a long *holem waw*. “Teach me O Lord, the way of your statutes...”

יְהִי דְרֹךְ חֻקֶיךָ

דְרֹךְ is the noun meaning “way”. חֻקֶיךָ is from the noun חֻק meaning “statute”. The word חֻקֶיךָ is in the plural חֻקִּים and it is in construct with הֵ, the pronominal suffix, second masculine singular.

וְאֶצְרְנָהּ עֲקֵב

“Teach me O Lord the way of your statutes, and I will keep it at every step.”

אֶצְרְנָהּ (note the *daghesh forte* in the א) is from נָצַר, the root “to keep”.

It is a *pe nun* verb, and the נ has assimilated into the א, doubling it, and the

א is indicative of the first person singular of this root. The ו is just the simple *waw connective*. It is a Qal imperfect first person singular from נָצַר.

The ו is a hinge, followed by the הָ, which is the pronominal suffix, third masculine singular, meaning “it”. It refers to the “way” of your statutes”.

עֲקֵב is the noun meaning “step”. We could supply the adjective “every”, even though it is not stated in the text. The implied sense is that it is “...at every step.”

#### 1.4 Translation

“Teach me O Lord the way of your statutes, and I will keep it at every step.”

1.5 **Application/Interpretation**

The Psalmist wants to be taught by the Lord in the way of His carved-out statutes, and he promises that he will obey it and keep it at every step. That should be our desire, to take what the Lord has taught, the way of His statutes. It should be our desire to want to keep it all, at every step of our lives.

He goes on with the second ׀...

Lesson 2: Psalm 119:342.1 Text

הִבְיַנֵּי וְאָצְרָה תּוֹרַתְךָ וְאֶשְׁמְרָנָח בְּכָל-לֵב:

2.2 Vocabulary

בִּין	verb	“to understand”
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נָצַר	verb	“to keep”
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שָׁמַר	verb	“to keep”
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לֵב	noun	“heart”
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2.3 Grammar

הִבְיַנֵּי

“Give me understanding that I may keep your law, and that I might observe it with all my heart.” הִבְיַנֵּי is from the root בִּין, which means “to understand”. Notice it is a Hiphil imperative second masculine singular in this bi-radical root בִּין “cause me to understand”. The ך is a hinge, and the ם is a pronominal suffix first common singular “me”, so “give me understanding” or “cause me understanding”.

## וְאֶצְרֶה תּוֹרָתְךָ

וְ here is probably a simple *waw* that should be translated “*that*”, “*in order that*”, a purposeful use of the *waw* here. “*that I might keep your law.*”

Notice אֶצְרֶה is the root “*to keep*” here. We have an א prefix; the ו has assimilated into the צ, אֶצְרֶה becoming אֶצְרֶה. “*that I might keep*” is sort of a cohortative idea, “*let me keep*” with the ה suffix as well. “*let me keep*” or “*I will keep indeed*” תּוֹרָתְךָ “*your Torah*”, “*your teaching*”.

Notice the noun here is from תּוֹרָה, which is in construct with ך, the pronominal suffix second masculine singular. “*give me understanding*” or “*cause me to have understanding that I might keep your Torah...*”

## וְאֶשְׁמְרֶנָּה בְּכָל-לֵב:

“...and that I observe it...” Notice אֶשְׁמְרֶנָּה is from שָׁמַר, “*to keep*”, and that א is the prefix, first common singular. The ו again is a hinge getting to the ה, the pronominal suffix, third feminine singular. “*that I might keep it*” בְּכָל-לֵב “*with all my heart*”. בְּ is the instrumental use of the ב here, “*with*” כָּל “*the entirety of my heart*” or “*all my heart*”. Literally, it is “*all the heart*”. כָּל is simply the noun meaning “*all*”, followed by לֵב, meaning “*heart*”. “*with the entirety of my heart*”, the noun “*heart*”.

2.4 Translation

“*Give me understanding that I may keep your law, and that I might observe it with all my heart.*”

2.5 **Application/Interpretation**

Notice his desire. He wants understanding, that he might keep God's instruction, and observe it with his whole heart. This is one of the main emphases that we should have, that is, absorbing God's word with a total heart. By the Lord giving us understanding, our desire should be to absorb His word, His teaching, and to keep it with all of our heart.

Jesus said, "If you love me, keep my commandments." "My word will be life to you."

And then as we go on with the third ׀ in verse 35:



Lesson 3: Psalm 119:353.1 Text

הִדְרִיכֵנִי בְּנֹתֵיב מִצְוֹתֶיךָ כִּי־בּוֹ הִפְצֵתָּי:

3.2 Vocabulary

דָּבַךְ	verb	“to tread or walk in”
נֹתֵיב	noun	“path”
מִצְוָה	noun	“commandment”
הִפְצֵן	verb	“to take delight”

3.3 Grammar

הִדְרִיכֵנִי

“Cause me to walk or to tread in the path of your commandments, for in it I delight.” הִדְרִיכֵנִי is from the root דָּבַךְ, “to walk in a path” or “to tread” would be a good way to translate it. It has a ה prefix with an *a-i* vowel pattern, so it is a Hiphil imperative again, second masculine singular. We then have an ׁ hinge, and the ׁ pronominal suffix first common singular. “Make me to tread...”

## בְּנִתֵּיב מִצְוֹתֶיךָ

בְּ is the preposition “in” and נִתֵּיב is the noun meaning “path”, and it is in construct with מִצְוֹתֶיךָ, “the path of your commandments”. מִצְוָה is the noun meaning “commandment”, and מִצְוֹת is the feminine plural of מִצְוָה. Notice מִצְוֹתֶיךָ is in construct with הֵ, the pronominal suffix second masculine singular. “Make me to tread in the path of your commandments...”

## כִּי־בּוֹ הִפְצֵתִי:

“...for in it...” כִּי is the conjunction “for”, and בּוֹ is the preposition “in” with the pronominal suffix וֹ. הִפְצֵתִי “...in it I take delight.” הִפְצֵתִי is just a Qal perfect, first common singular, from הִפְצֵץ.

3.4 Translation

“Cause me to walk or to tread in the path of your commandments, for in it I delight.”

3.5 Application/Interpretation

Notice he is asking the Lord to cause him to make a path or to tread in the path of the Lord’s commandments, for he finds delight there. “...for in it I delight.”

I am reminded of Psalm 1:

## כִּי אִם בְּתוֹרַת יְהוָה הִפְצֹו

“and in the Torah is his delight”

וּבְתוֹרָתוֹ יִהְיֶה יוֹמָם וְלַיְלָה:

And because of that, “*in His Torah he meditates day and night.*”

We are to delight in the Word of God, and we are to love the Word of God and take delight in it. As Christians, that delight takes us to Jesus. He said, “Search the Scriptures, for in it you will find me.” That should be our goal, our desire, to delight in the Word of God, to find the Savior, to love Him and to worship Him.

In verse 36, another ׀ continues:

Lesson 4: Psalm 119:364.1 Text

הֲט־לְבִי אֶל-עֲדוֹתֶיךָ וְאֶל-בְּצָע:

4.2 Vocabulary

נָטַה	verb	“to turn”
לֵב	noun	“heart”
אֶל	preposition	“unto”
עֲדָה	noun	“testimony”
אֵל	negative particle	“not”
בְּצָע	noun	“covetousness”

4.3 Grammar

הֲט־לְבִי אֶל-עֲדוֹתֶיךָ

“Turn my heart unto your testimonies and not to covetousness.” הֲט־ is a doubly weak verb from נָטַה, meaning “to turn”. The final ה is elided. The ך has dropped out. It is a Hiphil imperative second masculine singular.

“Turn my heart”. Notice לֵב becomes לְבִי in construct with ך, first common singular pronominal suffix. “Turn my heart unto...” אֶל is the

preposition “unto”. עֲדָהּ is “testimony”, and עֲדוֹת is the feminine plural form with the ם ending, in construct with the *seghol-yod* with ך, pronominal suffix second masculine singular. “Turn my heart unto your testimonies...”

וְאֵלֹהִים לֹא יִצְעַק:

“...and not...” וְאֵלֹהִים is the conjunction “and” with אֵלֹהִים, meaning “not”.

וְאֵלֹהִים לֹא יִצְעַק “...unto covetousness.” יִצְעַק is a noun meaning “covetousness”. It is in the final pause form here from יִצְעַק becoming יִצְעַק, lengthening the *seghol* to a *pathah*.

#### 4.4 Translation

“Turn my heart unto your testimonies and not to covetousness.”

#### 4.5 Application/Interpretation

“Turn my heart to your testimonies and not unto covetousness.” Covetousness could refer here to the love of money. “Turn my heart to your testimonies.” Often in the Hebrew Scriptures, God’s testimonies are more precious than gold, even than fine gold, we are told in Psalm 19. Jesus said we can’t serve two masters; we can’t serve God and mammon, or money. We need to turn our heart to His testimonies, and not unto any kind of covetousness.

Then we turn to verse 37, where the ך continues:

Lesson 5: Psalm 119:375.1 Text

הֶעֱבַר עֵינַי מִרְאוֹת שָׁוְא בְּדַרְכֶּךָ חַיִּי:

5.2 Vocabulary

עָבַר	verb	“to turn”
עַיִן	noun	“eyes”
רָאָה	verb	“to see”
שָׁוְא	noun	“vanity”
דֶּרֶךְ	noun	“way”
חַיָּה	verb	“to live”

5.3 Grammar

הֶעֱבַר עֵינַי

“Turn my eyes from seeing vanity, and in your ways quicken me.” The first word הֶעֱבַר is from עָבַר , “to turn away”. The ה again is the sign of the Hiphil imperative with the *a-e* (*pathah-sere*) vowel pattern. It is the Hiphil imperative second masculine singular from עָבַר . “Turn away my eyes...”  
 עֵינַי is actually עַיִן in construct with יְ , the pronominal suffix first

common singular with the plural noun. עַיִן becomes עֵינַי, יְ being added as a pronominal suffix to make עֵינַי. “Cause to turn my eyes...”

## מִרְאוֹת שְׁוֵא

“...from looking at vanity.” The מ is the preposition, the ך has elided, מִן רְאוֹת, and we have compensatory lengthening under the מ from a *hireq* to a *sere*. מִן becomes מִ, “from”, as a result of the loss of the ך dropping out or eliding. רְאוֹת is from the verb רָאָה, “to see”, and it is the Qal infinitive construct form, with the preposition מִ. “...turn away my eyes from seeing...” שְׁוֵא. שְׁוֵא is “that which is vain”, a noun meaning “vanity”.

## בְּדַרְכֶּךָ חֲיִנֵּי:

“...but in Your ways...” בְּדַרְכֶּךָ contains the word דַּרְךְ, which means “way”, and the preposition ב “in”. It is a plural noun in construct with the second masculine suffix ךְ, meaning “your”. “...in your ways...” חֲיִנֵּי means “to quicken” from חָיָה. The final ה has elided, and the verb is a Piel imperative second masculine singular from חָיָה. The יְ is the pronominal suffix first common singular with the hinge ךְ.

### 5.4 Translation

“Turn my eyes from seeing vanity, and in your ways quicken me.”

5.5 Application/Interpretation

What he is saying is, turn away my eyes from beholding that which is worthless, that which does not really have much value, which is vanity, and quicken me in your ways. Give me strength, give me life, to be in Your ways, for Your ways are always going to lead me in the right way, away from things that are vain. I want to stay in Your ways, and not stray off into vain things.

That reminds me of one of the hymns, when it talks about “quicken me”, and that is going to be repeated again. I used to sing it as a boy,

*We praise thee O God for the Son of Thy love,  
For Jesus who died and has now gone above.*

*Hallelujah, thine the glory, Hallelujah amen,  
Hallelujah, thine the glory, Revive us again.*

*We praise thee O God for thy spirit of light  
Who has shown us our Savior and scattered our night.*

*All glory and praise to the Lamb that was slain,  
Who has borne all our sins and has cleansed every stain.*

*Revive us again, fill each heart with Thy love,  
May each soul be rekindled from fire from above.*

*Hallelujah, thine the glory, Hallelujah amen,  
Hallelujah, thine the glory, Revive us again.*

This is a wonderful old hymn, in which the hymn writer is expressing the same thought, that we want to have reviving in our hearts, and our eyes to be turned away from the things of this world that prove to be vain. This is what the Psalmist is saying. As we turn our eyes to Jesus as Christians, we do receive a revitalization in our soul, through finding Him in the Word.

And then, turning to verse thirty-eight:



Lesson 6: Psalm 119:386.1 Text

הִקְמֵ לְעַבְדְּךָ אִמְרֹתֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר לְיִרְאַתְךָ:

6.2 Vocabulary

קוּם	verb	“to establish or confirm”
עַבְדְּךָ	noun	“servant”
אִמְרָה	noun	“word”
אֲשֶׁר	relative pronoun	“which or that”
יִרְאַה	noun	“fear”

6.3 Grammar

הִקְמֵ לְעַבְדְּךָ

“Confirm to your servant your word.” “Establish” or “confirm” comes from the root קוּם, a middle weak verb. The ה prefix, followed by the *sere*, indicates a Hiphil imperative second masculine singular. “Confirm to your servant...” לְ is the preposition, and עַבְדְּךָ becomes עַבְדְּךָ in construct with ךְ, the pronominal suffix second masculine singular. “Confirm to your servant...”

## אִמְרָתְךָ

“...Your word...” אִמְרָתְךָ is from אִמְרָה, meaning “word”. It is in construct, becoming אִמְרָתְךָ with ךְ, pronominal suffix, second masculine singular, again. “Confirm to your servant your word, ...”

## אֲשֶׁר לְיִרְאָתְךָ:

“...which...” אֲשֶׁר is the relative pronoun. לְיִרְאָתְךָ literally, “which is to your fear.” Possibly it is the fear which comes to those who actually hold on, or who revere you. Literally it is simply “which is to your fear”, in other words, “to the fear of you”. לְ is the preposition “to”, יִרְאָה means “fear”, and it is in construct with ךְ, the pronominal suffix, second masculine singular. “Confirm to your servant your word, which is [literally] to your fear,” that is, which is to those that have a fear for you. I think that is the idea here.

6.4 Translation

“Confirm to your servant your word, which is to your fear.”

6.5 Application/Interpretation

He wants his word to be established, especially to him, the Psalmist, who fears the Lord. In order to have God’s Word established, we must fear Him. We must reverence Him. I think that is so key in this particular verse.

He goes on in verse thirty-nine:

Lesson 7: Psalm 119:397.1 Text

הֶעֱבַר חֲרָפְתִּי אֲשֶׁר יִגְרֹתִי כִּי מִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ טוֹבִים:

7.2 Vocabulary

עָבַר	verb	“to turn away”
חֲרָפָה	noun	“reproach”
יָגַר	verb	“to dread”
מִשְׁפָּט	noun	“ordinance”
טוֹב	adjective	“good”

7.3 Grammar

הֶעֱבַר חֲרָפְתִּי

“Turn away my reproach, which I dread, for your ordinances are good.”

הֶעֱבַר is from עָבַר, which is “to cause to pass away”. This is a Hiphil imperative, second masculine singular. חֲרָפְתִּי is important to be understood that it is from חֲרָפָה, meaning “reproach”, and it is in construct, becoming חֲרָפַת, with the pronominal suffix, first common singular ךְּ. “Take away my reproach...”

אֲשֶׁר יִגְרֹתִי

“...which I dread...” אֲשֶׁר is the relative pronoun, and יִגְרֹתִי is from the verb יָגַר, “to dread”. It is a Qal perfect first common singular from that root, with the יִת ending, showing it is a first common singular.

כִּי מִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ טוֹבִים:

“...for your ordinances are good”. כִּי is the conjunction “for”, and מִשְׁפָּט has to do with ordinances of justice. It is a plural noun in construct with the יִ (sere-yod) with the pronominal suffix ךָּ, second masculine singular. “...for your ordinances are good.” טוֹבִים is an adjective from טוֹב, and the ים is showing a masculine plural. “...for your ordinances are good ordinances.”

#### 7.4 Translation

*“Turn away my reproach, which I dread, for your ordinances are good.”*

#### 7.5 Application/Interpretation

He wants the Lord to take away any reproach, anything that would bring reproach to the name of the Lord, because he dreads that. He wants to rest in the Lord’s ordinances, for they are good.

Of course, that should be our desire, that the Lord would remove any type of reproach in our lives. From those that would even reproach us as Christians, because we do not live up to what we are supposed to do. We are to dread not doing that, but to be faithful to the Lord.

Finally, we come to verse forty:

Lesson 8: Psalm 119:408.1 Text

הִנֵּה תִאֲבָתִי לְפִקְדֹתֶיךָ בְּצִדְקֹתֶיךָ חַיְיָ:

8.2 Vocabulary

הִנֵּה	interjection	“behold!”
תִּאֲבָ	verb	“to long for”
פִּקְוֹד	noun	“precepts”
צִדְקָה	noun	“righteousness”
חַיָּה	verb	“to give life”

8.3 Grammar

הִנֵּה תִאֲבָתִי לְפִקְדֹתֶיךָ

“Behold, ...” or “Lo, I have longed for your precepts. Quicken me... [there we have it again:] Quicken me in your righteousness.” הִנֵּה is the particle or interjection rendered “behold”. תִּאֲבָתִי is a Qal perfect first common singular from תִּאֲבָ, “to long for”. “...I have longed for...” It goes with the לְ in לְפִקְדֹתֶיךָ “...I have longed for...” פִּקְדֹתֶיךָ is the plural noun in construct from פִּקְוֹד, meaning “precepts”. The יְךָ is the second masculine singular pronominal suffix with the noun in construct with the *sere-yod*. “Behold, I have longed after your precepts...”

בְּצִדְקֹתֶיךָ יְיָ:

“...in your righteousness...” צִדְקָה means “righteousness”, and צִדְקָה becomes צִדְקָתְךָ in construct again with כִּי, and בְּ is just the preposition.

“...in your righteousness...” יְיָ is a Piel imperative second masculine singular with the pronominal suffix ךְּ, first common singular. “...quicken me” or “...give life to me.”

#### 8.4 Translation

*“Behold, I have longed for your precepts. Quicken me in your righteousness.”*

#### 8.5 Application/Interpretation

What he is really saying is that since the Lord has צִדְקָה or righteousness, he wants the Lord to give him that, and he wants to have that, because he has longed for His precepts, to obey what God has taught, and to be encouraged and to be revived and refreshed anew according to God’s righteousness and not his own.

Again, we are reminded of that hymn:

*Revive us again, fill each heart with Thy love,  
May each soul be rekindled from fire from above.*

We are quickened through God’s precepts, through His word, by loving them, by doing them, and by fulfilling them.

I am reminded of the great text in Psalm 119, verse eleven:

בְּלִבִּי צִפְנֹתִי אִמְרֹתֶיךָ

*“Your word have I hidden in my heart,*

לְמַעַן לֹא אֶחַטָּא לָךְ:

*that I might not sin against you.”*

I learned that as a boy in the old King James, “Thy word have I hidden in **mine** heart, that I might not sin against you.”

As we hide God’s word in our heart, it quickens us and helps us to try to be righteous according to His righteousness. Of course, that is only possible through Christ, who died and who suffered for us, that we might be justified and we might receive the righteousness of God, the δικαιοσύνη, through faith, not through works, but through faith and the Word then helps us to live out that faith in the lifestyle that the Lord would have us to be and to fulfill.