



# The Greatness of God's Word

An Inductive Hebrew Grammar

Psalm 119:9-16 - BETH

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**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I want to thank my former student Joseph Boehler for his tremendous overall help in typing this book for me. I want to thank my colleague Dr. Jim Davison for editing and formatting this work.

I also want to thank my former students and colleagues in ministry, Marty Daly for all of his technological expertise and help in the publication of my works, and Ruth Whitaker for her help in saving my works for publication.

I also would like to thank my parents for instilling in me a love of the Bible from childhood.

Finally, and foremost, I want to thank my wife Janet for her unfailing encouragement, her infinite patience and kindness, and for her constant love and sharing in all of life and ministry with me. She is truly אִשָּׁת־חַיִל.

- Gary Staats

## Introduction

Beginning at verse nine of Psalm 119, we now have the letter **ב** in the acrostic that will be used for eight verses. It begins:

### Lesson 9: Psalm 119:9

#### 9.1 Text

בְּמָה יִזְכָּה-נֶעֶר אֶת-אֲרֻחוֹ לְשֹׁמֵר כְּדִבְרֵי:

#### 9.2 Vocabulary

בְּ	preposition	“with”
מָה	interrogative	“what”
זָכָה	verb	“to purify”
נֶעֶר	noun	“young man”
אֶת	sign of the direct object	(does not translate)
אֲרֻחַ	noun	“way”
לְ	preposition	“to”
שֹׁמֵר	verb	“to keep”
כְּ	preposition	“according to”
דִּבְרֵי	noun	“word”

### 9.3 Grammar

בַּמָּה

Notice the **ב** is the inseparable preposition, “with” the interrogative pronoun, “with what.”

יִצְכֶּה

is from the verb **זָכַה**, meaning, “to purify,” and notice it is a Piel imperfect, third person, masculine singular with a *shewa pathach* and the doubling of the middle radical in the **כ**. So “with what shall a **נֶעֱר** cleanse his way?”

נֶעֱר

is a noun meaning, “young man,” or “man.”

אֶת

is the sign of the direct object.

אֶרְחוּ

is from **אָרַח** meaning, “way.” Notice **ו** is the pronominal suffix, third masculine singular. So, “With what shall a young man cleanse his way?”

לְשָׁמַר

Notice, “in keeping” or “to keep.” This is a qal infinitive construct, from the root **שָׁמַר**. Notice it has a **ל** prefix and an O-class vowel.

כַּדְּבָרְךָ

Notice **כ** is the inseparable preposition, “according to,” and **דְּבָרְךָ** means, “word.”

Notice **ךָ** is the pronominal suffix second masculine singular.

#### **9.4 Translation**

*“With what shall a young man purify his way? By taking heed, according to your word.”*

#### **9.5 Application/Interpretation**

So one cleanses his way and keeps his way pure by spending time in the word of God. It's in Scripture that we purify our lives and our path in life.

## Lesson 10: Psalm 119:10

## 10.1 Text

בְּכֹל-לְבַי דְּרִשְׁתִּיךָ אֶל-תִּשְׁגִּנִי מִמִּצְוֹתֶיךָ:

## 10.2 Vocabulary

בְּ	preposition	“with”
כֹּל	noun	“entirety”
לֵב	noun	“heart”
דִּרַשׁ	verb	“to seek”
אֶל	negative particle	“not”
שִׁגַּג	verb	“to err”
מִן	preposition	“from”
מִצְוָה	noun	“commandment”

## 10.3 Grammar

בְּכֹל-לְבַי

Notice בְּ again is the inseparable preposition. כֹּל is a noun meaning “entirety,” and לְבַי is in construct with כֹּל from the word לֵב for “heart.” י is the pronominal suffix, first person singular.

## דַּרְשָׁתִּיךָ

Notice דַּרַשׁ means “to seek.” The יְהִי ending is the suffix for the first person. ךָּ is your pronominal suffix second masculine singular. So, “*with all my heart or with all my mind, I have sought you diligently.*” So he wants a relationship with the Lord, and with all of his heart or with all of his mind he has sought the Lord.

## אַל־תִּשְׁגִּינִי

אַל is the negative particle, “not,” and תִּשְׁגִּינִי is from the root שגג, meaning “to err.” Notice you have a ת prefix, which shows we are looking at a second person masculine singular, and we have an A-class vowel, a *pathach* under the ת followed by a *sere* under the ג, showing a Hiphil imperfect. Notice the *daghesh* in the ג indicates there has been reverse assimilation from the root שגג, which is a double *ayin* root, in which the final ג has assimilated back into the second radical causing a doubling, or a *daghesh forte*. The ךָּ is again the pronominal suffix, first common singular. So, “*do not cause me to err.*” I think the idea here is simply, “*protect me; do not let me err.*”

## מִמְצֹתֶיךָ

מִ is your preposition מִן, where the ךָּ has assimilated into the מ. מְצֹתֶיךָ is the plural, with the ׁ ending, from מְצֹה. The ׁ indicates a feminine plural. ךָּ, preceded by the ךָּ shows a second masculine singular pronominal suffix put on to a plural noun. So, “*do not let me err,*” or “*stray away.*” Even in an unintentional way, “*inadvertently, don’t let me err from your commandments. Help me to keep your commandments; that is my sole desire. With all my heart, I have sought you.*”

#### **10.4 Translation**

*“With all my heart, I have sought you. Do not let me err from your commandments.”*

#### **10.5 Application/Interpretation**

We need to seek the Lord with all of our heart and keep his commandments. As Christians, as we look at the New Testament, we need to seek Christ in a deeper way. Paul said it was his desire to know the Lord, and to know His suffering and the power of His resurrection in Philippians chapter three. So we are to seek the Lord with all our heart, and it is through the Word that we find Him. The Lord says basically that as we search the Scripture, we find Him in John chapter eight. Even in the Lord’s prayer, “lead us not into temptation,” seems to fit the idea here of not allowing us to inadvertently, or unintentionally even, err from our Lord’s commandments.



Lesson 11: Psalm 119:11

11.1 Text

בְּלִבִּי צִפְנֹתִי אִמְרֹתֶיךָ לְמַעַן לֹא אֶחְטָא־לָךְ׃

11.2 Vocabulary

צִפֵּן	verb	“to treasure up”
אִמְרָה	noun	“word”
לְמַעַן	preposition	“so that”
לֹא	negative particle	“not”
חָטָא	verb	“to sin”

11.3 Grammar

בְּלִבִּי

The ב is the preposition, followed by the noun לֵב, which in construct becomes לִבְ with the pronominal first person suffix in the ך. So, “*With my heart, צִפְנֹתִי I have laid up, or treasured up.*”

צִפְנֹתִי

Notice צִפְנֹתִי is from the root צִפֵּן, which means “to treasure up.” The תִּי is your affix, or your suffix, showing a first person singular onto that verb. This is your Qal perfect, first person singular from the root צִפֵּן. Basically, it is God’s Word that we are to lay up in our mind.

## אִמְרָתְךָ

Notice אִמְרָה becomes אִמְרָת in construct, with ךְ. The *seghol* is a hinge vowel that is taking us to the ךְ. Notice, “*In my heart I have treasured up your Word.*”

One of the most important things we can do is to memorize the Word of God and treasure it in our hearts. I remember learning this verse as a little boy in the old King James Version, “*I have laid up thy word in mine heart, in order that I might not sin against Thee.*” How true that is. We have lost the concept of memory today, and to some degree, we need to get back to it, memorizing the Word, laying it up in our heart.

## לְמַעַן

Notice לְמַעַן is a preposition of purpose “*in order that.*”

## לֹא

is the negative particle, meaning “*not.*”

## אֶחָטָא

Notice אֶחָטָא is from the root חָטָא “*to sin.*” It is the Qal imperfect, first person singular. Notice the א prefix indicates the imperfect. We have the *seghol* under the א because we have the composite *hateph-seghol* under the ח and the *seghol* part of that shifts over under the א in such an environment. Again, we have the א ending because we have a final א. So this is a *lamed aleph* verb, with the final long *qames* in the final syllable.

לְ

is just the preposition “to” or “toward.” לְ is the suffix, second masculine singular added to that preposition. So, “*In my heart,*” or, “*in my mind, I want to treasure your word, in order that I might not sin against you.*”

#### **11.4 Translation**

*“With my heart, I have treasured your word, that I might not sin against you.”*

#### **11.5 Application/Interpretation**

It is the Word of God that helps us obey the Lord and not commit sin against Him, as we hide the Word of God in our heart. That is why it is so paramount that we spend time in the Word; that the Word cleanse us, that the Word of God guide us. Paul in Second Timothy will say that all Scripture is *theopneustos*, or “*God breathed,*” and profitable for teaching, for correction, or actually, “*turning the light on,*” for resetting our broken bones, as it were, restoring them and leading us in the right way. So we need to be in the Word of God so that we do not sin against the Lord. We need to let His Word permeate our hearts. Its memory is so critical.

Lesson 12: Psalm 119:12

12.1 Text

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה לְמַדְּנִי חֻקֶיךָ:

12.2 Vocabulary

בָּרַךְ	verb	“to bless”
אַתָּה	pronoun	“you”
יְהוָה	Tetragrammaton	“Lord” (proper noun)
לַמַּד	verb	“to teach”
חֻק	noun	“statute”

12.3 Grammar

בָּרוּךְ

Notice בָּרוּךְ is a Qal passive participle with the *qames* and the *shureq*, meaning, “*having been blessed.*” So in relationship to the Lord, He causes our heart to be blessed in that wonderful relationship with Him and to be happy and to prosper in a spiritual sense. So, “*blessed are you O Lord; teach me your statutes.*” In other words, we are to bless the Lord; we are to bow the knee before Him so that we can receive the blessing from Him, and He might then cause our hearts to be blessed as we bless Him.

אַתָּה

is the second personal pronoun meaning “*you.*”

יְהוָה

is the Tetragrammaton, a proper noun meaning “*Lord*.” So “*blessed are You, O Lord*.” We need to worship the Lord. We need to bow down before Him, and adore Him.

לְמַדְנִי

Notice לְמַדְנִי is from the root לַמַּד, “*to teach*,” and we have a *pathach* followed by the doubling of the middle radical in the מ. This is your Piel imperative. If we take the Piel imperfect, we can read it as יִלְמַדְנִי becoming לְמַדְנִי in the imperative. In other words, we move from the imperfect to the imperative by knocking off the prefix, and we have a *pathach* under the ל, followed by the doubling of the מ with the *daghesh forte*. This vowel pattern is characteristic of a Piel stem in the imperative. So, “*teach me*,” and notice again, the suffix in the נִי. The ך is the first person pronominal suffix.

חֻקֶיךָ

Notice, the plural here is looking at statutes that are engraven, like in stone. So חֻקִּים becoming חֻקֶיךָ where the “o” in the *holem* is interchanged with the *qibbus* here, and the doubling of the ק in the plural form, and notice again, the suffix ך, which is the second masculine singular pronominal suffix. So let us bless the Lord, the psalmist says, and “*teach me your permanent statutes*.”

## 12.4 Translation

“*Blessed are You, O Lord; teach me your permanent statutes*.”

### **12.5 Application/Interpretation**

One of the most important things that we should ask the Lord is to let Him teach us. He is our great teacher. As we look in the New Testament, the Holy Spirit in John 16 is to guide us into all truth. I can remember in seminary days, where the professor would often begin class by saying, “The Holy Spirit is our greatest teacher. He will help and actually do the teaching of the class.” So it is so critical to allow the Holy Spirit to teach us, to communicate God’s permanent statutes with us, and so let Him be our teacher.

Lesson 13: Psalm 119:13

13.1 Text

בְּשִׁפְתַי סִפְרָתִי כֹל מִשְׁפָּטֵי־פִיָּה:

13.2 Vocabulary

שִׁפָּה	noun	“lip”
סִפַּר	verb	“to proclaim”
מִשְׁפָּט	noun	“regulation”
פֶּה	noun	“mouth”

13.3 Grammar

בְּשִׁפְתַי

The בְּ is the inseparable preposition. שִׁפָּה is the noun meaning “lip,” and

בְּשִׁפְתַי is actually the plural noun in construct with יְ, which is the pronominal suffix, first person singular, which is added to the plural noun. As we look at this, we are taught the importance of praising the Lord with our lips.

סִפְרָתִי

סִפְרָתִי is a Piel, meaning, “to rehearse,” in the first person singular, or to “share,” all of the ordinances that the Lord has taught us.

כֹּל

Notice כֹּל is the noun, again, meaning “all” or “totality.”

מִשְׁפָּטַי

is from מִשְׁפָּט, meaning “*ordinance*.” These are the kind of judgments that have to do with interpersonal relationships that are taught to declare God’s righteous requirements among individuals. Notice that ךְּ is with מִשְׁפָּט in the plural masculine form. So, “*all the judgments of your mouth.*”

פִּי

פִּי is the word for “*mouth*.” The noun is followed by the pronominal suffix, second masculine singular. So not only does he lay God’s Word up from his heart, but all the ordinances that come from His mouth he wants to teach.

### 13.4 Translation

*“With my lips I have declared all the ordinances of your mouth.”*

### 13.5 Application/Interpretation

It is interesting that God’s Word goes back to His mouth; to what He has said, what He has spoken. So it’s that Word that we are to lay up and then rehearse to others. It is sad that often we do not talk about the things of the Lord in life, and yet this is what should be the main point of our conversation of what we are sharing. How critical that is! In Rabbinic literature, it is taught that if you don’t spend time talking about the Torah, it is as though you have deeply sinned against the Lord. I think as Christians how important it is to talk about the Lord and His Word, because His mouth has spoken His message to us that we’re to pass on to others.



Lesson 14: Psalm 119:14

14.1 Text

בְּדֶרֶךְ עֵדוּתֶיךָ שִׂשְׂתִּי כָּעַל כָּל-הוֹן:

14.2 Vocabulary

דֶּרֶךְ	noun	“way”
עֵדוּת	noun	“legal provision”
שׂוֹשׂ	verb	“to rejoice”
עַל	preposition	“over”
הוֹן	noun	“wealth”

14.3 Grammar

בְּדֶרֶךְ

Notice בְּ is again the preposition “in.” דֶּרֶךְ is the noun meaning “way,” in construct with עֵדוּתֶיךָ.

עֵדוּתֶיךָ

From עֵדוּת, this is the plural form, with the וּת, followed by the pronominal suffix put on the plural verb, יָךְ . Notice it is a second masculine singular pronominal suffix, “*In the way of your testimonies.*”

שִׁשְׁתִּי

This is from שִׁשׁ, “to rejoice.” It is a middle-weak verb and it becomes שִׁשְׁתִּי with the affix, or the suffix יִתִּי, showing we are looking at the first person singular from the root שִׁשׁ. “In the way of your testimonies, I have rejoiced.” This middle-weak verb came historically from שִׁשׁ and the ל actually dropped out. We then shorten the verb in the Qal perfect to a bi-radical root. It becomes שִׁשׁ, and it is the Qal perfect, 3<sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, like קָם from קָוִם, “to rise.” Historically קָוִם became קָם in the Qal perfect 3<sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, thus in a similar way שִׁשׁ becomes שִׁשׁ in the Qal perfect. So, “In the way of Your testimonies, I have rejoiced” כָּעַל כָּל־הוֹן.

כָּעַל

Literally, “as above.” כָּ is just your preposition “as,” and notice עַל can be translated here “above,” or “upon.” I would probably render this “above.”

כָּל־הוֹן

“All wealth.” כָּל is the noun meaning “all,” and הוֹן is the noun, meaning “wealth.” So, “as above all wealth,” it reads,

#### 14.4 Translation

“In the way of Your testimonies I have rejoiced, above all wealth.”

### **14.5 Application/Interpretation**

Notice God's Word is more precious than gold. He wants to rejoice in the way of the Lord's testimonies that are more joyful to him than all the acquisition of silver, or wealth. One of the important things that we must never lose sight of is that we cannot serve two masters. We cannot serve God and *mammon*, the Aramaic word for money. Jesus teaches that in the Sermon on the Mount, and how important it is, to love the Word of God above all wealth. But often in life we enjoy our things, our toys, and our wealth more than the Word of God. It is God's Word that takes us to understand our Lord Jesus Christ, and who He is, and what He's done for us. So we are to love the testimonies of God above all wealth. This is what this great verse is teaching.

Lesson 15: Psalm 119:15

15.1 Text

בְּפִקְדֵי יְיָ אֲשֶׁר יָחָה וְאֶבִּיטָה אֶרְחֹתֶיךָ:

15.2 Vocabulary

פִּקְדֵיִם	noun	“precepts”
שִׁיחַ	verb	“to meditate”
נִבַּט	verb	“to look”
אֶרְחַח	noun	“way”

15.3 Grammar

בְּפִקְדֵיִךְ

Notice בְּ is the inseparable preposition, and פִּקְדֵיִךְ is from the noun, meaning “precepts.” פִּקְדֵי is the noun, and in the plural construct form, it becomes פִּקְדֵיִךְ. Notice the ךְ the pronominal suffix, second masculine singular has been put on to this plural noun in construct. So, “*In your precepts...*”

אֲשֶׁר יָחָה

שִׁיחַ means “to meditate.” Notice it is a middle-weak verb. With the ךְ, historically an *ayin-waw/yod* form שִׁיחַ becoming שִׁיחַ, and in the root, ךְ loses its consonantal quality. Notice the אֲ is the first person singular prefix. So it is the Qal

imperfect, first person singular, and the ׀ ending makes it intensive. So, “*In Your precepts, I will meditate.*”

### וְאַבְיָטָה

“*I will delight,*” or, “*I will look to your paths.*” “*Look,*” in the sense of having great respect. “*I will occupy my thoughts with you,*” the psalmist is saying, “*and I will look into your ways in a deep way so that I can do them and respect them.*” Notice the ׀ is a conjunction. It is a simple conjunction, with the imperfect here, so it has a *shewa* under the ׀. It is not what we call a *waw consecutive*, or *waw conversive*, but it is just a simple conjunction “*and.*” אַבְיָטָה is the Hiphil imperfect, first person singular from the root נבט. Notice the ׀ of the *pe nun* verb has assimilated into the ׀ causing the doubling in the ׀. אַבְיָטָה becomes אַבְיָטָה with the ׀ assimilates by progressive assimilation. The A-I vowel pattern gives it away as a Hiphil, and ׀ makes it intensive again, so “*I will cause to look intensely in your paths.*” In other words, “*I am going to have deep respect for them, and desire to do them as I gaze intently into your paths based on the precepts you have taught me.*”

### אֶחָדְךָ

This is from אַחַדְךָ, meaning “*path.*” The ׀ is the sign of the feminine plural. The ׀, preceded by the ׀, is indicative of the second person pronominal suffix put on to a plural noun. So, “*I am going to take great respect and look into your ways so that I can do them, and I do this by meditating in your precepts.*”

## 15.4 Translation

“*I will meditate in your precepts, and I will look into your paths.*”

### **15.5 Application/Interpretation**

Over and over again, the New Testament emphasizes the need of meditating on the Word of God. Paul would tell Timothy to meditate in the Scriptures; to be in them continually, because they will make you wise in salvation, which is in Jesus Christ. So in Second Timothy chapter three, Paul will give encouragement to Timothy to be in the Word of God, so that one can get to know the way of salvation; get to know the Lord in a deeper and significant way. How important it is to have the utmost respect for the ways of the Lord, and we learn those ways by meditating in His precepts.

Lesson 16: Psalm 119:16

16.1 Text

בְּחֻקֹתֶיךָ אֲשַׁתְּעֶשְׂע לֹא אֲשַׁכַּח דְּבָרְךָ:

16.2 Vocabulary

חֻקָּה	noun	“statute”
שַׁעַע	verb	“to delight”
שָׁכַח	verb	“to forget”

8.3 Grammar

בְּחֻקֹתֶיךָ

Notice the **בְּ** is again the inseparable preposition, and **חֻקָּה** is the noun for “statute,” in the plural **חֻקֹת**. The *qibbus* is being used with the plural noun in construct, instead of the *holem* in the first syllable. We see an interchange of that often. **ךָ** is again the pronominal suffix second masculine singular.

אֲשַׁתְּעֶשְׂע

**אֲשַׁתְּעֶשְׂע** is a Hithpapel first common singular. This word is from the verb **שַׁעַע**. It is actually a *double ayin* root, but what we have here is a Hithpapel first person singular, from that root. So the psalmist will delight in the statutes, those engraved teachings of the Lord in His Torah, or His Word. The **א** is indicating first person singular to the imperfect. Notice that we have what is called a *metathesis*. That is, **אֲתַשַׁעֲשַׁע** changes to **אֲשַׁתְּעֶשְׂע**, that is, the **ש** and the **ת**

exchange places in this form, with a repetition of **שׁע**. It is a Hithpatal form with this *metathesis* that has occurred, and again, showing the Psalmist's delight. He actually delights in the Word and the engraved statutes of the Lord found in His Torah. "I will not forget your Word," he says.

לֹא

Notice **לֹא** is the negative particle, "not."

אֲשַׁכַּח

This is the verb **שָׁכַח**, "to forget." It is the Qal imperfect, first person singular.

דִּבְרֶיךָ

is from **דָּבַר** and **דִּבְרֶיךָ** is in construct with the **ךָ**, the pronominal suffix second masculine singular. So, "I will not forget your word, I am going to be faithful to do it and to remember it. And I delight in your statutes."

#### 16.4 Translation

"I will delight in your statutes, and I will not forget your word."

#### 16.5 Application/Interpretation

One of things that the text is teaching here is the delight that he has in God's word, and meditating on it. Others may delight in other things, but he delights in the statutes of what the Lord has taught. I believe, again, that we are to love the Word of God, and we are to delight in it. In Psalm one:

כִּי אִם בְּתוֹרַת יְהוָה חִפְצוֹ וּבְתוֹרָתוֹ יִהְיֶה יוֹמָם וּלְיָלָה

"But his delight is in the Torah of the Lord, and in His Torah he meditates day and night." One of the most important things we can do in life is to delight in the Word



of God, and in what He teaches us in His engraved statutes, in His Torah, or in His Word. It is by delighting in the Word, that we are brought to love Christ in a deeper way, because the purpose of Scripture is to get to know Him, and to love Him. That is again, what Paul is telling Timothy, to spend time there, that it will make you wise unto salvation, which is found in Jesus Christ, so we need to delight in the Word of God, find our joy there, and that will bring us into a deeper relationship with obedience to the Lord's Word, and a deeper love for our Savior.