

The Way of Psalm 119: Entering God's Presence by Honoring His Word & Law

Val Brinkerhoff, 1/25/2022 – 4 pages

Throughout God's written word we find useful instruction for returning to His glorious presence. We have the simplicity of D&C 93 and its **5 covenant** steps to re-enter His presence in verse 1, along with a number *ascension* experiences in scripture. The Book of Mormon is a manual for being born again and then experiencing the LORD personally. We see this very early in the ascension of Lehi in the 6th verse of the first chapter of the Book of Mormon. There he joins with others in worshipping before God's throne. In Psalm 119, King David provides instruction on how we can return to God's presence by honoring His word and law. It is the way of salvation and eternal life. It is unique among the Psalms in that it is the *longest* of them all at 176 verses, featuring 22 stanzas of **8** verses each. Its 22 stanzas are tied to the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet.

Prior to Psalm 119 we have the *shortest* Psalm at only two verses in Psalm 117. In verse **8** of Psalm 118 we read, "It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man." Some suggest this is the *exact* chiasmic center scripture of the entire Bible. It sums up how to return to God by first trusting in Him, not man – "the arm of flesh." Trust is part of having faith in Him and honoring Him by keeping His commandments. These originate in our sincere, heartfelt love for God – the first and great commandment. Verse #1 (of 8 verses) of Stanza #1 (of 22 stanzas) below is tied to the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet *Aleph*. It states:

ALEPH

- 1 "**Blessed** are the undefiled in **the way**, who walk in **the law** of the LORD.
- 2 Blessed are they that keep his **testimonies**, and that seek him with the whole heart.
- 3 They also do no iniquity: they walk in his ways.
- 4 Thou hast commanded us to keep thy **precepts** diligently.
- 5 O that my ways were directed to keep thy **statutes!**
- 6 Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect unto all thy **commandments**.
- 7 I will praise thee with uprightness of heart, when I shall have learned thy righteous **judgments**.
- 8 I will keep thy **statutes**: O forsake me not utterly."

The entire alphabet of 22 letters is believed to be a *timeline* of the earth, extending from God's *creation* at *Aleph* (letter 1) ending with His final *judgment* at *Tau* (letter 22) at the end of time. A modified version of this alphabet with proposed symbolic meaning for each letter, is found in the chart below. It is a composite of Joseph Smith's work on his "Hebrew alphabet and grammar" and my own research. See also the chart on page 4.

#/Gematria	Hebrew Letter	Meaning/Graphic	#/Gematria	Hebrew Letter	Meaning/Graphic
1	Aleph A	God	12 (30)	Lamed L	Justice / Governance
2	Beth B v	Mother [house, creation]	13 (40)	Mem M	Messiah
3	Gimal G	Cycle	14 (50)	Nun N	Angel / new governance
4	Daleth D	Mortality	15 (60)	Samekh S	Resurrection
5	Hei H	Life / Covenant	16 (70)	Ayin E o	Deliverance [gentiles]
6	Vav W v	Nail [structure]	17 (80)	Peh P F	Voice
7	Zayin Z	Time [spiritual perfection]	18 (90)	Tzadhe T s z	Devotion
8	Cheth CH h x	Gate [renewal]	19 (100)	Koph K Q	Mercy
9	Tet T	Serpent (judgment & creation)	20 (200)	Resh R	Scythe
10	Yod Y I J	Spirit [complete]	21 (300)	Shin S, Sh	Womb
11 (20)	Kaph K X	Palm	22 (400)	Tav T, Th	Judgment [at the end] <i>Sealing</i>

Anciently there were no written numbers in Hebrew. Letters were assigned numerical values. Thus A was 1, B was 2 and so on - every letter carrying numerical and symbolic value. Numbers in scripture and sacred architecture have symbolic meaning beyond simple computation. The chart above represents the author's condensed number and letter symbolism tied to Joe Sampson's research on Joseph Smith's Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar. Much of it was created by W. W. Phelps and Joseph Smith as an aid in decoding the Book of Joseph, part of early translation work for the Book of Abraham. See Joe Sampson, Written by the Finger of God, Wellspring Publishing.

Throughout Psalm 119 and its **8** verses per stanza, we see **8** repeating words used to stress the importance of how to come unto Christ or Jehovah, the God of the Old Testament. Collectively these **8** words define "**the way**" of salvation, which addresses how we are to adhere to God's **word** and **law**. They are made up of His

commandments, statutes, precepts, judgments, and testimonies. Living them leads to the “**blessed**” state of returning to God’s presence in this life. They include:

1. The **Way** is the “**Blessed**” LORD's pathway to receive salvation, returning to His presence in this life (vs 1 & 30).
2. The **Word** is a name-title for Christ in John 1:1. It is also God’s written word in scripture and His pure revelation given to us individually (v 11).
3. The **Law** in the Bible is found in the first 5 books of the Old Testament, *the Torah*, also known as the Pentateuch (v 44). It is the instruction given by God to us in scripture through Prophets like Moses, Isaiah and Jeremiah. With this law we are refined and sanctified, bringing us closer to God.
4. His **Commandments** are authoritative guides on how to live (v 166). The Ten Commandments of Exodus 20 were written by God’s finger on two tables of stone. Five are tied to loving God, five more to loving one another.
5. His **Statutes** are those important, enacted laws that are to be inscribed in our hearts (v 8). The two most important ones - are the two Great Commandments , to love God with all our heart, might, mind, and strength, and to love one another as ourselves. They were first given in the Old Testament (see Deut. 6:5, 10:12 and Lev. 19:18, 34) and were given again by our LORD in the New Testament (see Mark 12:28-33 and Luke 10:25-28).
6. His **Precepts** are injunctions or requirements in the law (v 69).
7. His **Judgments** are binding laws also known as judicial decisions (v 7).
8. His **Testimonies** are ordinances or symbolic earthly rites that point to greater realized “sealings” in heaven (v 2).

The “Blessed” State *of those Adhering to The Word, those in The Way*

The word “**Blessed**” means “in the state of the gods,” or in the condition of the past, present, and future members of the Council in Heaven. In the ancient temple drama (the Psalms were the liturgy for it, but now out of correct order), kingship began with a foreordination before coming to this world. This path extended through this life and continued thereafter forever. Christ the LORD was enthroned at the Temple of Bountiful in the New World in 3rd Nephi. After this ancient ceremony concluded there, our LORD chose a new leader (king and priest) among the people to lead them upon His departure. He then gave a lecture to the people – the 12 Beatitudes (see also JST Matt. 5). Each of them began with the word “**Blessed**.”

He said to Nephi, a king over his people, “And it came to pass that the Lord spake unto me, saying: **Blessed** are thou Nephi, because of thy faith...And inasmuch as thou shalt keep my commandments, thou shalt be made a ruler and a teacher [king and priest] over thy brethren” (1 Nephi 2:19:22). Our LORD finalized this important ancient temple drama (at Tabernacles) in the New World by offering a great feast on the 8th day. It was the Sacrament, the emblems of which He miraculously supplied Himself as the King of kings (see 3 Ne. 20). Note what Psalm 118 had to say about this. “The Stone [seer and prophet] which the builders [of the temple] rejected [in Jerusalem] is become the headstone of the corner” (v. 22). For more on Christ’s visit in 3rd Nephi as an enthronement ceremony for Him in the New World, see Baker and Ricks, *Who Shall Ascend the Hill of the Lord*, Eborn Books, pps. 925-29.

How to Become “Blessed”

Utilizing the 1st verse of each of the 8 verses in the 22 stanzas we find a hidden key to becoming “**Blessed**” in this life. It is to believe in, have faith in, and follow the WORD Yeshua or Jesus by keeping His law, statutes, precepts, judgments, testimonies, and commandments. Note the numbers tied to how the words below are used in Psalm 119.

- 12 repeated uses of – the “**Word**”, as taught to believers by the LORD’s 12 special witnesses that He chose
- 10 repeated uses of – “the “**Law**” (4x), Statutes (2x), Judgments (2x) Commandments (1x), & Testimonies (1x) given Moses atop Sinai, or 10 total references to His law
- 2 repeated uses of – “**Statutes**”, tied to the 2 Great Commandments, a summary of the 10 commandments that were written by God’s finger on the 2 tablets of stone; one had 5 commandments on it tied to loving God, while the other had 5 more commandments tied to loving one another
- 12 governing parts of the **Word** and **Law**, with 10 commandments and 2 **Statutes** - the 2 Great Commandments.

Key Symbolic Numbers

The number **12** in scripture is tied to the principle of *governance*. The number **22** in scripture is tied to final *judgment at the end*, resulting in a *sealing* (to our Redeemer, Father of our salvation, or to thee evil one) as symbolized in the last letter of the Hebrew alphabet T or *Tau*, shaped like *the scales of justice and mercy*. God possesses both in perfect balance.

Love, Honor & Trust God by Keeping His Word & Law in the 2 Great Commandments (& the 10)

1. **Love God** with all your heart, strength, mind & soul

1. Thou shalt have no other gods before me
2. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image
3. Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain
4. Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy
5. Honour thy father and thy mother

2. **Love others** as yourself

6. Thou shalt not kill
7. Thou shalt not commit adultery
8. Thou shalt not steal
9. Thou shalt not bear false witness
10. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, goods

The number **2** in scripture is tied to *witnesses* (like the 2 Great Commandments), or to *opposition in all things*, like male and female, light and dark, etc. The number **8** in scripture is tied to *rebirth* and *renewal* through Christ's atonement and resurrection. The words "God, faith, trust", and "Emanuel" all result in the number 8 when the numbers tied to each letter of these words in the English alphabet are added together and then reduced to a single digit:

God (G=7, O=15, D=4) = 26 = 8

Emanuel (God with us / E=5, M=13, A=1, N=14, U=21, E=5, L=12 = 71 = 8

Trust (T=20, R=18, U=21, S=19, T=20) = 98 = 17 = 8 **Faith** (F=6, A=1, I=9, T=20, H=8) = 44 = 8

8 Scriptures on Trusting God rather than the Arm of Flesh

1. "It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man" (Psalm 118:8). Portions of this Psalm were read at the Last Supper just before the LORD went to Gethsemane with 11 of His disciples to willingly suffer there for them and all of us that night. He was then taken early the next morning and scourged and crucified the next day. It was Passover, the day lamb's blood delivered Israel anciently in Egypt.

2. "For My people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water" (Jeremiah 2:13). During the Feast of Tabernacles, six months before His crucifixion, the LORD Yeshua stood before the people and told them He was a fountain of living waters, and that they would not thirst if they turned to Him (see John 7:37-39).

3. "Thus saith the Lord; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, that maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord" (Jeremiah 17:5). Israel too often trusted in themselves and their kings. It led to idolatry, sin, and great trials for the covenant people.

4. "O LORD, I have trusted in thee, and I will trust in thee forever. I will not put my trust in the arm of flesh; for I know that cursed is he that putteth his trust in the arm of flesh. Yea, cursed is he that putteth his trust in man or maketh flesh his arm" (2 Nephi 4:34). The Book of Mormon teaches us to be wary of men and their false religions, yet too many today remain committed to church leaders more than their Creator or Redeemer Yeshua.

5. "Cursed is he that putteth his trust in man, or maketh flesh his arm, or shall hearken unto the precepts of men, save their precepts shall be given by the power of the Holy Ghost" (2 Nephi 28:31). These verses provide a second witness to this concept. Many more are found throughout scripture, attesting to man's weakness. God, however, is more worthy of our faith, love, and trust.

6. "The weak things of the world shall come forth and break down the mighty and strong ones, that man should not counsel his fellow man, neither trust in the arm of flesh" (D&C 1:19). This message is repeated in modern revelation.

7. "For behold, you should not have feared man more than God. Although men set at naught the counsels of God, and despise his words – Ye you should have been faithful; and he would have extended his arm and supported you against all the fiery darts of the adversary; and he would have been with you in every time of trouble" (D&C 3:7-8). Here the Prophet Joseph is reminded to trust in God and no other. We are to "fear" Him, which means to look to Him in "reverential awe" and in love and gratitude. He is our Creator, Redeemer, Healer, Judge, and coming King.

8. "Be strong and courageous, be not afraid nor dismayed for the king of Assyria, nor for all the multitude that is with him: for there be more with us than with him: With him is an arm of flesh; but with us is the LORD our God to help us, and to fight our battles" (2 Chronicles 32:7-8). All servants of the LORD need reminders from time to time that it is in God we must trust. He has all wisdom and power to help us. Let us turn to Him in humility.

Hebrew Alphabet

	Gem #	Char	Hebrew	Letter	Meaning/Graphic
	1	א	Aleph	A	God
	2	ב	Beth	B V	Mother [house, creation]
	3	ג	Gimel	G	Cycle
	4	ד	Daleth	D	Mortality [Kingdom]
	5	ה	Hei	H	Life
	6	ו	Vav	W V	Nail [structure]
	7	ז	Zayin	Z	Time [spiritual perfection]
	8	ח	Cheth	Ch H X	Gate [rebirth]
	9	ט	Tet	T	Serpent
	10	י	Yod	Y I J	Spirit [complete]
	11 (20)	כ ך	Kaph	K X	Palm
	12 (30)	ל	Lamed	L	Justice [priesthood government]
	13 (40)	מ ם	Mem	M	Messiah
	14 (50)	נ ן	Nun	N	Angel [Holy Ghost]
	15 (60)	ס	Samekh	S	Resurrection
	16 (70)	ע	Ayin	E o	Deliverance [gentiles]
	17 (80)	פ ף	Peh	P F	Voice
	18 (90)	צ ץ	Tzadhe	T s z	Devotion
	19 (100)	ק	Koph	Q K	Mercy
	20 (200)	ר	Resh	R	Scythe
	21 (300)	ש	Shin	S, Sh	Womb
	22 (400)	ת	Tav	T, Th	Judgment [end, seal]

The pictographic letters (far left above) represent the oldest known Hebrew characters. Especially noteworthy are the first and last letters tied to **Alpha** (God as the bull, ox, or Creator, providing “the breath of life”) and **Omega** (God as *Judge*, marking the *end of time* as we know it, when our merciful, powerful God will *seal* His Bride to Him as the Bridegroom). The change in the last letter Tav from its original cross-like t shape, to its present modern form today ת has ties to the rejection of Jesus as the Messiah, in connection with the cross. The Rabbi’s wanting to retain their power and the traditions keeping them in power, changed their alphabet, eliminating troublesome connections it to the Christian Messiah Jesus, like the cross-shaped letter Tav were eliminated. In 2006, the very famous Jewish Rabbi Yitzhak Kaduri (age 108) left a handwritten note to be read one year after his death. It revealed the identity of Messiah. It was hidden in the first of each of the 6 Hebrew words in his note.

1		א	א	1	(a)	Alef	
22		ת	ת	400	T	Tav	
Tav							
	Early Hebrew	Middle Hebrew	Late Hebrew	Modern Hebrew			

The 6 words said: “Concerning the letter Abbreviation of the Messiah’s name, He will lift the people and prove that his word and law are valid.” These first 6 letters spelled out “Yeshua”, the long form spelling of “Yeshua” or Jesus’ given name in Hebrew. Read the amazing story of Rabbi Kaduri, the changed alphabet, and our Messiah, in the book, *The Rabbi, the Secret Message, and the Identity of Messiah*, by Carl Gallups.