

Meditations and Prayers Relating to the Law of God — Psalm 119:1-8 关于神律法的默想和祷告—诗篇119:1-8

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Aleph.

- 1 How blessed are those whose way is blameless,
Who walk in the law of the LORD.
- 2 How blessed are those who observe His testimonies,
Who seek Him with all *their* heart.
- 3 They also do no unrighteousness;
They walk in His ways.
- 4 You have ordained Your precepts,
That we should keep *them* diligently.
- 5 Oh that my ways may be established
To keep Your statutes!
- 6 Then I shall not be ashamed
When I look upon all Your commandments.
- 7 I shall give thanks to You with uprightness of heart,
When I learn Your righteous judgments.
- 8 I shall keep Your statutes;
Do not forsake me utterly!

诗篇 119:1-8

- 1 行为完全，遵行耶和华律法的，这人便为有福！
- 2 遵守他的法度，一心寻求他的，这人便为有福！
- 3 这人不作非义的事，但遵行他的道。
- 4 耶和华啊，你曾将你的训词吩咐我们，为要我们殷勤遵守。
- 5 但愿我行事坚定，得以遵守你的律例！
- 6 我看重你的一切命令，就不至于羞愧。
- 7 我学了你公义的判语，就要以正直的心称谢你。
- 8 我必守你的律例，求你总不要丢弃我。

Introduction

Pursuit of happiness. One of the founding features of this country is the Declaration of Independence. One key section of this document reads, “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of... Happiness.”

A fundamental reason for this pursuit is that not everything is happy. The curse has brought devastation to this world we live in. Mankind’s pursuit of happiness has fragmented in multiple directions. The common saying of the day is “you do you.” Is this the way to happiness?

Look at the results. Our country has become increasingly depressed. Turning to psychology, drugs, materialism, or the various worldly pursuits of happiness have turned out to be dead ends. **Where can we go in this sin cursed world to find true and lasting happiness?**

Today, we will see the way to true and lasting happiness from **Psalm 119:1-8**.
“**How blessed**” (v1-2): Can be translated happy. The pursuit is over; happiness found!

Let’s discover 3 paces on the path to blessedness:

1. The Source of Blessing (v1-2)

Where can we truly find happiness, blessedness in this cursed world?

- 1 How blessed are those whose way is blameless,
 Who walk in the law of the LORD.
- 2 How blessed are those who observe His testimonies,
 Who seek Him with all *their* heart.

V1 God’s Word

The **initial source of blessing** we see in the first verse is **God’s Word** (v1).

“**the law of the LORD**”: Far more than “Do this! Don’t do that!”, the law (literally, *Torah*) of Yahweh refers to both law and revelation. **Genesis** shows the true origins of the universe, sin, Gospel, nations, covenants. **Exodus** God redeems His people from the most powerful nation of the day and calls them to relationship with Himself as His own priestly nation. **Leviticus** shows how the unholy people can relate with a holy God. **Numbers** shows God’s refinement of Israel through the wilderness. **Deuteronomy** points the refined generation toward the promised land.

The core idea of *Torah* is **teaching, directing**. The Law of Yahweh **guides, shapes, directs** His people in a particular direction. We see that God is sovereign over all His creation. We see that mankind is sinful. We see that God is Savior. He directs us in a particular **path**.

“**whose way ... Who walk**”: This describes **one’s life**. One who lives their life in accordance with the teaching of the Torah, who walk in the instruction of Yahweh.

“**blameless**”: This contains the idea of whole, unscathed, entire. It is used of **God’s Word** itself in Psalm 19:7 (ESV). There are no defects in God’s Word. Those who walk in it become like it—blameless.
Blamelessness is true happiness, true bliss, true blessedness.

But even before the first five books in the Bible was penned by Moses through the Holy Spirit, Noah was found “blameless in his generation” because he “walked with God” (Gen 6:9). The source of blessing is the **Word of God**, which finds its source in the **God of the Word** (v2).

V2 The God of the Word

“**Who seek Him**”: God’s Word is a means to an end. That end is God. “Seek” has the idea of careful search. Where do you search for happiness? Do you find it in your work? Family? Reputation? Health? Wealth? Are these the path to happiness?

“**observe His testimonies**”. God’s Word is a testimony to truth. In the day of relative truth, in the day of uncertainty, conflicting testimonies, wayward witnesses, how blessed are those who observe His testimonies! How glad are those who adhere to what He says is true!

“**with all their heart**”: The idea of heart in Hebrew is your central control. It is the seat of not just your emotions, but your thoughts. It is your headquarters. Jeremiah 17:9 tells us that the heart deceives, it is desperately sick. It is prone to wander, going after various pursuits.

[Exhortation] True life, true happiness is **found in one place. God.** Do not place your pursuit elsewhere. Seek Him with not just sometimes, not just some ways—with family but not work, with most areas except your pet sins—**seek Him with all of your heart.**

[Transition] What does it mean to seek Him? How does this look in my life?

2. The Outward Strides of Blessing (v3–4)

V3 Overview of the Blessed Path

- 3 They also do no unrighteousness;
 They walk in His ways.

“**do no unrighteousness**”: Unrighteousness results in eternal wrath from God (Rom 1:18). It quite literally leads to death. Avoid it like the plague!

[Gospel] If you haven’t trusted Jesus as Lord and Savior, you can only do unrighteousness. Now is the time to repent, turn from sin and turn to Jesus! He died to remove the penalty of your unrighteousness, provide you with His perfect righteousness, and rose to give you a new life!

If you have this new life, here is how you avoid unrighteousness: Walk by the Spirit (Gal 5:16–23). Not just avoiding immorality, idolatry, jealousy, anger... but walk by His Spirit in His ways.

[Transition] What does this look like in practice?

V4 Details of the Blessed Path

- 4 You have ordained Your precepts,
 That we should keep *them* diligently.

“**You have ordained**”: Ordain means to order, command, charge. This is not optional. When God commands, we ought to obey all the way, right away, and with a good attitude.

“**Your precepts**”: We have seen three synonyms for God’s Word. Law (*Torah*) means to teach or direct. Testimonies speaks of God’s witness to what is true. Precepts are the particulars. God has ordained **not just what** we should do **but how** we should do it!

[Examples] We are to worship God, and Romans 12 tells us how to do it (Rom 12:1-2, 9-21).
We are to love one another, and John 13 tells us how to do it (John 13:3-5, 34-35).

“**keep them diligently**”: When we do what He says and do it well, we are truly blessed. As you obey, as you love, other fruits of the Spirit will well up from your heart, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, and self-control.

3. The Inward Signs of Blessing (v5–7)

[Transition] When you start living this way, you start realizing that you need help! So:

V5 Depend on Him in Prayer

5 Oh that my ways may be established
 To keep Your statutes!

Here the Psalmist turns to the One who can help Him live in the blessed path. God Himself! Where do you go when you feel your insufficiency? Where do you turn when you wish you were more like Him and closer to Him? Turn to Him in prayer. Express your heart to God!

“**established**”: Has the idea of stand firm, stand fast, be stable, secure. Closely related to the next synonym for God’s Word, “**statutes**”, which refers to the firmness, the stability, the established nature of Scripture. God’s Word is firm, and so should be our resolve to keep it.

You need help. Call on Him in prayer! **Be established in what He has established.** Found your life on the foundation of God’s Word.

[Transition] Such dedication to God’s Word leads to inward results:

V6 Focus on the Shame Banishing Word

6 Then I shall not be ashamed
 When I look upon all Your commandments.

“**ashamed**”: Shame is one of the greatest killers of happiness. As we look at our sin, we feel the opposite of happiness. But the Psalmist turns his focus. He looks at something different.

“**look upon all Your commandments**”: Focus on His Word. The word commandment carries the authority of God. These are not suggestions, but authoritative commands of God. When we dedicate ourselves to God’s Word, we will not be ashamed. God’s Word leads us out of shame.

[Exhortation] Now is the time to turn! Found your life on the foundation of His Word and **watch the shame become crowded out by love for God and love for others.** Look to His Word.

V7 Praise the God of the Word

7 I shall give thanks to You with uprightness of heart,
 When I learn Your righteous judgments.

“**give thanks**”: Same word for praise, means “to acknowledge”. Acknowledge God for His work through His Word in our life. He is the One who brought us from deadness in sin to life in Christ, who gave us the upright, straight, clean heart, who sanctifies us further toward Himself.

“**learn**”: This word is equivalent to discipleship. A disciple is not one who simply learns the facts but who lives them. God's Word has **penetrated into** the psalmist's life so much so that the center control of his life is upright; and so He bubbles over with thanks, with praise to God.

“**Your righteous judgments**”: This synonym for God's Word highlights His perfect decisions and standards. God never makes the wrong decision. When He makes a judgment, it is always right.

[Example] When God says, ‘do not lie’ this is always righteous. When God says ‘do not steal’ you can count on this as true. When He says ‘do not commit adultery’, you can guarantee that breaking His command will lead toward death. When God says ‘children obey your parents’ we know this is right. When He says ‘love God and others’ we can count on this as good. When He gives us any standard, any decision, on any subject, we can take it to the bank.

Conclusion (v8):

8 I shall keep Your statutes;
Do not forsake me utterly!

“**keep Your statutes**”: The psalmist expresses His resolve to keep God's Word.

[Exhortation] Have you resolved yourself to guard God's word? To carefully put it into practice? To take the outward steps? To relish in the inward results? And turn it all in praise to God? If so, you have resolved yourself to happiness. Resolve today to keep God's Word!

“**Do not forsake me utterly**”: He pleads with God to remain close. Despite our sin, despite the difficulties and trials, God still remains with His people because of the cross of Jesus Christ.

[Conclusion] The pursuit of happiness is over, it is found in God's Word, it is found in God Himself. Now, let us seek Him with all our hearts!