

Psalms 19-03-21a

Welcome to the Thursday evening festivities here at Grace & Truth Bible Church. This is March the 21st, 2019, and we're continuing our study of the Psalms. And because I have gotten fascinated with the acrostics, we are taking a giant leap forward tonight from Psalm 37 to Psalm 111.

111. If the mark of the beast is 666, God's number is 111. So we'll be looking actually tonight at both Psalm 111 and Psalm 112.

These are fascinating psalms. They are both acrostics, they are full acrostics, and they are full of really interesting content that is going to be stimulating and beneficial. I promise.

Actually, God promises, which is even better. Let's take a moment as we begin our study to go to the Lord in prayer and ask His blessing upon us, and then we'll begin. Father, it is a wonderful thing to be fully dependent upon You for our righteousness, for our sustenance, for our life, both here and in the eternal future.

When these things depend on You and not on us, it gives us great confidence and great security. We can bend our attention and focus our energies on being good and faithful, on hearing and heeding Your Word and allowing Your Holy Spirit to minister Your truth to our souls and to act upon it so that Your purpose for us is accomplished in this life and we are prepared for the next. We pray that as we look at this wonderful portion of Your Word tonight, that Your Spirit will illuminate it for each heart and each mind, that as we look at it together, we'll be blessed and edified and thoroughly equipped for every good work.

We pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen. As I said, we're tackling Psalm 111 and Psalm 112, two Psalms, 20 verses, 44 letters of the alphabet, each one in the Hebrew alphabet twice.

And you're welcome to and encouraged to grab your notes from last time that on the right-hand column gives some insights into the meaning and significance of, and those are two different things by the way, significance and meaning are not exactly the same, but I don't have time to digress. But on the right-hand side of your page, you'll see some notes about each of the Hebrew letters. This was extremely pertinent as we saw in Psalm 37.

It is going to be not quite as directly relevant in our Psalms tonight because the acrostic can be used in more than one way. It can invoke and carry the freight of the meaning of these letters like Psalm 37 did, and some of our earlier Psalms have done. But tonight it is going to provide a different kind of structure and it is going to be numerically significant.

The complete alphabet without any missing letters is going to be significant and it is going to serve as a bridge and as a hinge as we will see further along in the evening. But let's begin by looking at our first Psalm, Psalm 111. Let's read it for its content and its theme and its emphasis.

Content, theme, and emphasis. After we read this, if you look up from the page, see if you can then answer those three questions. What is this Psalm pretty much about? What is its central theme? What is its overarching subject? And what about that subject and that theme does it really emphasize? Most general themes can be very broad.

If God is the theme, well, what about God? Is it His grace? Is it His power? Is it His provision? Is it His truth? Is it His salvation? Is it His righteousness and justice? He has so many facets. Something will be brought to the fore, something pertinent, something applicable. So watch and listen for those things as we read this Psalm.

Psalm 111. Praise the Lord. I will praise the Lord with my whole heart, in the assembly of the upright and in the congregation.

The works of the Lord are great, studied by all who have pleasure in them. His work is honorable and glorious, and His righteousness endures forever. He has made His wonderful works to be remembered.

The Lord is gracious and full of compassion. He has given food to those who fear Him. He will ever be mindful of His covenant.

He has declared to His people the power of His works, in giving them the heritage of the nations. The works of His hands are verity and justice. All His precepts are sure.

They stand fast forever and ever, and are done in truth and uprightness. He has sent redemption to His people. He has commanded His covenant forever.

Holy and awesome is His name. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. A good understanding have all those who do His commandments.

His praise endures forever. Overall theme or subject, what would you say? What's in view here? Who or what are we looking at? And I said, who louder than what? Who or what are we looking at? It's God in heaven, right? He and things about Him are pretty much in view. We're not really talking about much else.

This is all about God. Now, what facet or what feature related to God, having established that the theme is God, what about God? If you were going to circle one word out of this psalm that would capture the emphasis and the focus as it looks at God, what would it be? There's a word that is repeated. You find it in verse 2, you find it in verse 3, you find it in verse 4, you find it in verse 6, you find it in verse 7. See a common word in there? Starts with a W and ends with O-R-K-S.

This psalm is focusing on the works of God over and over again. Look at verse 2, the works of the Lord are great and are studied by those who have pleasure in them. Verse 3, His work is of this particular nature.

It is glorious, it is honorable, it reflects His righteousness. Verse 4, He's made His wonderful works memorable. See what I mean? Even when it's talking in verse 5, He has given food to those who fear Him.

This is one of God's works. It's not so much a feature of His character, it's not talking about His omniscience or His omnipresence or His immutability or veracity, it's talking about what He does. In verse 6, He has declared to His people the power of His works.

So there are characteristics of His works in terms of their righteousness and their glory, in terms of their power, in terms of their direction and the beneficiaries of those works. It's all about God first and foremost, and the specific aspect of God is His works, what God has done. Now, you would think, well, Sam, not for the first time, you're simply being a master of the obvious here.

Hang on to these thoughts, remembering that we have another psalm to go, and the answers to these questions will not be the same. And yet these psalms are linked, they are joined, joined at the hip, they are linked, and one is the companion of the other. So these questions and answers are going to be pertinent to understanding the relationship between those psalms.

So, the theme is God, we're looking at God and something about God, and that something is specifically what God has done, why He has done it, how He does it, for whom He does it. This is handy for us. Are we related to God in some way? Yes, we are, we are His children.

And what do we hope in terms of God's works and ourselves? We want to be the beneficiaries of God's goodness, and when God does good works, we would like to be recipients, beneficiaries, blessed, inheriting on the good side of God's nature. When He acts, we want to be on the positive side, it just goes without saying. Now, in order to really enjoy this psalm and the next one, you're going to have to do a little bit of marking in your Bible, because, unfortunately, the King James and the New King James have obscured the necessary clues.

You need this information. God put it in the Bible and it got left out of your Bible. And whoever edited the psalms for the King James and New King James needs to go over and read the last chapter of Revelation toward the end where it says, anybody who takes away from the words of this book is in trouble, because we're missing something here, and it's something important.

It's vital, extremely helpful to understand what this stuff is doing in our Bible in the first place. It's great to read it and understand it, reflect upon it, it's applicable and pertinent, but we're missing some things. So, very quickly now, you've got 10 verses here, and you're going to be labeling two or three things in each verse.

Now, I've reflected on how I was going to suggest that you do this, and it's up to you. If you want to write the name of the Hebrew letter out by the side, or if you would like to use the English capital letter that is closest to the Hebrew letter, that might be best. So, for Aleph, you could just put a capital A and circle it.

For Abate, you could put a capital B and circle it. For the third letter, Gimel, you could put a capital G and circle it, because these are the value of those letters. So, in verse 1, it says, praise the Lord.

See that? What is the Hebrew behind that phrase? You know it. You've said it many times. What is it? Two words.

Hallelu-Yah. Hallelu-Yah. Y'all praise Yah, the Lord.

So, you can write that up above. That's what that says. I think they should have transliterated it.

Hallelu-Yah. This is something to celebrate, something to extol and think about and be happy over. Praise the Lord.

Hallelu-Yah. Now, he says, I will praise the Lord with my whole heart. Where it says, I will praise, that line, that's your capital A. That's Aleph.

And if you want to circle the word that the A refers to, it's where it says, I will praise. That's Odeh. Odeh.

I will praise. And it starts with an A, with an Aleph. So, that's capital A. I will praise the Lord with my whole heart.

And the letter is praise. Hallelu-Yah. Praise.

That's what starts this thing off and gets it rolling. Now, in the same verse, we're getting the second letter, which is going to be your capital B in a circle, where it says, in the assembly. The letter B, Beit, in Hebrew, is the preposition that means in, by, or with.

And in, among, with the assembly is where I'm going to do this. It is an assembly of the upright. It is, notice that upright people get together.

And we don't just praise God in our mind while we're out alone in a fishing boat on Sunday when we have to be in church. We're with the assembly and we share this praise and this appreciation of God with each other. Let's all praise the Lord, he says.

I will praise the Lord with my whole heart, all my heart. In the assembly of the upright, I'm going to be getting together with the upright. I can identify them.

I can recognize them. I know who they are and we get together. And we, together, celebrate the greatness of God.

So that's letter B, in the assembly. Now, verse two, the works of the Lord are great. This is your letter Gimel.

So this is going to be capital G in a circle. And Gadol, great, is your letter G. So, so far, Aleph was, I will praise. Beit is in the assembly.

G is great works of the Lord are studied. They are studied. That's D, Dalet.

So circle a big capital D and put it right next to studied. It's a great word. It means to resort to something, to seek it, to inquire into it, to, it's, it's used of an oasis of frequenting it.

You, you frequently go there. So it's not so much study in the academic sense as you frequently go revisit this in your mind. You think about it often.

It's never far from your mind. These great works of the Lord, they are resorted to. They're a resource.

They're a visiting place for those who have pleasure in them. So Dalet D, studied by all who have pleasure in them. Do you enjoy reflecting and revisiting what you know of what God has done? We can all choose the direction our mind wanders.

Where do we send our mind on vacation when we're not concentrating on a task before us? Are we thinking about some real or imagined problem or insult or problematic person or problematic circumstance or something that drags us down? Or is the frequent oasis and the frequent visiting place, the great things that God has done past, biblically, past in our own lives, in the present, the good things about the situation. Remember our memory verse that says, whatsoever things are, then noble, lovely, pure of good report. And we saw that in Greek, it means to the extent that, find the part of each thing that is good, noble, lovely, true, honorable, of good report, and think on these things.

This is what he's talking about. The congregation of the upright, the one who praises the Lord, visits frequently the great works of the Lord and takes pleasure in them. This is that word kapets, the desire.

David's great swan song, his final ode, his final poem, uses this word, that all of his desires have not yet been fulfilled on earth, but they're going to be in the life to come. Wonderful, wonderful ode to hope in that final song. We studied it back when.

So that is the aleph, beit, gimel, and dalet. Now we come to the letter he, at the beginning of verse three, his work is honorable and glorious. And the word honorable is hod, H-O-D.

We have a lady on TV named Hoda. I don't know where that came from, but I suspect if it's got any Yiddish or Jewish roots, that it may be the feminized portion of this. It might be honorable in the feminine, because hod is a masculine singular noun that means honorable.

There used to be a lady actor named Honor Blackman, I think. Her name was Honor. Well, this would be another way of saying that same thing, hod, honorable and glorious.

His work. So that's capital H there at the beginning of verse three, his work is honorable and glorious. And honor begins in Hebrew, just like it does here in English with the letter H. And his righteousness endures forever.

And the, the and there that is tacked directly onto the word righteousness. So I would circle and his righteousness. If you want to know what the capital W goes to that you're going to put on the second half of that verse.

W, wow, is the next letter. And righteousness of him, and righteousness of him endures forever. Then we come to Zion.

Remember Zion was the sword stuck in the ground like Excalibur. It's a vertical sword or pointed tool of some sort. And that attaches to the word Zachar, which means to be remembered.

The name Zachariah is the Lord remembers. Zachariah, the Lord remembers. And if you know anybody named Zach, that's what their name means.

Zachar. To be remembered are his wonderful works. So that would be the letter Z in front of the first part of verse four.

And notice God didn't just do these works because there was an immediate exigency and it served at the time. And now it's lost in the midst of, of history. When God does wonderful works, he wants us to remember them.

That's the reason we've got a 66 book Bible. That's the reason we've got the record of the old Testament and God's mighty works. He didn't just do them to deliver Noah or to deliver Israel or to do deeds of the moment to empower Joshua or Samson or David or Daniel.

These works are to be remembered. We are to look at them and draw strength and comfort and hope and faith in God from these examples. How easy it is to look at circumstances and get entangled in who did what, where, or who didn't do what, when.

And here is a sticking point and here's a hard place to get through. And here's a challenge and here's an obstacle. And we want to look at circumstances of the moment.

This Psalm is concentrating on what? Concentrating on who? God. And what aspect of God? His works. The encouragement is to celebrate.

Hallelujah for God's works. Revisit them frequently. This is your path to strength.

This is your stronghold. This is your fortress. Looking at the works of God is comfort.

It is encouragement. It is strength because the strength is his, not ours. The works will be his, not ours.

The righteousness, the glory, and the justice are his, not ours. Thank the Lord. We don't have to try to get to heaven on our righteousness, on our power, on our consistency, or our anything other than our willingness to be saved and to receive God's wonderful blessings through Christ.

So verse 4z, he has made his wonderful works to be remembered. And the word for wonderful works is really something. Because you would think, well, is this some version of bara or asa or something that God has made or manufactured? This word in Hebrew means something that is marvelous and extraordinary and separate because it's unique.

There's nothing like it. And it also means because of that, that it is something difficult. God has done difficult things because that will make them memorable.

You know, the Marine Corps has a saying, the difficult we do immediately, the impossible takes a little longer. But God does these difficult things. And the reason they're difficult, you think about Jesus healing lepers and withered hands and restoring sight to the blind and people lame from birth walk and so on.

These are difficult, wonderful works. They're extraordinary. And God did that so that they would be memorable.

The harder thing is to forgive sin. The harder thing is to grant salvation, but that's invisible. And it might be difficult for us to remember that.

So God has given us these memorable works that point to his power to do these even more extraordinary things that are not as memorable because we can't see their difficulty. So these marvels, these extraordinarily hard and difficult things are designed to be memorable. Why? Why do we have an acrostic song? What's the purpose of an acrostic? You know this by now.

To remember, to remember. This is why we're studying the acrostics because out of all 150 Psalms, which ones are the most important? The ones that God marked and said, hey, remember this one. Here's your alphabetical key.

Here's your clue. If you can't memorize 150 Psalms, I've heard there's people that have done so, and God bless them, I can't. But if I can memorize any Psalms, I'm going to memorize the acrostics.

Psalms 119 is going to be a chore. However, it'd be a whole lot easier if we spoke Hebrew because, you know, eight lines in a row all start with the same letter. But this is doable.

Ten verses. I mean, come on. 111 and 112.

If you only measure, memorize, and measure the length of one acrostic set, here you go. It's not that hard. Ten verses for each, 20 verses total.

You get two letters per verse. Remember in Psalm 37, we had one letter for two verses. Now we've gone the other way.

Instead of doubling, we've gone halves. So, to be remembered. Don't forget these are to be remembered.

And then, Kate, the CH, and I would put CH here. This is a H. This is, you know, I say pray with the frequency of a hacking cough, but this is not quite a cough, but it's a, it's a, it's not a fricative. It's a, not an aspirin.

I don't remember the name of it. It's a, it's a noise made by pushing your tongue against your upper palate and then pushing air through there anyway. Hate.

You've heard people imitating Hebrew and they put a lot of these in there. That's what they're doing. It's a really, really hard H. So CH in a circle here for the last half of verse four, the Lord is gracious.

This is Chesed, Chesed, CH. We just usually use kind of a K sound, but it's got more moisture than that in the original. Chesed, the Lord is gracious and full of compassion.

Kate, CH. Now verse five, this is going to be the letter Tate or Tate. It's a T and you kind of need to put TTH here, or maybe just TH, but it's Tate.

It's a soft T. It's harder than a Dalit, but it's softer than a Tav. It's kind of a, I don't know. We don't, we don't distinguish this sound, but it's Tate.

In verse five, he has given food. We talked about this being one of God's works. He has given food, and this is the Hebrew word here, Teref, is the word for food.

So food he has given. Food, Teref Natan. You know, Natan is to give.

Benjamin Netanyahu is a gift from the Lord. Benyamin Netanyahu is, you can remember quite a bit of your Hebrew vocabulary just by remembering that guy's name. Son of the right hand, gift of the Lord.

Benjamin Netanyahu. Great name, by the way. So food, Teref, he has given to the ones fearing him.

So that's your TTH there in verse five. The second part of that, he will ever be mindful of his covenant is Yod. Y in a circle there.

He will ever be mindful of his covenant. Remember we were talking about Zion up above, meaning Zachar, to remember. Zachariah, remember that? Well, it's the same word here, but when God is doing it, it's preceded by a Yod.

So this is Yod in front of Zachar. He will ever remember. He will remember forever his covenant.

So he will remember, or he will ever be mindful. That whole thing is the Yod. God will be mindful.

Ya-Zachar. This is actually Yizkor, but the idea here is it's an imperfect, it's ongoing action. God will keep on remembering his covenant.

Well, that brings us to verse six. We're going to speed up just a little bit here. He has declared to his people, the power of his works.

Verse six, circle power and put a K for cough in front of verse six. Power. The word for power is quach.

Sounds like it ought to be Klingon or something. Quach. It's a hard K. And then there's a hate after it.

And there's an OA in there. So quach. The power of his works.

Works are the noun form of Asa, the power of what he does. He has declared to his people. Why does God declare the power of his works? What does Zachar mean? Zachar.

Zachariah. The Lord remembers. Zachar.

Your Z is to remember. Why has God declared the power of his works? So that we will remember. We are supposed to remember.

Think on these things. The peace of God that passes all understanding will keep you, keep your heart, keep your mind. Think on these things.

Whatsoever things have these divine qualities of goodness and honor and the qualities of God's works, remember them. They impart power. They impart peace.

Do you want to know how to be happy? This is not an abstraction. This is step-by-step. You want peace in your soul.

You want power in your life. You want fruit that redounds unto eternal life and creates inheritance and opportunity in the future. This is step-by-step.

Here's how to do it. This is better than an instruction manual. It's better than something you get in the box or download from the internet for putting something together.

This is how to do it. Focus on God. This is all of the things that God wants us to remember and reflect on about himself.

Reflect on it. He has declared to his people the power of his works. It ought to do something to us.

It ought to do something for us to remember God's power, to remember his righteousness, to remember his honor and his glory, all of the things that have been talked about up here. So Kaph, capital K, top of verse six, he has declared to his people the power, circle power. The next letter in the Hebrew alphabet is Lamed.

This is going to be your capital L for the second half of that verse, in giving them the heritage of the nations. This is not just power in general. This is God taking all of the other nations of the

world and subjecting them and subordinating them and giving them to his people.

This is specifically true on earth for Israel. It is spiritually true galactically and in a larger sense for the body of Christ. Israel is the physical representation.

We in Christ are the firstborn. He is the firstborn among many brethren and we are co-heirs. We will reign with him.

We will rule with him. We will walk with him. We will fellowship with him.

We will share manna with him. He will give us of what comes to him as the king of glory. If we are in fact his people, if we are reflecting on these things, if we are managing our challenges and working through our day using these principles.

So Lamed. Lamed is to his people. Circle to his people.

Them. He has declared the works of his power to his people in giving. Giving begins with Lamed.

To them begins with Lamed. To his people begins with Lamed. Probably the central, the first part of that line I misspoke should be giving.

Giving them the heritage of the nations. Giving them. Both of them work.

Both start with Lamed. Now verse 7 is going to be the letter M. Capital M in a circle there. Mame.

The works of his hands are truth and justice. And this is the works. Mame starts the works.

The works of his hands are truth. Emeth. Emeth and Mishpat.

Truth and justice. Emeth and Mishpat. Truth and justice.

The next letter is going to be N. All his precepts are sure. Circle the word sure and put at the front of that line a capital letter N. N. This is Emunim. Emuna is stability and surety.

Lastingness. Sure are all his precepts. Okay, we're nearly there.

We've just got three more verses to go. Verse 8. They stand fast forever and ever. This is psalmic.

You can put a small S. This is a soft S. So put a lowercase S because, or you can put a capital S because the other S is going to be an SH. So put an S here in a circle ahead of verse 8. They stand forever. Standing forever.

Standing fast. Standing is your letter S. So stand fast. This means to lay a foundation, a support, something that you lean on, that you rest on, that you depend on as stable.

You brace yourself on it. It sustains you. It stabilizes you.

And the verb there actually lends its name to the letter. This is the verb form of the name psalmic. S-M-K.

So that's your S in a circle there. Verse 8. They stand fast forever and ever. Now you have tzaddeh.

This is T-S. Capital T-S in a circle on the last half of that verse. It says they are done in truth and uprightness.

And they are done is tzaddeh. Oh gosh, you're right. Oops.

Yeah. Psalmic ayin. Sorry.

They are done. And this is from Asa again. This is to do or make, to fashion or accomplish.

And you're right. Now that I squint, that's ayin. Tzaddeh comes after peh.

So the last half of verse 8 there is going to be you can put a small a there. That's your evil ayin in some cases. But that is they are done in emmet and uprightness, in truth and uprightness.

They are done. Verse 9 is peh. This is your letter P in a circle.

He has sent redemption to his people. And the word here that starts with P is redemption. Redemption he has sent to his people.

This is another work of God, right? You can go through this Psalm and count the works of God that are being emphasized here. Redemption he has sent to his people. Now we have tzaddeh.

Thank you, Matt. The last half of verse 9, he has commanded his covenant forever. He has commanded.

Commanded begins with TS, tzaddeh. Bear with me. I know this seems a little tedious, but I'm Perry Mason tonight and I'm going to tie it all up and you'll be glad.

TS. Okay, we've only got four letters to go where it says, notice now in verse 9, we're going to have three letters. We've got three letters in this one and we've got three letters in the last one.

So we've got peh at verse 9. We've got tzaddeh in verse 9. And now where it says holy and awesome is his name. That's kof. That's a letter Q in a circle.

Kof, Q, kadosh, holy. Holy is the word. Okay, now we just have one verse left to go and we're going to get resh, sheen, and tav here.

So first part of verse 10, the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Capital R there. And you might think fear would be the letter R, but it's not.

It's the beginning. Rosh. Remember barashit bara in the beginning? Well, the beginning, the rosh, the head of wisdom.

A wise head fears the Lord. The beginning of wisdom. So that's capital R. The beginning of wisdom is the fear of the Lord.

Now you've got sh in a circle next to a good understanding. A good understanding. Honestly, what this word means is prudence or good sense.

And it's followed by tav. So this is good, good sense. This is righteous prudence.

Righteous prudence. It says a good understanding, like this is going to help you clarify what's being said. No, this is prudence and wisdom in the sense of application.

Your insight and understanding here in terms of reflected in what you do. So you're going to have good common sense, good sense of what's important, good sense all the way around. All of those who do and notice his commandments is in italics because that's not in the original.

Fearing the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. And those who fear the Lord, those who do fear of the Lord have good prudence, have good common sense. It's not diverting your attention to his commandments.

It's focusing your attention on fearing the Lord. That includes doing his commandments, but includes a lot more. Fearing is respecting.

Respecting is appreciating. What part of God are we appreciating in this psalm? His works, what he has done. Appreciating the Lord is the starting place for wisdom and good prudence comes from paying attention to this.

That's where you're going to get your prudence. That's where you're going to get your spiritual common sense is remembering what God has done, dwelling on it, revisiting it like an oasis that you frequent. So that's Sheen.

Now our last letter, hard T, capital T in a circle, his praise endures forever. And his praise is a T on the front of Hallel. It's the same word we started with.

Remember that? Hallelujah at the beginning. Beautiful symmetrical conclusion here. The same verb we started with, everybody praise the Lord.

His praise, his Hallel, starting with a T here, endures forever. That's our first psalm. Two letters for each verse and then verse nine and verse 10 have three each.

So eight verses with two letters, that makes 16 letters covered. Then you've got six more letters in the next two verses. 16 plus six is 22.

That's all your letters of the alphabet. The pattern in the next psalm is identical. The first eight

verses are going to have two lines each.

Verse nine and verse 10 are going to have three letters each, three lines each. Now, if you've got two psalms back to back with an identical structure, this invites comparison, does it not? So when we come back from the break, we're going to see this psalm is complete and entire in itself in the sense of giving us a prescription for success, for peace, for power, for stability, for righteousness in this life and inheritance in the next by focusing on God and specifically God's works, how important it is to remember them because God did them to be remembered. He has designed his mighty works to be thought about and to be the basis of praise by his people.

So that's where the focus is in this psalm. Let's see what happens in Psalm 112 when we come back from the break. you