

Text: Ps 119.49-56

For our first communion service of the year, we turn again to Ps 119.

The section we are in is the “zayin” section, all the stanzas beginning with that letter of the Hebrew alphabet, it has the “z” sound.

The opening word of the section is *zakar*, a word occurring 222 times in the Hebrew Bible.

184 times it is translated with a form of “remember” as it is three times in this section.

Also translated with “mention, mind/mindful, remembrance, memorial, consider, remind, preserve, celebrate, boast”

“There are three groups of meanings: 1) for completely inward mental acts such as ‘remembering’ or ‘paying attention to,’ 2) for such inward mental acts accompanied by appropriate external acts, and 3) for forms of audible speaking with such meanings as ‘recite’ or ‘invoke.’”¹

When we say that “remember” is the main translation, Bowling calls that an “inner mental act.”

Now let’s look at the *zayin* section of Psalm 119 and see what we can find out for our communion service.

Read Ps 119.49-56

I. The Psalmist’s plea (49)

A. The only petition in this section: Remember your word

1. We will talk more about God at the end, but consider
2. God is omniscient: what do we mean when we ask him to remember?

“When God is challenged to ‘remember’ the meaning is better taken as ‘pay attention to’ since nothing ever escapes God’s omniscience (Ps 89:47 [H 48]).”²

¹ Andrew Bowling, “551 זָכַר,” in *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, ed. R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, Jr., and Bruce K. Waltke (Chicago: Moody, 1980), 241.

² Bowling, 241.

B. The relation of the word to the Lord's servant

1. The word is a promise (if it is David writing this, we can think of several promises)
2. The word gives hope to the Psalmist

II. The Psalmist's faith (50-54)

A. The Lord's word comforts in affliction (50-51)

B. The Lord's word comforts in a world full of wickedness (52-53)

1. Note here that the "word" is "ordinances" — *i.e.*, the Law
2. It isn't only promises for my good that comforts me, it is God's will revealed in his word

C. The Lord's word forms the songs of pilgrimage (54)

James Montgomery Boice points out that our contemporary world doesn't do much singing, it listens to singing.

"It has always been natural for Christians to sing of what is lodged joyfully in their hearts, and their worship services have always been characterized by joyous hymn singing."³

Christians, by and large, have valued singing (because of God's promises)

III. The Psalmist's God (55-56)

- A. Here the Psalmist talks about remembering God's name: making God personal to himself
- B. The relationship with God makes the Law of God his own

Conclusion:

In this section we see the Psalmist asking the Lord to "remember his word."

Then he talks about his own remembering of God's word, and remembering his name.

³ James Montgomery Boice, *Psalms 107-150: An Expository Commentary* (Grand Rapids, Mich: Baker Books, 2005), 1000.

When we look to God to fulfill his promises, we are asking him to remember his word.

When John says at the end of Revelation, “Even so, come, Lord Jesus,” he is asking God to remember his word.

Now, as we partake in Communion, we are celebrating our relationship with the Living Word, who said that he would not eat this meal again until he came in his kingdom.

Remember your Word, Lord Jesus. We remember you.