

56 This has become mine,
Because I kept Your precepts.



Heth

57 You are my portion, O LORD;
I have said that I would keep Your words.

58 I entreated Your favor with my whole heart;
Be merciful to me according to Your word.

59 I thought about my ways,
And turned my feet to Your testimonies.

60 I made haste, and did not delay
To keep Your commandments.

61 The cords of the wicked have bound me,
But I have not forgotten Your law.

62 At midnight I will rise to give thanks to You,
Because of Your righteous judgments.

63 I am a companion of all who fear You,
And of those who keep Your precepts.

64 The earth, O LORD, is full of Your mercy;
Teach me Your statutes.



TETH

65 You have dealt well with Your servant,
O LORD, according to Your word.

Heth: Psalm 119:57-64

As noted earlier, there is a tight connection between the *Zayin* and *Heth* sections. Verses 56 and 57 each address the themes of both inheritance and obedience.

“God is mine!” exults the psalmist; and the man who has God as his sole possession is bountifully blessed. (“Take the world, but give me Jesus!” said Fanny Crosby, putting a gospel twist on the same sentiment.)

And “possessing God” leads naturally to obeying him, as Alexander Maclaren notes: “The psalmist had learned the evangelical lesson that he did not win God by keeping the Law, but that he was moved to keep the Law because he had won God. . .”

I find that Maclaren’s thought accurately expresses my own motivation to memorize Psalm 119. I don’t memorize God’s word so he will be happy with me; I memorize God’s word because I’m happy with him.

Verses 59 and 60 work together as a pair. This is noteworthy but by no means unique (compare vs. 5-6, 41-42, 49-50, 69-70, 90-91, etc.).

As throughout the psalm, its author is tormented here by his adversaries. There’s a striking contrast, though, between his mention of them (vs. 61) and the verse that follows (vs. 62, which echoes vs. 55). Just think about it: the psalmist is entangled in the snares of those determined to do him harm, and what keeps him up at night? Gratefulness to God!

Verse 63 offers contrast as well to verse 61. Excluding the introductory verses (1-3), this is the first of just five references to the righteous in the psalm. (The others are in vs. 74, 79, 143, and 165.)

Notes on memorization:

Here are hints on a few problem spots I had in the *Heth* section; you may not find them helpful, but it probably won’t hurt you to read them, either.

Verse 57 speaks of “Your words,” verse 58 of “Your word.” Remember that the same term is repeated, but that’s it’s in the plural once and the singular once.

“Your law” is mentioned only once in this section, in verse 61. There’s probably not a sound reason for me to think of this as a backwards look at the last section (where “Your law” occurs in vs. 51, 53, and 55), but that idea does remind me that vs. 61 talks about God’s law, rather than his statutes, his commandments, his testimonies, or his precepts.

While memorizing this section, I noticed that my son Nick and I both tended to begin verse 63 with “I am a companion of all those. . .” Remember that “those” only occurs once, and in the second half of the verse.