

88 Revive me according to Your lovingkindness,
So that I may keep the testimony of Your mouth.



Lamed

89 Forever, O LORD,
Your word is **settled** in heaven.

90 Your faithfulness **endures** to all generations;
You **established** the earth, and it abides.

91 They **continue** this day according to Your ordinances,
For all are Your servants.

92 Unless Your law had been my delight,
I would then have perished in my affliction.

93 I will never forget Your precepts,
For by them You have given me life.

94 I am Yours, save me;
For I have sought Your precepts.

95 The wicked wait for me to destroy me,
But I will consider Your testimonies.

96 I have seen the consummation of all perfection,
But Your commandment is exceedingly broad.



MEM

97 Oh, how I love Your law!
It is my meditation all the day.

Lamed notes

“The stability of nature witnesses to the steadfastness of the Word which sustains it.” So begins Alexander Maclaren’s commentary on the Lamed section of Psalm 119.

Stability; steadfastness. The word is *settled*; the earth is *established*. In times of trouble, it is a great comfort to remember that our God is as constant as his creation. He has ordered our days from all eternity. Those who would claim a desire to study the universe without acknowledging God would do well to realize that the constancy they see in the laws of the universe is a reflection of the constancy of their Creator. (Who are the “They” of verse 91? The heaven and earth of the previous two verses.) God is as faithful as the rising of the sun, as faithful as gravity.

Yet though God’s creation points to his glory, it ultimately falls short of it, as the psalmist concludes in verse 96. All of the universe’s visible perfection has an end, a limit; only God’s word, “the one thing in the world with a window on eternity,”¹ is as limitless as God himself. The universe, with all its power and beauty, is passing away, but God’s word is settled forever.

Since the word of God is our only window on eternity, in troubled times it offers comfort and hope available from no other source on earth. “Unless Your law had been my delight, I would then have perished in my affliction.” This verse is for me a high point of the psalm; for all its simplicity, it touches on truths as profound as any in the experience of man. It takes me back to the time of my own great affliction, and reminds me:

That when all hope is gone, the permanence of God’s word still gives hope;

That there is ultimately no hope to be found anywhere else;

That when the whole world goes dark, the light of God’s word shines all the brighter;

That even in times of the bleakest despair, it is possible to find not just comfort, but even delight in the word of God;

That those who are not acquainted with God and his word are in a truly desperate and pitiable state.

And it reminds me again to keep turning to the word of hope. “I will never forget Your precepts, for by them you have given me life.”