

A SUPERIOR VIEW OF LAW AND FREEDOM

Psalm 119:89-104

INTRODUCTION

1. Many in today's society tend to rebel against law. Laws get in the way of one's freedom. They restrict one's lifestyle. Law is often viewed as hostile to freedom and liberty.
2. Even in spiritual things, many find law to be the destroyer of spiritual liberty and the enemy of the gospel.
3. Such mistaken thinking is dangerous. It also fails to give due respect for the need for law and the benefits of law.
4. This psalm speaks almost entirely of the law of the Lord. It presents the manifold aspects of God's revelation through the use of several key synonyms found throughout:
 - a. Law
 - b. Testimonies
 - c. Precepts
 - d. Statutes
 - e. Commandments
 - f. Ordinances
 - g. Word
 - h. Promise
5. All of these except one are found in these 16 verses of our lesson text.
6. These verses present what the law provides for us.

I. **STABILITY**, vs. 89-91

- A. We live in a world of change. Heraclitus: "You can't step in the same river twice."
- B. Some argue that all is relative. Truth is relative; there is no absolute truth. Morals are relative; there are no absolute rights and wrongs. Some see the world as uncertain, life as fragile, and existence as meaningless.
- C. This text talks of the eternal, unchanging nature of God's word (Ps. 119:160, 165; 89:2; Isa. 40:8; Matt. 24:35).
- D. The word provides a structure for living. Just as God created an orderly universe by the word that is sustained by natural law (e.g., gravity, etc.), so God's law provides the foundation for order. Truth is truth. Right is right. Sin is sin. "Hold to God's Unchanging Hand." The promises of God are dependable. This gives us hope and comfort.
- E. The law of God brings peace of mind and stability

II. **LIFE**, vs. 92-95

- A. The law of God provides the means for grace. God bestows His gifts upon us. This speaks of the gift of life which the precepts of the Lord bring: Revived (93); Saved (94);

Delivered from the wicked (95)

B. There is a link between scripture and the gift of life (Ps. 19:7; John 6:68; Rom. 8:1).

III. **LIBERATION**, v. 96

A. Many people think of law as restricting, limiting; cramping their style; stifling their ability to express themselves.

B. There is a “limit to all perfection” — there is nothing perfect in this world. Neither is there absolute freedom in this world. It is an illusion. We will never be free from:

1. Having to choose right or wrong
2. The consequences of that choice
3. Responsibility for that choice

A. Freedom is relative and conditional (Rom. 6:16). When we were younger, we might have thought that our parents made rules to make life God gave us his laws, not to hurt us or make our lives unhappy, but for our good. In fact, He knows exactly what we need in order to be happiest in life, to fulfill our true potential, to flourish in life. God, our Heavenly Father, wants nothing but the best for us, His children. That is why he has provided the guidelines of his laws and precepts to help us in life.

A. “The Keeper of the Kite” (Curt Roberts)

E. True freedom is found within God’s laws, not through release from them (Ps. 119:32, 45, 133; 18:19; John 8:32; Jas. 1:25).

C. “Thy commandment is exceedingly broad” (v. 96).

IV. **LIGHT**, 97-104

A. These verses speak of the love the psalmist has for God’s law (97), and the sweetness and pleasantness they bring to life (103).

B. The reason for this is that the law provides guidance (105).

1. A wisdom or insight on a higher plane than one’s own (98-100; cf. 1 Cor. 1:18f).
2. Discipline or training in life; help in making the right choices (101-102).
3. Good judgment. “Taste” (103) suggests discrimination to know the difference between what is good and what is evil (Rom. 12:9; 1 Thess. 5:21).

Dan Petty