

Mission Sunday

Like a Wineskin in the Smoke

Psalm 119:81–88 (NIV) Ps. Leia

Where is your mission field?

The mission field is often a dry place: language barriers, loneliness, unanswered prayers.

The mother praying for a prodigal, the worker in a hostile office, the patient in a hospital bed, a spiritual leader in their solitude.

All of us, at some point, serve in the smoke.



Psalm 119:81–82 (NIV)

“My soul faints with longing for your salvation,
but I have put my hope in your word.”

v. 81

“My eyes fail, looking for your promise; I say, ‘
When will you comfort me?’”

v. 82

Psalm 119:83–84 (NIV)

“Though I am like a wineskin in the smoke,
I do not forget your decrees.”

v. 83

“How long must your servant wait?
When will you punish my persecutors?”

v. 84

Psalm 119:85–86 (NIV)

“The arrogant dig pits to trap me,
contrary to your law.”

v. 85

“All your commands are trustworthy;
help me, for I am being persecuted without cause.”

v. 86

Psalm 119:87–88 (NIV)

“They almost wiped me from the earth,
but I have not forsaken your precepts.”

v. 87

“In your unfailing love preserve my life,
that I may obey the statutes of your mouth.”

v. 88



Where this cry comes from

The lowest stanza of the longest psalm

176	22	11th
VERSES	STANZAS (Serves to Transition)	LETTER · KAPH

Psalm 119: an A-to-Z love song about Scripture.

Our verses sit under Kaph, one of the darkest points of the psalm.

Let’s see how it works:

Psalm 119

The Hebrew Alphabet · 22 Stanzas on the Word of God

Stanzas 1–8

1.	א	**Aleph**	(vv. 1–8)	**Blessing**	*of obedience*
2.	ב	**Beth**	(vv. 9–16)	**Cleansing**	*by God's Word*
3.	ג	**Gimel**	(vv. 17–24)	**Appreciation**	*of God's Word*
4.	ד	**Daleth**	(vv. 25–32)	**Understanding**	*a prayer for it*
5.	ה	**He**	(vv. 33–40)	**Loyalty**	*to God's Word*
6.	ו	**Vav**	(vv. 41–48)	**Salvation**	*through God's Word*
7.	ז	**Zayin**	(vv. 49–56)	**Hope**	*from God's Word*
8.	ח	**Heth**	(vv. 57–64)	**Obedience**	*to God's Word*

Stanza themes from the Bible Knowledge Commentary (Walvoord & Zuck), Old Testament

Psalm 119

The Hebrew Alphabet · 22 Stanzas on the Word of God

Stanzas 9–15

9.	ט	**Teth**	(vv. 65–72)	**Trust**	*in God's Word*
10.	י	**Yod**	(vv. 73–80)	**Hope**	*in God's Word*
11.	כ	**Kaph**	(vv. 81–88)	**Faithful**	*God's Word is faithful*
12.	ל	**Lamed**	(vv. 89–96)	**Sure**	*God's Word is sure*
13.	מ	**Mem**	(vv. 97–104)	**Sweet**	*God's Word is sweet*
14.	נ	**Nun**	(vv. 105–112)	**Light**	*God's Word is a light*
15.	ס	**Samekh**	(vv. 113–120)	**Awe**	*God's Word is awe-inspiring*

Stanza themes from the Bible Knowledge Commentary (Walvoord & Zuck), Old Testament

Psalm 119

The Hebrew Alphabet · 22 Stanzas on the Word of God

Stanzas 16–22

16.	ע	**Ayin**	(vv. 121–128)	**Vindication**	*from God*
17.	פ	**Pe**	(vv. 129–136)	**Wonderful**	*God's Word is wonderful*
18.	צ	**Tsadhe**	(vv. 137–144)	**Righteous**	*God's Word is righteous*
19.	ק	**Qoph**	(vv. 145–152)	**True**	*God's Word is true*
20.	ר	**Resh**	(vv. 153–160)	**Love**	*for God's Word*
21.	ש	**Shin**	(vv. 161–168)	**Rejoicing**	*in God's Word*
22.	ת	**Tav**	(vv. 169–176)	**Deliverance**	*by God's Word*

Stanza themes from the Bible Knowledge Commentary (Walvoord & Zuck), Old Testament



THE SMOKE

An honest lament

A wineskin hung in the smoke

The Discipline of Patience: An empty wineskin doesn't cure overnight; it must hang in the smoke for a prolonged period. By stating, *"though I am like a wineskin in the smoke, I do not forget your decrees,"* the writer shows a battle-tested patience.

They are willing to wait out the dark, suffocating trial because they know the "curing" process keeps them from rotting under pressure.

I feel forgotten

“When will you comfort me?”
v. 82

I feel dried out

“My soul faints”
v. 81

I feel scarred

The soot of affliction shows.



Lament is faith that still talks to God

The psalmist doesn’t pretend it is all good; he tells God exactly how he feels.

God can handle your honesty.

> “Lord, I feel like a wineskin in the smoke.”

THE “YET”

A faith that *remembers*

His circumstances changed; his anchor did not

“But I have put my hope in your word” v. 81

“I do not forget your decrees” v. 83

“All your commands are trustworthy” v. 86

“But I have not forsaken your precepts” v. 87



Jesus Knows!

On the cross, the One who made the rivers cried,

“I am thirsty” John 19:28

He was dried out so that we could be filled.

The living water

“Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink”

John 7:37–38

Every believer is a missionary

Your neighborhood,

Job site

Family

Social Media

"The Lord will guide you always;
he will satisfy your needs in a sun-scorched land and
will strengthen your frame. You will be like a well-watered garden,
like a spring whose waters never fail."

Isaiah 58:11

The one who chose you, goes with you!

Jesus knows you! Hold fast to His Word. Look to Him.

"And surely I am with you always"

Matthew 28:20.

Mission in action:

"Some go with their feet, some with their prayers,
and some with the giving
—With God, we make missions happen." Ps. Leia

"Here am I. Send me!" Isaiah 6:8