

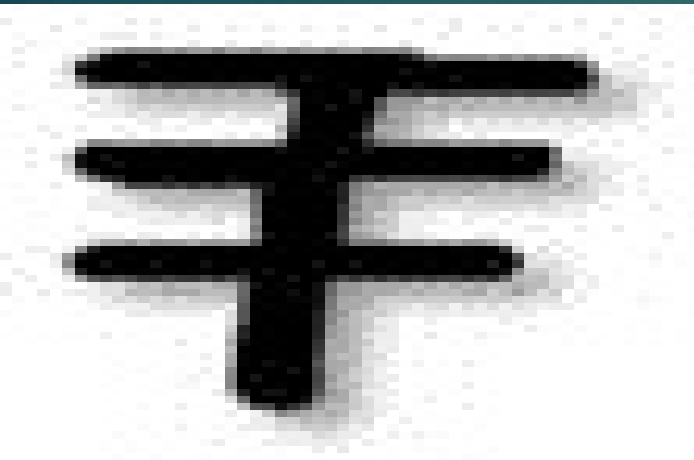
SAMEKH

PSALM 119:113-120

*Hope in the Word of God and not the
Deceitful Words Of unbelievers*

SAMEK

Psalms:119:113-120



Letter Name	Early Hebrew	Middle Hebrew	Late Hebrew	Modern Hebrew
SAMEK				

Pictograph:

Meanings:

Sound:

Thorn

Grab, Hate, Protect

S

113 SAMEK. I hate the double-minded, But I love
Your law.

114 You *are* my hiding place and my shield; I hope in
Your word.

115 Depart from me, you evildoers, For I will keep
the commandments of my God!

116 Uphold me according to Your word, that I may
live; And do not let me be ashamed of my hope.

117 Hold me up, and I shall be safe, And I shall observe Your statutes continually.

118 You reject all those who stray from Your statutes, For their deceit *is* falsehood.

119 You put away all the wicked of the earth *like* dross; Therefore I love Your testimonies.

120 My flesh trembles for fear of You, And I am afraid of Your judgments.

Separating themselves from ungodly and deceitful people whom God will judge, believers pray for God to sustain them in their faith by His Word.

The psalmist hates double-minded evildoers and knows that God, in whom He trusts, and in whose Word he trusts, removes the wicked by His judgments (Psa 119:113–120).

He petitions the Lord to *uphold* him (Psa 119:116) and *to hold him up* (Psa 119:117).

Short outline:

- I. Believers find security and hope in God's Word and not in the inconsistency of the words of people (Psa 119:113–114)**
- II. Believers desire separation from evildoers so that they can follow God's commands (Psa 119:15)**
- III. Believers pray for God to sustain them by His Word because He opposes the wicked (Psa 119:16–119)**
- IV. Believers stand in fear of the judge of the whole world (Psa 119:120)**

I. Believers find security and hope in God's Word and not in the inconsistency of the words of people (Psa 119:113–114)

Psalm 119:113 I hate the double-minded, But I love Your law.

The first verse of this file sets up a contrast between those who are dedicated to God's Word and those who are double-minded.

I hate שׂנֵא (sane') hate. It expresses an emotional attitude toward persons and things which are opposed, detested, despised and with which one wishes to have no contact or relationship.

It is therefore the opposite of love. Whereas love draws and unites, hate separates and keeps distant.

HATE IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

1. The verb שָׂנֵא (sane') means "to hate"; it occurs some 148 times in the Bible with a wide range of meanings.
2. The verb "hate" can have varying levels of intensity from hatred with great intensity to just aversion to something or someone, or simply as a comparison in not loving one object as much as one loves another object. Leah, for example, was hated (Gen 29:31, 33), meaning less loved or neglected.

3. The word is used frequently with God as the subject. God's hatred is not like a human emotion, but an anthropopathism which expresses His justice when His righteousness has been offended.

Things He hates are many:

- A. abominations (Jer. 44:4),
- B. hypocritical worship (Isa. 1:14),
- C. a series of sins (Prov. 6:16),
- D. divorce (Mal. 2:16),
- E. heathen practices (Deut. 16:22).

4. *Jacob have I loved, but Esau I hated* (Mal. 1:3). God chose Jacob before he was born and so personal feelings were not the issue; he did not choose Esau.
5. Most things hated are rejected; whereas things loved are chosen.
6. God commands those who love the LORD to hate evil (Ps. 97:10), meaning reject it, but this could include revulsion toward an object.

- 7 People who reject the LORD and his Law are said to hate Him (Exod. 20:5).
8. The people of Israel were warned not to hate their brothers in their hearts (Lev. 19:17).
9. The psalmist declares that he hates those who hate the Lord (Psa 139:21-22).
- ²¹ Do I not hate them, O LORD, who hate You? And do I not loathe those who rise up against You? ²²
I hate them with perfect hatred; I count them my enemies.

This is not a mental attitude sin, but rather a rejection of them because of their hostility to the Lord. They were first God's enemies, and since he is loyal to God, they have become his enemies. This is not personal animosity, but an attitude which demonstrates love for God and His law.

This is illustrated in 2 Cor 8:14-15 ¶ Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? ¹⁵ And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever?

I hate the double-minded סֵׁעַף (se'ep) divided, half-hearted

In the first part of the verse the psalmist declares that he hates the double-minded. This word *double-minded* (which occurs only here) describes people who are fickle, who cannot decide what they believe, as illustrated in 1 Kings 18:21 where the prophet Elijah accuses the nation of faltering (dancing) between two opinions—they could not decide between Yahweh or Baal!

Double-minded is literally *divided*. It may refer to divided opinion or to divided loyalty; the latter fits the context better.

He hates those who do not join him in devotion to the Word of God.

I. But I love Your law

In the second half of this verse the psalmist states what he loves: *the law of the LORD*. These two verbs, *love* and *hate*, are antithetical. They are not merely emotions or attitudes, but are also words that include acts.

To “hate” includes the idea of rejecting, and “love” the idea of choosing. We might interpret them as “being against” and “being dedicated to.”

Psalm 119:114 You *are* my hiding place and my shield; I hope in Your word.

This verse explains why the psalmist loves the law of the LORD—it is because of what the LORD means to him.

He uses two metaphors to describe the LORD, *hiding place* and *shield*. Both of these are common in the psalms. They indicate that the psalmist learned these things about the LORD by going through suffering and oppression, and finding refuge in Him.

hiding place סֵתֶר (seter) hiding place.

God as a *hiding place* conveys the idea of safety and protection from assault (Psalms 27:5; 31:20; **32:7** et al), and signifies safety in the Lord.

We are taught that God protects us from the common dangers of life, including the conspiracies of the wicked (Psalm 31:20) as well as the plans of the wicked (Psalm 64:2). Hiding describes the action of the wise man when he sees evil (Proverbs 22:3, 27:12).

my shield מִגֵּן (māgēn) shield; to cover over and thus shield from danger.

The word *shield* is taken from the battlefield and signifies protection. It is a common metaphor in the psalms for God's defense of His own people (Psalm 7:10; 18:30; 28:7; 33:20; 59:11; 84:9, 11; 115:9, 10, 11; 119:114; 144:2).

The word was first spoken by God to Abraham in Genesis 15:1. "Do not be afraid, Abram. I *am* your shield, your exceedingly great reward."

The psalmist had the same God that Abraham had.

In Psalm 91, the psalmist declares that God's truth is his shield.

I hope in Your word. יָחַל (yachal) wait, hope.

Because of what he has learned, he puts his hope in God's Word. To hope in the Lord, or wait for the Lord, is a common idea because the Lord is the source of all good. The passages seldom say exactly what they are waiting for, just that they are waiting for the LORD.

The hoping or waiting is for God to fulfill His Word. Hoping in the LORD requires faith and courage (as in Psa 31:24). Faith and courage will be needed because hoping implies the need for endurance.

Be of good courage, And He shall strengthen your heart, All you who hope in the LORD.

See also Psa 27, especially verses 11- 14:

Teach me Your way, O LORD, And lead me in a smooth path, because of my enemies.

¹² Do not deliver me to the will of my adversaries; For false witnesses have risen against me, And such as breathe out violence.

¹³ *I would have lost heart*, unless I had believed That I would see the goodness of the LORD In the land of the living.

¹⁴ Wait on the LORD; Be of good courage, And He shall strengthen your heart; Wait, I say, on the LORD!

I hope in Your word.

By *word* he means primarily the promises of God to protect and preserve him.

His love for the law of the LORD is based in part on his experiencing protection according to God's Word.

II. Believers desire separation from evildoers so that they can follow God's commands (Psa 119:15)

Psalm 119:115 Depart from me, you evildoers, For I will keep the commandments of my God!

Typical of laments in general, the psalmist addresses the evildoers (see Ps. 6:8). He says, Depart from me ... that I may keep the commandments of my God.

It is a demand for the wicked to leave him alone so that he can hold to God's Word in his life.

He could maintain such a commitment to the Word even if they did not depart; but if they left him alone he would be free to do more in his service to God.

In Psalm 6 evildoers are in some way hindering his concentration on God's word. Therefore he says,

⁸ Depart from me, all you workers of iniquity; For the LORD has heard the voice of my weeping.

⁹ The LORD has heard my supplication; The LORD will receive my prayer.

¹⁰ Let all my enemies be ashamed and greatly troubled; Let them turn back *and* be ashamed suddenly.

III. Believers pray for God to sustain them by His Word because He opposes the wicked (Psa 119:16–119)

Psalm 119:116 Uphold me according to Your word, that I may live; And do not let me be ashamed of my hope.

Uphold me סָמַךְ (samak) lean upon, lay, put, uphold,
support

Uphold me means, “Support me as Your Word has taught me to expect.” The word is used for divine help in general (see Psa 3:5; 37:17; 71:6). Because he knows the Word of God he rightly expects God to support him in his troubles.

according to Your word. This phrase occurs 12 times in this psalm (9, 25, 28, 41, 58, 65, 76, 107, 116, 154, 169, 170). It is imperative to know the Word of God.

The petition appeals to the promises God made to His people.

that I may live – (see verses 17, 77).

He is not simply asking for God to spare his life, although that would be included, but that he might live to fulfill God's purpose for his life.

Parallel to this petition is his request not to be ashamed because of his hope.

And do not let me be ashamed of my hope.

ashamed בֹּשׁ (bosh) be ashamed, put to shame, disconcerted, disappointed.

The primary meaning of this root is “to fall into disgrace, normally through failure, either of self or because the object of trust was not reliable.”

The verb “*ashamed*” means much more than being embarrassed or made to look silly. He does not want to be so humiliated and have his belief in God’s Word seriously discredited.

And do not let me be ashamed of my hope.

Hope **שֵׁבֶר** (seber) hope.

The word “*hope*” is not the usual word for hope — it occurs only here and in Psalm 146:5.

It refers to his expectation that the promises God made will be fulfilled. It looks to that deliverance which alone has power to make a person safe (Ps 119) and happy (Ps 146).

Psa 146:5 Happy *is he* who *has* the God of Jacob for his help, Whose hope *is* in the LORD his God,

If he puts his trust in God's word for help, and no help comes, he would be put to shame—and God would be discredited because His Word would appear to be unreliable.

This is similar to Moses arguing with the Lord out in the desert when the people wanted to go back to Egypt.

¹⁵ If you put all these people to death, leaving none alive, the nations who have heard this report about you will say,
¹⁶ 'The LORD was not able to bring these people into the land he promised them on oath, so he slaughtered them in the wilderness.'

Psalm 119:117 Hold me up, and I shall be safe,
And I shall observe Your statutes continually.

Hold me up סָעַד (sā'ad) sustain, support, establish,
strengthen, comfort.

The verb means to support, sustain, with regard to helping individuals in distress. It is an appeal for divine help (as in Psa 20:3; 41:3). If the LORD sustains him, he will eventually be delivered from his enemies.

I shall be safe יָשַׁע (yasha') be saved, be delivered, means I will be helped, I will be delivered.

Through God's support and comfort he will be saved from his terrible situation.

And I shall observe Your statutes continually.

שָׁעָה (sha'ah) look at, look to, regard.

He affirms his high regard for God's statutes. The verb *observe* has the idea of to look at with interest. It is never a casual glance, but to look at with approval.

He is saying that he has high regard for the Word of God. Many believers claim to esteem the Bible, but they show through their attitude and their actions that they do not.

And I shall observe Your statutes continually.

By saying that he observes it continually he is saying that it is a continual part of his thinking all the time and in every area of his life.

This is not saying that he will keep the statutes. He has already declared that in verses 5, 8, 32, 145. This is saying that he has high regard for the Word of God, that he recognizes their worth, and thus he will keep them in the forefront of his thinking.

In verses 118 and 119, the psalmist makes two observations that express his confident expectation of deliverance.

The first in verse 118 is that God rejects those who reject Him, those who wander away from His statutes, meaning they disregard and disobey His Word.

The second statement is that God causes the wicked to cease, that is, removes them *like dross* (119).

Psalm 119:118 You reject all those who stray from
Your statutes, For their deceit is falsehood.

You reject סָלָה (salah) make light of, toss away, treat
as worthless, trample underfoot (Lam 1:15).

Those who abandon the law of God have no future with
God.

all those who stray שָׁגָה (shagah) go astray, err.

This word is used to describe how sheep get lost (Ezk 34:6).

It happens when people stop listening to the instructions of God's Word (Prov 5:2; 19:27).

For their deceit is falsehood. “Their deceitfulness is a lie,” literally

They may act as if their manner of life is not evil, not sinful, but in the end it will be seen for what it really is – a rejection of God’s laws. The result is that they will be rejected by God.

Psalm 119:119 You put away all the wicked of the earth like dross; Therefore I love Your testimonies.

put away שָׁבַת (shabat) cease, desist, rest, to put an end to, to cause to cease.

It is a favorite verb of the prophets to describe God's judgment on His people: "I will cause to cease the arrogance of the proud" (Isa 13:11).

You put away all the wicked of the earth like dross;

all the wicked of the earth is a reference to those who have rebelled against God and His Word.

Dross סוג (sug), the worthless material removed in the refining process.

Therefore I love Your testimonies.

Because God removes the wicked, the psalmist declares his loyalty to Him: “*therefore I love your testimonies.*”

The word “*love*” is used here with its sense of showing loyalty to the covenant God has made. This statement comes immediately after his report that God removes the wicked. It is followed by a statement of his personal response to the thought of divine judgment.

IV. Believers stand in fear of the judge of the whole world (Psa 119:120)

**Psalm 119:120 My flesh trembles for fear of You,
And I am afraid of Your judgments.**

Trembles סָמַר (samar) bristle up, tremble, shiver

Believers know how fearful the divine judge is, how horrible His judgments can be. The verb tremble means “to tremble, shiver,” or we might say “shudder.”

for fear of You פִּחַד (pachad) dread, terror, panic

This is not the usual word for fearing the Lord. So this is not saying that the psalmist responds with reverential fear, i.e., worship, but rather with genuine fear. This is a strong verb of fearing and may refer to the kind of fear aroused by a “terror.”

It is used in contexts which refer to such ideas as quaking and trembling (e.g. Isa 19:16; 33:14; Jer 33:9. See also Dt 28:67).

There is something from the Lord which we should dread, and that is judgment.

And I am afraid of Your judgments.

afraid יָרֵא (yare') fear, be afraid, revere.

Judgments — means decisions, but in this context it is judgment on those who refuse God's decisions.

The psalmist is not afraid that he might be swept away in the judgment; he is overwhelmed and terrified at the thought of divine justice on all the ungodly.

Knowing that God will one day bring judgment on the ungodly can give us peace and hope. But do not hasten to call down God's judgment on them. For instance, the Church will not go through the Tribulation, and that gives us comfort, but it will be horrible. It should make us tremble to even consider.