

# Enchanted Forest of Psalms

June 8, 2025

1 Tree Planted by a Stream  
119 God's Holy Word, Law, Wisdom

19 Heavens Declare God's Glory  
96 Sing a New Song, Let Heavens Rejoice  
132 Lord, Remember David  
110 Sit at My Right Hand, Enemies a Footstool  
18 Lord Is My Rock, His Way Perfect  
105 Give Praise, Remember Wonders

His Word Pierced Me

George Pine's Deep Roots

General Sherman Sequoia

Huge Oak of David

Red Maple Profuse Beauty

Liberty Trees of Early U.S.

Hanging Trees of Old West

Mighty Elms – Keel of Ship

Douglas Fir for Homes

Poisonous Driftwood

Nobel Pine, 126 Species

Nightengale of Psalms

Knightwood Oak – Queen of Forest  
Hickory – American Wagon Wheel

**Psalm 119:1**  
Blessed are those whose  
ways are *BLAMELESS*  
who walk according to the  
**LAW** of the LORD

How do you **READ** Psalm 119?  
Shallowly, **Legalistically**,  
or **Relationally**?





## Psalm 119

Spurgeon quoted William De Burgh of Psalm 119,

St. Augustine, among his voluminous works  
on Psalms that he delayed to comment on 119  
until he had finished the whole Psalter

Then yielded only to the long and  
vehement urgency of his friends,

“because,” Augustine said, “as often as  
I essayed to think thereon,  
it always **EXCEEDED** the powers of  
my intent thought and  
the utmost grasp of my faculties”



*Saint Augustin*, c. 1645  
by Philippe de Champaigne,



**Key Verse Psalm 119:1**  
**Blessed are those whose**  
**ways are BLAMELESS,**  
**who walk according to the**  
**LAW of the LORD**

***IF*** you can grasp  
***THIS VERSE***

- ✓ You Can Grasp ALL 176
- ✓ You Can APPRECIATE ALL
- ✓ You are Top of the Class

Who is ***BLAMELESS?***

- ✓ Me? You? WHO?
- ✓ Only ONE has been—  
1,000 years after 119
- ✓ Who can approach such  
a high standard?



## Psalm 119

**George Wishart (1599–1671) Presbyterian Bishop of Edinburg**  
not an earlier man by same name (1513–1546) killed for preaching in Scotland

**His biography of great 1st Marquis of Montrose was  
tied around the Marquis' neck when  
the Marquis was *HANGED* for his 1650 victories  
then Marquis was beheaded & quartered**

**Wishart was tried & ordered to be HANGED too ...**

**Custom was the condemned chose a Psalm to be sung**

**He chose Psalm 119 ... before 2/3 was sung ...**

**a pardon arrived . . . . . His life was preserved.**





## Psalm 119

One of Spurgeon's 100s of sources was

- ✓ Thomas Manton (1620–1677) English Puritan
- ✓ His Collected Writings span 22 volumes
- ✓ He was a Chaplain to Oliver Cromwell

Manton was jailed for 6 months in 1670 for violating Act of Uniformity 1662

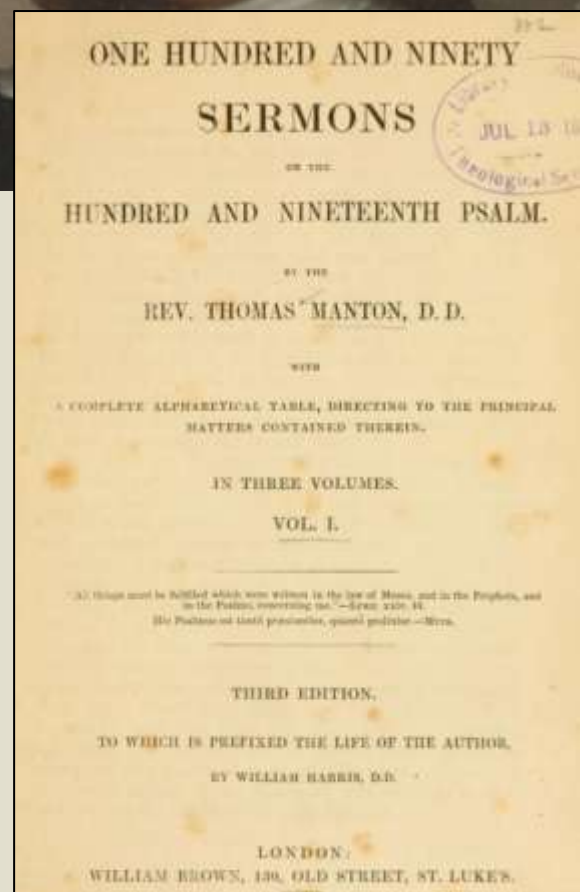
His 3-vol *190 Sermons on Psalm 119* (1840s)

Free from Google Books ... How did he do it?

Hard to imagine anyone preaching 190x on 119  
more than twice for a few of Psalm 119's 176 verses

I seriously doubt *anyone* read ALL 3 volumes

Though a few might spend an hour *gleaning*





# The Enchanted Forest

Psalm 119 – How ... *HOW* you  
read it makes *ALL* the difference

- ✓ 1. Shallow – *Boring, Tedious*
- ✓ 2. Semi-Shallow – *Repetitive or uselessly Redundant*
- ✓ 3. *Legalistically* – *Rulebook Taxing*
- ✓ 4. Relationally – Loving God's *Love*  
increasing in richness ...



GENERAL SHERMAN



# *Les Misérables*, 1862

French epic novel by Victor Hugo

Upton Sinclair said it was "one of the half-dozen greatest novels of the world"

5 volumes, 48 books, 365 chapters.

chapters short, usually just a few pages.

655,478 words, one of longest novels written  
takes us from 1815 & Waterloo to 1832

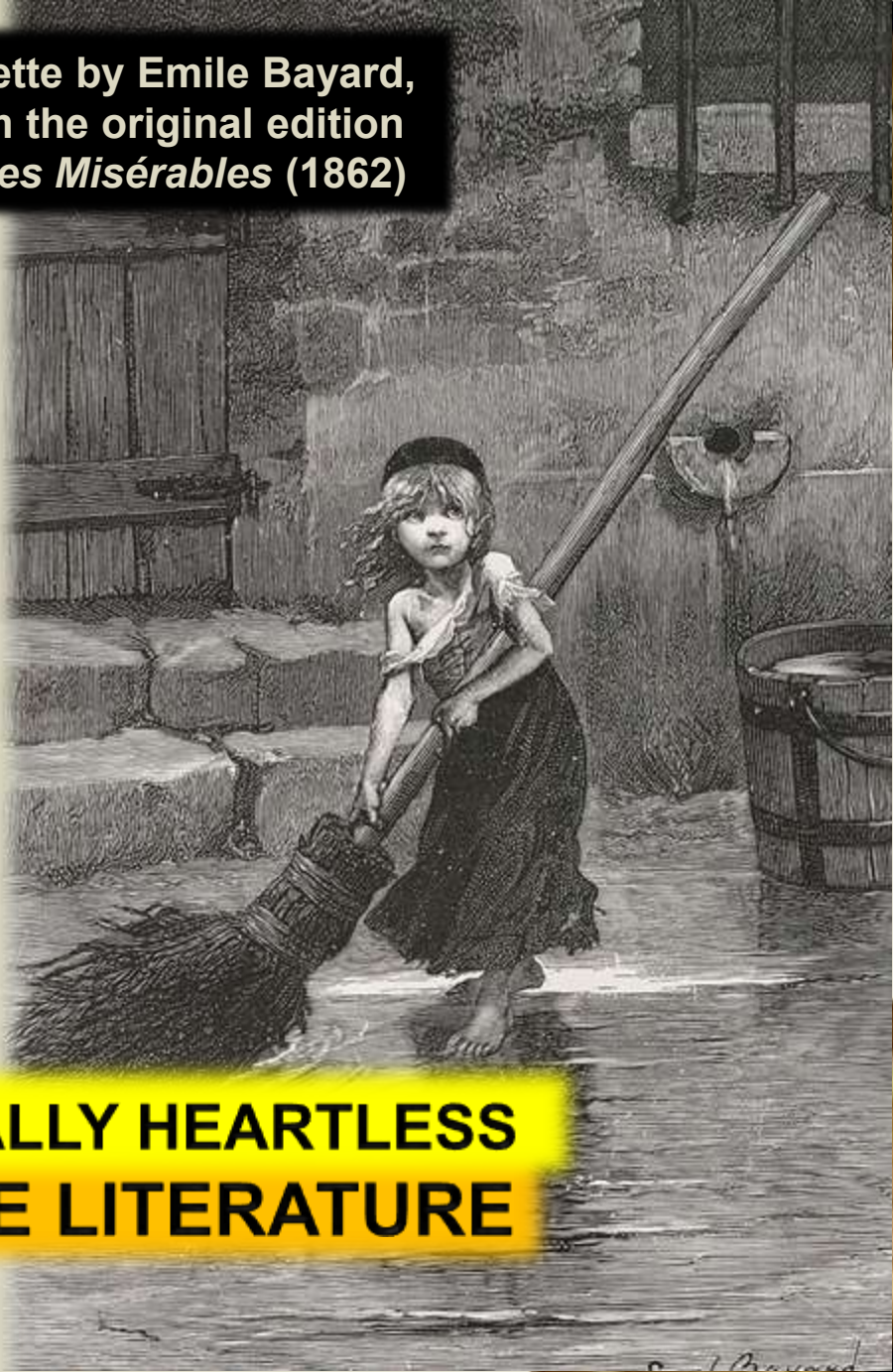
Jean Valjean is prisoner for stealing bread  
after release, a priest takes him in ...

Valjean steals silver, caught, brought back

Priest FREES – gives him candlesticks

**HEREIN WE SEE THE MOST LEGALISTICALLY HEARTLESS  
POLICE INSPECTOR IN THE LITERATURE**

Cosette by Emile Bayard,  
from the original edition  
of *Les Misérables* (1862)







***Les Misérables*, 1862, French epic novel by Victor Hugo**  
***Les Misérables* = miserable ones or wretched ones**



# General Sherman

275 feet tall ~ 2,100 tons ~ 36 feet wide

Like Psalm 119 - Massive & Ancient

General Sherman is dated 500-300 BC

Most Massive Tree in the World

not tallest – not largest circumference

Psalm 119 is the **most massive Psalm**

Not as TALL as Psalm 23 in metaphor – Valley to His House **FOREVER**  
or as WIDE as Psalm 139 – guides to uttermost part of the **SEA**

Though no author is listed, Spurgeon & others  
see King David as author

Like General Sherman ...

Psalm 119 stands most MASSIVE in

the **Enchanted Forest of Psalms**



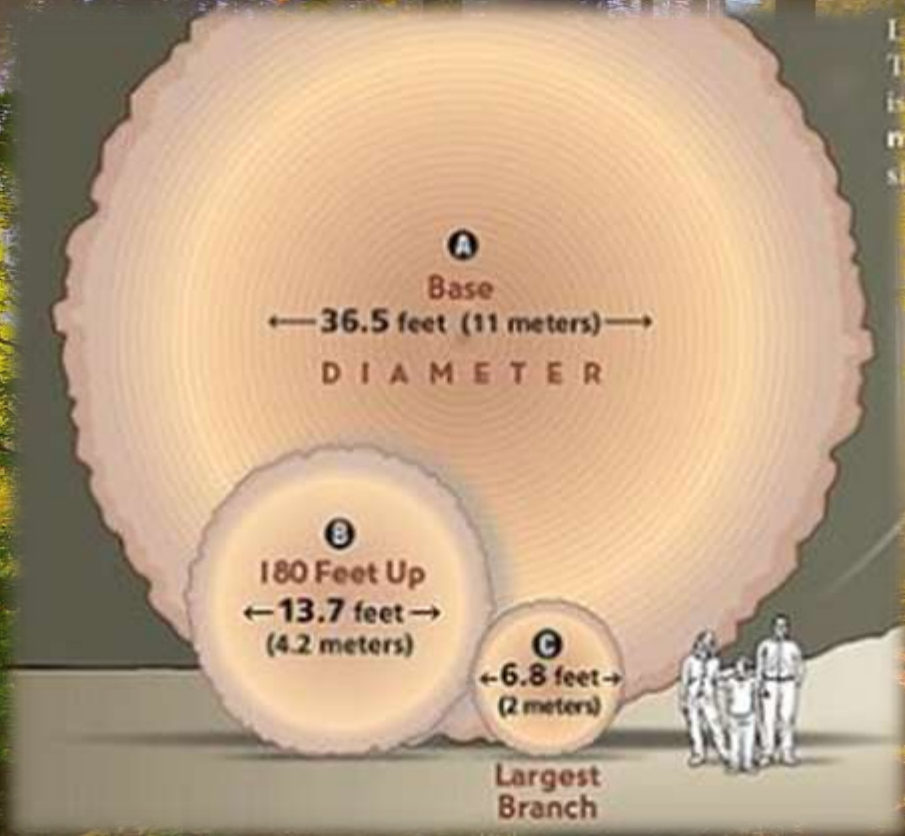


# General Sherman –

Giant Sequoia 275 feet tall

Est. 2,100 tons – largest volume in world

Not the tallest or largest circumference







# General Sherman Sequoia

275 feet tall ~ 2,100 tons ~ 36 feet wide





# PSALM 119 ~ Hebrew Reads Opposite of English

Hebrew reads LEFT to RIGHT



Psalm 119 is an Acrostic Psalm, each section beginning with letter of Hebrew alphabet, for 22 sections

*Each* set of 8 verses in the 22 sections begins with Hebrew letter

א Aleph	1-8	ה Heth	57-64	ס Samekh	113-120
ב Beth	9-16	ט Teth	65-72	ע Ayin	121-128
ג Gimel	17-24	י Yodh	73-80	פ Pe	129-136
ד Daleth	25-32	כ Kaph	81-88	צ Tsadhe	137-144
ה He	33-40	ל Lamedh	89-96	ק Qoph	145-152
ו Waw	41-48	מ Mem	97-104	ר Resh	153-160
ז Zayin	49-56	נ Nun	105-112	ש Sin/Shin	161-168
				ת Taw	169-176

Psalm 119 is the General Sherman Sequoia of PSLAMS



## Psalm 119

Spurgeon quoted Andrew A. Bonar of Psalm 119's acrostic,  
There may be something more than fancy in the remark,  
Christ's name, "the Alpha and Omega" ... may have a  
a reference to the peculiarity of this Psalm, which ...  
every verse speaks of God's revelation of Himself to man.

Spurgeon quoted Johannes Paulus Palanterius on Psalm 119  
writing these words in 1600,

This Psalm is called the Alphabet of Divine Love,  
the Paradise of ALL the Doctrines,  
the Storehouse of the Holy Spirit,  
the School of Truth,  
also the deep mystery of the Scriptures, where the whole  
moral discipline of all the virtues shines brightly.

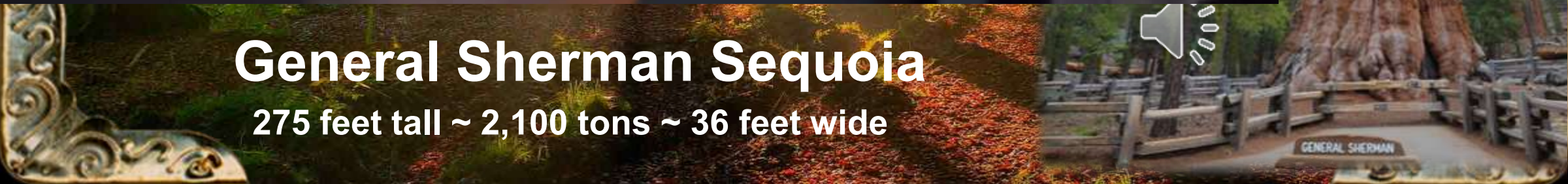






# General Sherman Sequoia

275 feet tall ~ 2,100 tons ~ 36 feet wide





# The Enchanted Forest

Psalm 119 – How ... *HOW* you  
read it makes *ALL* the difference

1. Shallow – *Boring, Tedious*
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3. *Legalistically* – *Rulebook Taxing*
4. *Relationally* – Loving God's *Love*  
increasing in richness ...



GENERAL SHERMAN



# The Enchanted Forest

General Sherman of Psalms

MASSIVE – few *Metaphors*

WHY it does **NOT** at first *FEEL*  
appealing – few *Pictures!*

Psalm 23 has Dozen PICTURES in 6 verses

Psalm 119 *barely has Dozen* in 176 verses

Like v 25, “I am laid low in the DUST”

Like v 103, “How SWEET are your words to my TASTE,  
SWEETER than honey to my mouth!”

Like v 105, “Thy Word is a LAMP unto my feet,  
a LIGHT unto my PATH”

Like v 114, “You are my REFUGE & my SHIELD”





**Key Verse Psalm 119:1**

**Blessed are those whose  
ways are BLAMELESS,  
who walk according to the  
LAW of the LORD**





## C.H. Spurgeon's *Treasury of David*

Premier website:

<http://archive.spurgeon.org/treasury/treasury.php>

C. H. Spurgeon's *Treasury of David* (1865-1885)  
*masterpiece* without equal

Psalm 119 takes up nearly 400 pgs of Vol 4  
Profitable are the hours gleaning these pages  
Waxing eloquent as always, Spurgeon says:  
**He—King David—never repeats himself;**  
**for if the same sentiment recurs it is placed**  
**in a fresh connection, and so exhibits**  
**another interesting shade of meaning.**





## C.H. Spurgeon's *Treasury of David*

Waxing eloquent as always, Spurgeon says:  
More one studies it, the fresher it becomes.  
As those who drink the Nile water like it better  
every time they take a draught,  
so does this Psalm become the more full and  
fascinating the oftener you turn to it.  
It contains no idle word;  
the grapes of THIS CLUSTER are almost  
to bursting full with the new  
wine of the kingdom.





## C.H. Spurgeon's *Treasury of David*

Waxing eloquent as always, Spurgeon says:

The more you look into this mirror of a  
**GRACIOUS HEART** the more you will see in it.

Placid on the surface as the sea of glass before  
the eternal throne,

it yet contains within its depths

**an ocean of fire,**

and those who devoutly gaze into it shall not only  
see the brightness, but

**feel the glow of the sacred flame.**





# The Enchanted Forest

Psalm 119 – How ... *HOW* you  
read it makes *ALL* the difference

1. Shallow – Boring, Tedious
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uselessly Redundant
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*FIRST* – see the *LEGALIST*



GENERAL SHERMAN

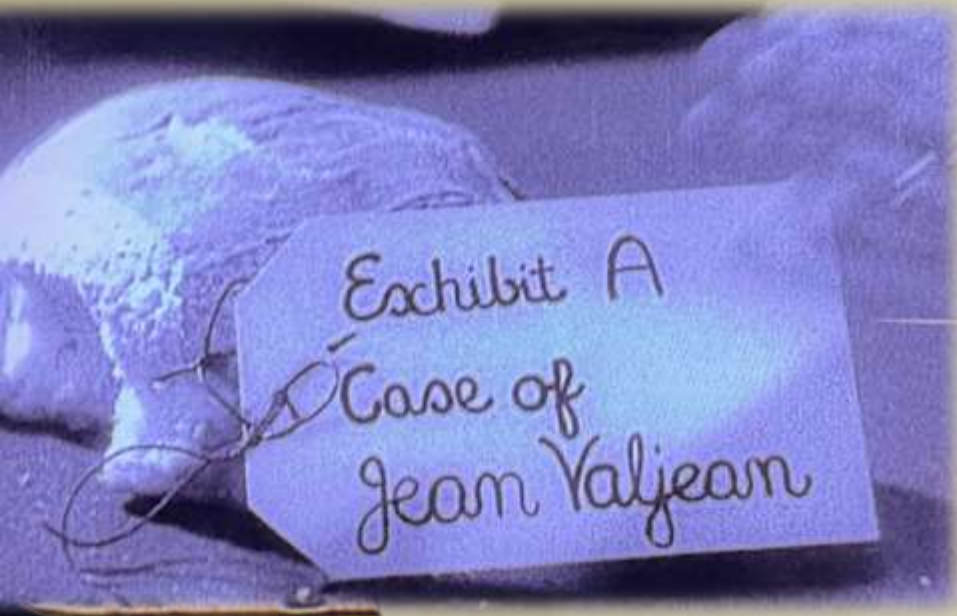


*Les Misérables*, 1862

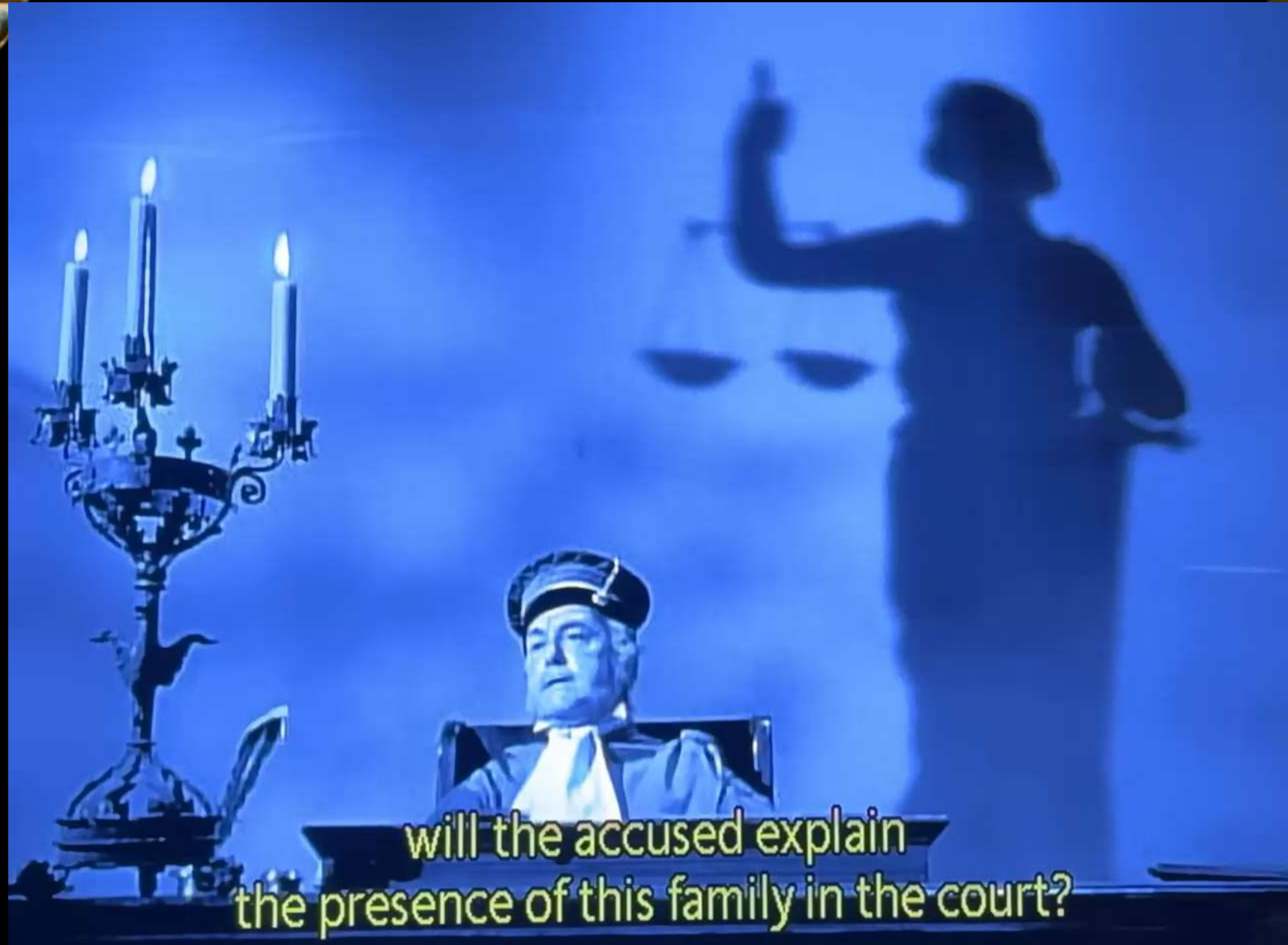
French epic novel by Victor Hugo

Jean Valjean is a prisoner  
for stealing bread for starving children!  
After release, a priest takes him in ...  
Valjean steals silver, caught, brought back  
Priest FREES him, giving him pair of  
silver candlesticks

Cosette by Emile Bayard,  
from the original edition  
of *Les Misérables* (1862)









*Les Misérables*, 1862

French epic novel by Victor Hugo

Valjean in the sewers  
with the wounded Marius  
(US edition, 1900)

**AFTER PRISON** Valjean runs for years ...  
assumes a name - becomes prominent

Raises Fantine's daughter Cosette

Inspector Javert was **BRUTAL** as a prison  
guard - chases Jean *thru the book*

Inspector Javert—Fanatical **LEGALIST**  
his **LIFE** is the **LAW** without a **HEART**

Young man Marius falls for Cosette

During the uprising in 1832 Paris,  
Jean Valjean saves Marius' **LIFE & FLEES**

Jean Valjean **CARRIES** Marius thru the  
**SEWERS** of Paris





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GENERAL SHERMAN



*Les Misérables*, 1862

French epic novel by Victor Hugo

**LEGALIST** Police Inspector Javert

No room for **MERCY** or **FAITH**

**JUST THE LAW ...**

**Catches Jean Valjean carrying Marius  
exiting the SEWER**

**NONE** of the movies can detail how  
the novel describes the **SEWER**

Only faintly one sees in the movies how  
**TORN** Javert is about Jean Valjean

**Jean SAVES Javert's LIFE**

then after a **LIFE** of heartlessness

**Javert sees his LEGALISM**





*Les Misérables*, 1862

French epic novel by Victor Hugo

Javert allows Valjean to save Marius

Javert watches the MAN Valjean

Javert – Fanatical Legalist is *TORN* – then quote:

Javert had lost his bearings in this unexpected presence

He did not know what to do with this superior....

But how manage to send in his resignation to God ?

However this might be ...

one thing overruled all else for him ...

he had just committed an appalling infraction.

He had closed his eyes upon a

convicted second offender!



Javert played by  
Russell Crowe in 2012  
film musical





# The Enchanted Forest

Psalm 119 – How ... *HOW* you  
read it makes *ALL* the difference

IF not shallow, then ... then ... then

3. *Legalistically* – Rulebook Taxing

*Psalm 119 is DPRESSING*

*Then Psalm 119 is an endless diatribe  
on the endless failures of ALL of US*



GENERAL SHERMAN



*Les Misérables*, 1862

French epic novel by Victor Hugo

## Javert – Fanatical Legalist is **TORN**

*of many sublimely exquisite passages*

He had SET A GALLEY-SLAVE AT LARGE.

He—Javert—had robbed the laws of a man  
who belonged to them. He had done that.

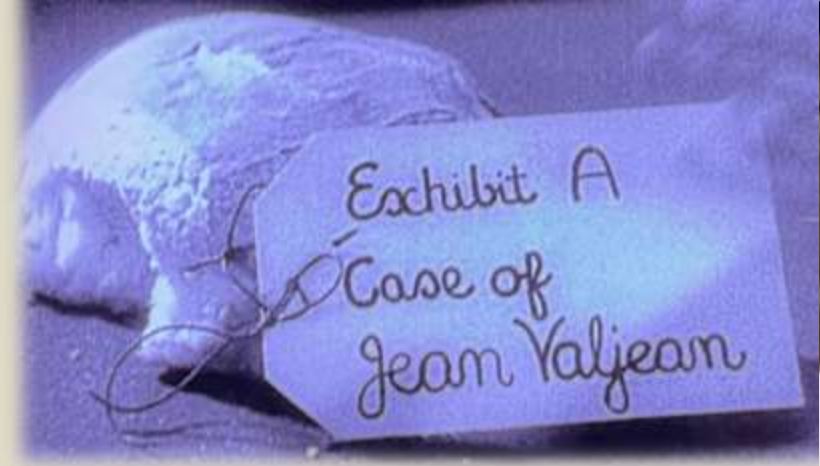
He could not understand himself....

The very reasons of his action escaped him....

He had lived up to this moment by that blind faith  
which a dark probity engenders....

All that he had believed was dissipated.

Truths which he had no wish for ... **BESIEGED HIM.**



Javert played by  
Russell Crowe in 2012  
film musical





*Les Misérables*, 1862

French epic novel by Victor Hugo

Javert – Fanatical Legalist is **TORN**  
*of many sublimely exquisite passages*

**He must henceforth be another man.**

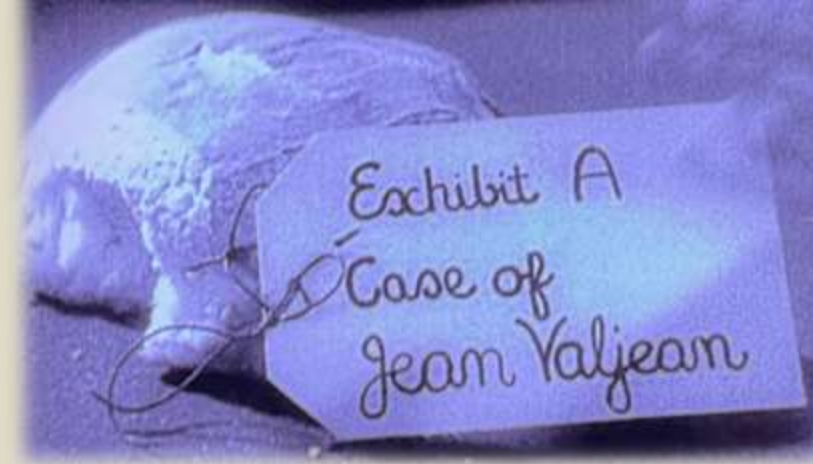
**... strange pangs of a conscience suddenly  
operated upon for the cataract.**

**He saw what he revolted at seeing.**

**He felt that he was emptied, useless, broken off  
from his past life, destitute, dissolved.**

**Authority was dead in him.**

**He had no further reason for existence....**



Javert played by  
Russell Crowe in 2012  
film musical





*Les Misérables*, 1862

French epic novel by Victor Hugo

Javert—to be granite, and **NOW TO DOUBT!**

To be the statue of penalty cast in a single  
piece in the mould of the **LAW**,

and to suddenly perceive that you have under  
your breast of bronze something *preposterous* ...  
which almost resembles a **HEART!**

To be led by it to render good for good....

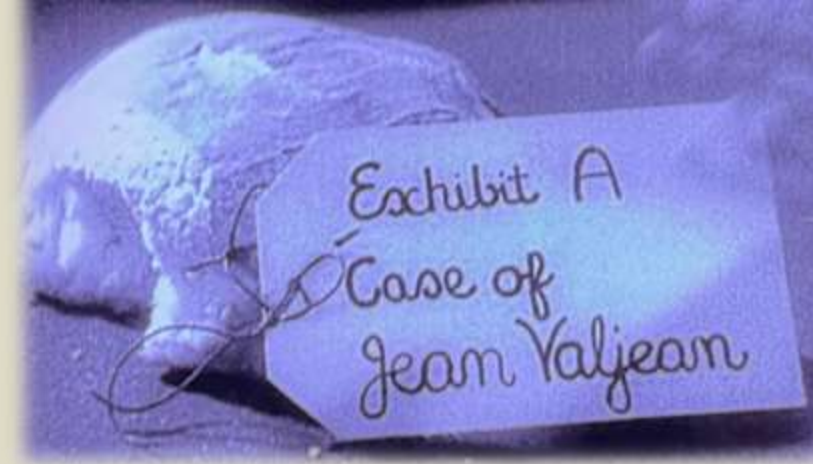
To be the watch-dog, and to fawn !

to be ice, and to melt !

to be a vice, and to become a hand !  
to feel your fingers suddenly open !

Javert LOVED Psalm 119's PERFECT LAW

But to find himself **IMPERFECT** was too much!



Javert played by  
Russell Crowe in 2012  
film musical





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GENERAL SHERMAN



Thanks to Mark Tolar for this song by Amy Grant  
Psalm 119:105, "Thy Word is a LAMP unto my feet"

AND A LIGHT UNTO MY PATH



## Psalm 119

- 1 Blessed are those whose ways are blameless,  
who walk according to the law of the LORD.
- 2 Blessed are those who keep his statutes  
and seek him with all their heart—
- 3 they do no wrong but follow his ways.

Viewed by Javert—there is no room for error

Viewed by LOVE, there is latent a *DESIRE*

Spurgeon quoted Thomas Manton (1620–1677)

There is a remorse after the sin:

David's heart smote him.

It grieves and shames them that they do evil.

Tenderness goes with the new nature:

Peter sinned foully, but he went out and wept bitterly.



Biography of Thomas  
Manton (1620-1677):



# Word Use in Psalm 119

2x	God
24x	Lord
-----	
45x	Law
30x	Word
23x	Statutes
22x	Commands
22x	Decrees
21x	Precepts
17x	Right/Righteous/ Righteousness
14x	Promises
3x	True

20x	Obey
19x	Love
12x	Teach
11x	Preserve
9x	Live
9x	Delight
8x	Meditate
8x	Understanding
8x	Long
7x	Follow
6x	Praise
3x	Help
2x	Deliver

-----	
7x	Wicked
5x	Fear
4x	Hate
3x	Persecute

15x	Heart
13x	Servant
8x	Eye/s
3x	Soul
28x	ALL

-----  
*Now for the odd ones*  
*Today's Infamous*

## **PRONOUNS** 😊

254x	you/your
145x	I
86x	me
85x	my

When NOT viewed as Javert  
 When seen by LONGING  
 to be **CLOSE**

When read for Love & God's LOVE  
 in the light of inability & LONGING  
 Psalm 119 gets  
**DEEPLY** Profound!



## Psalm 119

Spurgeon quoted William De Burgh on 119, St. Augustine, among his voluminous works on Psalms that he delayed to comment on this one, 119, until he had finished the whole Psalter Then yielded only to the long and vehement urgency of his friends, “because,” he said, “as often as I essayed to think thereon, it always exceeded the powers of my intent thought and the utmost grasp of my faculties”



Saint Augustin, c. 1645  
by Philippe de Champaigne



## **Psalm 119 – Spurgeon quoted these:**

**Spurgeon said Johannes Paulus Palanterius  
said in 1600 of Psalm 119,**

**The other Psalms, truly, as lesser stars shine somewhat  
but THIS burns with the meridian heat of its full brightness,  
and is wholly resplendent with moral loveliness.**

**Spurgeon quoted Great O. T. scholar Franz Delitzsch on Psalm 119,  
German version it has the appropriate inscription,  
"The Christian's golden A B C of the praise, love, power,  
and use of the Word of God."**

**Spurgeon quoted William De Burgh on Psalm 119,  
an ancient church father titled 119  
"the perfection of teaching & instruction"**



## Psalm 119

Spurgeon quoted William De Burgh on 119,  
One ancient church father said,  
“it applies an all containing medicine  
to the varied spiritual diseases of men—  
sufficing to perfect those who  
long for perfect virtue,  
to rouse the slothful,  
to refresh the dispirited, and  
to set in order the relaxed”





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