

Psalms 119:172

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

My tongue shall speak of thy word: for all thy commandments are righteousness.

Analysis

My tongue shall speak of thy word (תַּעַן לְשׁוֹנִי אֶמְדַּבֵּר, ta'an leshoni imratekha)—Anah means 'answer, respond, testify, sing, proclaim.' The tongue answers God's imrah (word, utterance, promise). The motivation: **for all thy commandments are righteousness** (כִּי כָל־מִצְוֹתֶיךָ צֶדֶק, ki kol-mitzvotekha tzedeq). Tzedeq ('righteousness, justice, rightness') characterizes every single mitzvah (commandment). The plural 'commandments' receives the singular abstract noun 'righteousness'—they form one unified standard.

Romans 7:12 echoes: 'The law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.' Christ speaks the Father's words (John 14:10) because they are perfect tzedeq (righteousness).

Historical Context

The verse connects proclamation with theological conviction. The tongue speaks because the mind is persuaded: God's commandments ARE righteousness itself, not arbitrary rules. This anticipates the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20)—teaching others to observe Christ's commands flows from confidence in their inherent rightness.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How does your tongue 'answer' (ta'an) God's Word in daily conversation, or does it answer cultural narratives instead?
2. What would change in your speech if you were fully persuaded that ALL God's commandments are righteousness?
3. How does Jesus as the Word made flesh (John 1:14) perfectly embody the tongue that speaks God's imrah (utterance)?

Interlinear Text

שֶׁנִּי	לִשׁוֹנִי	אֶמְרֶתְךָ	כָּל	מִצְוֹתֶיךָ
shall speak	My tongue	of thy word	H3588	H3605
H6030	H3956	H565		H4687
מִצְוֹתֶיךָ				
are righteousness				
H6664				

Additional Cross-References

Ephesians 4:29 (Parallel theme): Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.

Romans 7:14 (Word): For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin.

Psalms 37:30 (Righteousness): The mouth of the righteous speaketh wisdom, and his tongue talketh of judgment.

Romans 7:12 (Righteousness): Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.

Colossians 4:6 (Parallel theme): Let your speech be alway with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.

Psalms 119:142 (Righteousness): Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and thy law is the truth.

Psalms 119:86 (Word): All thy commandments are faithful: they persecute me wrongfully; help thou me.

Psalms 119:138 (Righteousness): Thy testimonies that thou hast commanded are righteous and very faithful.

Psalms 119:13 (Parallel theme): With my lips have I declared all the judgments of thy mouth.