

Psalm 119: For The Love Of Scripture!

Psalm 119:161-168

Psalm 119:161

(KJV) SCHIN. Princes have persecuted me without a cause: but my heart standeth in awe of thy word.

(NIV) Rulers persecute me without cause, but my heart trembles at your word.

Popular by way of its unique construction, the Hebrew letter *schin* opens this week's passage. With the shape of a crown, or a perpetual burning flame in the Holy Temple—the fire of the sacrifices—we cannot but envisage God Himself, King of Kings, and holy Lord of Lords.

Three important Hebrew words begin with this letter:

Shalom (“peace”).

Shadai (“name of God”).

Sheker (“lie, falsehood”).

Lies? Falsehood? Where do these evil characteristics fit in here? Interestingly, to form the word *sheker*, some juxtaposition of letters needs to take place. When letters shift from their home base, words take on different meanings, and the result is deception. In particular, “white lies” that seem to contain just enough truth to be dangerous, then deviate into hyperbolic narrative. The devil lives inside these devious tales. God hates falsehood:

Numbers 14:36-38

And the men, which Moses sent to search the land, who returned, and made all the congregation to murmur against him, by bringing up a slander upon the land, Even those men that did bring up the evil report upon the land, died by the plague before the LORD. But Joshua the son of Nun, and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, which were of the men that went to search the land, lived still.

Read Numbers 13 to gain context of how a simple witness report become an extravagant lie and stumbling block to God's people. *You just don't do that:*

Matthew 18:6

But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea.

Psalm 119:161

SCHIN. Princes have persecuted me without a cause: but my heart standeth in awe of thy word.

So our psalmist identifies in this verse the deception involved with false accusation. *Without a cause.* All through Holy Scripture, wicked men attempt to ensnare blameless believers with bold face lies. But truthfully, God exposes false accusation for what it is—false!

Remember Daniel:

Daniel 6:4

Then the presidents and princes sought to find occasion against Daniel concerning the kingdom; but they could find none occasion nor fault; forasmuch as he was faithful, neither was there any error or fault found in him.

And David:

1Samuel 29:3

Then said the princes of the Philistines, What do these Hebrews here? And Achish said unto the princes of the Philistines, Is not this David, the servant of Saul the king of Israel, which hath been with me these days, or these years, and I have found no fault in him since he fell unto me unto this day?

And Jesus:

Luke 23:4 *Then said Pilate to the chief priests and to the people, I find no fault in this man.*

And so many more. Blameless.

Our psalmist, yes, blameless! How? He stands in awe of God His Father and the Word of God.

QUESTION FOR MEDITATION: Are you a faithful, blameless witness for Christ in your sphere of influence? How do you know? Do you think your level of reverence for God and His Word is in any way connected to living out practical holiness before an unholy world? What is the connection between the two?

Psalm 119:162

(KJV) I rejoice at thy word, as one that findeth great spoil.

(NIV) I rejoice in your promise like one who finds great spoil.

Spoil, or *shalal* in Hebrew describes a great find, a booty, a great catch, an unexpected treasure. While every day in God's Word may not be illumination and revelation worthy of rejoicing—the Word itself is the blessing and the washing and feeding that keeps us alive in God through Jesus Christ:

Ephesians 5:25-27

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.

John 5:39-40

You study the Scriptures diligently because you think that in them you have eternal life. These are the very Scriptures that testify about me, yet you refuse to come to me to have life.

Beloved, Jesus lives on every page of your Bible, and when you ask the Holy Spirit to show you His whereabouts—every letter, word, phrase, sentence, and paragraph will reveal Your Saviour. This is the Living Word—the Person in the Pages.

Great spoil, indeed!

Psalm 119:163

(KJV) I hate and abhor lying: but thy law do I love.

(NIV) I hate and detest falsehood but I love your law.

Falsehood and lying—so deeply sown into our governments, our schools, our society—is one of many reasons our holy God and His Son Jesus, the Truth—must one day judge all liars. *All liars:*

Romans 3:23 *For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;*

Very simply, each of us has fallen short of God's glorious standard. And largely through our lying!

This is why, dear believer, we need the Word of God—to expose our falsehood—so that we can acknowledge it, confess it, and be forgiven (1 John 1:9).

Now understand that it is the Holy Spirit in us that *hates* falsehood, and it is Him alone that *loves* the truth in God's Word. In our flesh, we will only love to lie and hate the truth.

Galatians 5:16-26

This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another.

Psalms 119:164

(KJV) Seven times a day do I praise thee because of thy righteous judgments.

(NIV) Seven times a day I praise you for your righteous laws.

Why stop at “seven times a day” dear psalmist? The Bible exhorts us to “pray without ceasing” (1 Thessalonians 5:17). Okay, then we need to define what constitutes prayer for the New Testament child of God.

Perhaps this: Keep the channels of communication open with the Lord by meditating on His Word day and night (Psalm 1:2), follow and obey the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:16), and love the Lord with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength (Mark 12:30).

Everything I just suggested is from *God's righteous judgments*. The psalmist gets it right again!

Psalms 119:165

(KJV) Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them.

(NIV) Great peace have those who love your law, and nothing can make them stumble.

Oh, what a reassuring verse! *Great peace. No stumbling.* Let me add by way of no commentary at all—these verses:

Isaiah 26:3

Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.

Jude 1:24-25

Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.

Amen.

Psalm 119:166

(KJV) LORD, I have hoped for thy salvation, and done thy commandments.

(NIV) I wait for your salvation, LORD, and I follow your commands.

Discipleship training is one of the most challenging tasks we will ever be called to do for the Lord. He must go ahead of us, or we will certainly fail! It is most difficult to train a person to depend upon and lean into Jesus every waking moment. And the love for God's Word—while it can be caught—is seldom taught. This is why I am teaching through all of Psalm 119—so that the psalmist's delight in God's Word will be caught by each of us in a life-transforming way!

But to be raw and honest, I've been involved with discipleship for a couple of decades and it is often heartbreaking as much as it is exhilarating!

Psalm 119:167

(KJV) My soul hath kept thy testimonies; and I love them exceedingly.

(NIV) I obey your statutes, for I love them greatly.

Obviously, I can't force you to love God's Word and spend more time studying it and meditating upon it without nagging. God hates nagging us to do His will. He looks at our hearts, and our heart's desires.

Question: What or whom do we love more than God and His Word?

Answer: The very things or people we spend the most time with!

QUESTION FOR MEDITATION: Without accepting condemnation (Romans 8:1), because we all need God's grace, write down the things and people that consume too much of the time you could be spending in devoted prayer, study, and meditation.

STUDY POINT: Find passages in the New Testament that inspire you to more and more live a lifestyle of intimate fellowship with the Lord and His Word.

Psalm 119:168

(KJV) I have kept thy precepts and thy testimonies: for all my ways are before thee.

(NIV) I obey your precepts and your statutes, for all my ways are known to you.

Gods sees all. God knows all.

For believers this knowledge is comfort. For unbelievers this knowledge is concern.

Hebrews 4:13

Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

~ Reverend Darren McClelland