



PSALM 119, Part 21

Shin

This is Holly with Presence Point and welcome to week 21 of *Psalms for Shepherds* series. Today, we're looking at verses 161 through 168, the stanza of this psalm that is based on the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet. This stanza being number 21, entitled Shin.

Please join me as I read the Shin portion of this Psalm Acrostic:

¹⁶¹ Powerful people harass me without cause,
but my heart trembles only at your word.

¹⁶² I rejoice in your word
like one who discovers a great treasure.

¹⁶³ I hate and abhor all falsehood,
but I love your instructions.

¹⁶⁴ I will praise you seven times a day
because all your regulations are just.

¹⁶⁵ Those who love your instructions have great peace
and do not stumble.

¹⁶⁶ I long for your rescue, Lord,
so I have obeyed your commands.

¹⁶⁷ I have obeyed your laws,
for I love them very much.

¹⁶⁸ Yes, I obey your commandments and laws
because you know everything I do.

David continues with his plea to God to save him, but in this stanza, he has a peace that emanates from his reverence and belief in God's Word. Just as it should for us during times of difficulty.

Matthew Henry said, "It has been the common lot of the best men to be persecuted; and the case is the worse if princes be the persecutors, for they have not only the sword in their hand, but they have the law on their side, and can do it with reputation and a color of justice."

How true that is even in today's world! People in power do not always rightfully go after those they persecute. How often is it, in fact, one who has God's Word on His side that those in power seek to devour?

Eugene Peterson translates *Psalms 119*, verses 161-168 this way:

¹⁶¹⁻¹⁶⁸ I've been slandered unmercifully by the politicians,
but my awe at your words keeps me stable.
I'm ecstatic over what you say,
like one who strikes it rich.
I hate lies can't stand them!
but I love what you have revealed.
Seven times each day I stop and shout praises
for the way you keep everything running right.
For those who love what you reveal, everything fits—
no stumbling around in the dark for them.
I wait expectantly for your salvation;
God, I do what you tell me.
My soul guards and keeps all your instructions—
oh, how much I love them!
I follow your directions, abide by your counsel;
my life's an open book before you.

Do you hear the peace, the shalom, the confidence, even the stability the psalmist has in the Father? He knows nothing is greater than His God, the Father's statutes, His commands, His directions, His counsel. He expects salvation by His God from this situation. He believes he has struck it rich because He knows God's Words!

He shouts praises rather than stumbles. And the psalmist shouts those praises not once during the day. He shouts praises, as devout Jewish worshippers would, three times a day, but he increased that time of praise and prayer to seven times a day. Is this what brought the psalmist the shalom he experienced?

I know that communicating with the Father praising him, beseeching Him on our behalf and the behalf of others, and sitting before Him silent listening expectantly for His response brings shalom to me. Doing so seven times a day would, most certainly, keep us in the same mental and spiritual space that the author of this psalm was in, resting in total and complete confidence in the Father and His Word, hating lies, seeking truth, loving what the Father reveals, telling God that we will do whatever He tells us, keeping God's instructions, following His directions, abiding in His counsel.

The question is do we do that? Do we make decisions that will result in the true shalom He offers or do we skirt around His Word choosing what we will believe and what we will follow based on what seems easy, or right, or comfortable to us?

Do we as the Father's under-shepherds seek truth, love His Word, do what it instructs, follow His direction, and abide in His counsel? Because whether we embrace the Father and all for which He

stands will affect how we shepherd those He entrusts to our care, I'm suggesting that today you pause for at least 10 minutes and ask yourself those questions, listening for the Holy Spirit's answers rather than your own, and journal what you hear.

Commit to what you need to do differently and make note of that in your journal (or on your favorite electronic device) as well. Then, re-read this portion of *Psalms 119*, verses 161-168, and note whether you read it with great depth, stronger meaning, and with shalom.

Thank you for joining me. I pray you'll live deeply into your calling this week and shepherd well all of those the Father has entrusted to your care.