

Lesson 21: Psalm 119:161-168 – *Sin and Shin*

Love and Respect for God’s Word Manifested in Obedience

<i>ESV</i>	<i>NKJV</i>	<i>NASB</i>	<i>NIV</i>	<i>NLT</i>
161 Princes persecute me without cause, but my heart stands in awe of your words.	161 Princes persecute me without a cause, But my heart stands in awe of Your word.	161 Princes persecute me without cause, But my heart stands in awe of Your words.	161 Rulers persecute me without cause, but my heart trembles at your word.	161 Powerful people harass me without cause, but my heart trembles only at your word.
161 Rulers persecute me without cause, but my heart stands in awe of (trembles at) Your word.				
<p>Commentary:</p> <p>Princes persecute me without cause. “What moved [these men] to persecute [the psalmist] seems to have been [his] fidelity to his God and His Word.” (<i>Leupold, Exposition, p. 858</i>)</p> <p>This is becoming a reality now throughout the world! Christians are being persecuted in America without any real cause other than the fact that evil is being allowed to rule the land.</p> <p>Life is not fair nor should we expect it to be!</p> <p>John 16:33 – “I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.”</p> <p>2 Timothy 3:12-13 – “Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, while evil people and impostors will go on from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived.”</p> <p>But my heart stands in awe of your words. The fear of the Lord (reverential awe and respect) manifests itself in reverence and respect for His Word. The psalmist held God’s Word in very high regard. He did not fear rulers but he did fear God and His Word!</p> <p>Psalm 119:120 – “My flesh trembles for fear of you, and I am afraid of your judgments.”</p> <p>Proverbs 29:25 – “The fear of man lays a snare, but whoever trusts in the Lord is safe.”</p> <p>Matthew 10:28 – “And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell.”</p>				
<p>Application:</p> <p>Can I honestly say, “My heart trembles at your word” (<i>NIV</i>)?</p> <p>“Lord, please help me to fear (hold in reverence, awe and respect) and appreciate You and Your Word as I should. Create in my mind and heart this reverential awe and respect.”</p> <p>“In the coming days of persecution and oppression, please help me to stay focused on You and Your Word.”</p>				

162 I rejoice at your word like one who finds great spoil.	162 I rejoice at Your word As one who finds great treasure.	162 I rejoice at Your word, As one who finds great spoil.	162 I rejoice in your promise like one who finds great spoil.	162 I rejoice in your word like one who discovers a great treasure.
162 I rejoice in Your word like one who discovers a great treasure.				
Commentary: The psalmist recognized God’s Word for the supreme treasure that it is, surpassing anything that this world offers.				
Application: “May I look upon Your Word as a treasure of supreme worth (surpassing all else) and never take it for granted.”				
163 I hate and abhor falsehood, but I love your law.	163 I hate and abhor lying, But I love Your law.	163 I hate and despise falsehood, But I love Your law.	163 I hate and abhor falsehood but I love your law.	163 I hate and abhor all falsehood, but I love your instructions.
163 I hate and despise falsehood, but I love Your law.				
Commentary: I hate and abhor falsehood. The godly take a very dim view toward falsehood, deceit, lying, distortion, hypocrisy. If we hate it and abhor it, we will not practice it! We can avoid overt lying but still be “living a lie” by deceiving and misleading others. Sometimes we lie, not by what we say, but by what we don’t say. “One thing that [the psalmist] is strongly opposed to is ‘lies,’ everything that savors of untruth; for that is the essence of all ungodliness. But that hatred is kept wholesome by a strong love for the Lord’s law.” (<i>Leupold, Exposition, p. 858</i>) Psalms 119:158 – “I look at the faithless with disgust, because they do not keep your commands.” But I love your law. God’s Word is not false. It does not lie or distort the truth. It does not deceive or mislead, unlike we humans.				
Application: I can practice deception while avoiding outright lying. How subtle, but still it is falsehood and hypocrisy. Love for God and His Word will not allow me to continue practicing falsehood. “Please deliver me from falsehood and deception in every area of my life.”				
164 Seven times a day I praise you for your righteous rules.	164 Seven times a day I praise You, Because of Your righteous judgments.	164 Seven times a day I praise You, Because of Your righteous ordinances.	164 Seven times a day I praise you for your righteous laws.	164 I will praise you seven times a day because all your regulations are just.
164 Seven times a day I praise You for Your righteous laws.				

Commentary:

Seven times a day I praise you. The psalmist was continually, habitually, reflecting on God’s Word and interacting with Him concerning it. Numerous Scriptures speak of meditating on God’s Word “day and night” (e.g., Psalm 1:1-3).

“If the law of the Lord is so great a treasure (vs. 162) that calls forth such strong affection (vs. 163), it is surely most fitting that God should be praised abundantly for it.” (Leupold, *Exposition*, p. 858)

For your righteous rules. God’s Word is the standard by which all else is measured and judged. It reflects God’s holy and righteous character. “Everything about them is right.” (Leupold, *Exposition*, p. 859)

Application: “Please help me to develop the habits of continually meditating on Your Word and of praying to You without interruption.”

165 Great peace have those who love your law; nothing can make them stumble.

165 Great peace have those who love Your law, And nothing causes them to stumble.

165 Those who love Your law have great peace, And nothing causes them to stumble.

165 Great peace have they who love your law, and nothing can make them stumble.

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

165 Great peace have those who love Your law; nothing can make (cause) them to stumble.

Commentary:

“From praise the writer’s thoughts turn to two great blessings which fall to the lot of those men who love God’s law.” (Leupold, *Exposition*, p. 859)

Great peace have those who love your law. Peace of mind vs. restlessness, turmoil, agitation, anxiety and worry. God’s Word provides stability, balance, security, well-being, peace. Those who love God’s Word can stand up in the stormy blasts of life. God’s Word enables them to keep moving forward, making progress toward the goal.

Nothing can make them stumble. They shall move forward firmly, confidently, with sure and secure footing.

Application: “Thank You, Lord, for the peace of mind and confidence that the knowledge and application of Your Word provides.”

166 I hope for your salvation, O Lord, and I do your commandments.

166 Lord, I hope for Your salvation, And I do Your commandments.

166 I hope for Your salvation, O Lord, And do Your commandments.

166 I wait for your salvation, O Lord, and I follow your commands.

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

166 I hope (wait) for Your salvation (deliverance), O Lord, and I obey Your commands.

Commentary:

I hope for your salvation, O Lord.

Hope. “Desire accompanied by expectation of or belief in fulfillment; expectation of success; someone or something on which hopes are centered; something desired; trust, reliance.” (Merriam-Webster Dictionary)

“But it is quite obvious that all such glorious prospects as great peace are only partially attained in this present life. Those things that still burden and afflict us are committed into the hands of our gracious Lord, for whose help in all of them we continually do pray...” (Leupold, *Exposition*, p. 859)

And I do your commandments. Hope in God manifests itself in obedience to His commands.

“...the sincerity of the longing of a godly man will always be marked by faithfully observing the Lord’s commandments.” (Leupold, *Exposition*, p. 859)

Application:

“Cause me to put my hope fully in You and Your promises, O Lord.”

“Thank You that You are worthy of my hope and trust. You never disappoint those who trust in You.”

The Solid Rock by Edward Mote

My hope is built on nothing less Than Jesus’ blood and righteousness.
I dare not trust the sweetest frame, But wholly lean on Jesus’ name.

Refrain

On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand;
All other ground is sinking sand. (x2)

When darkness seems to hide His face, I rest on His unchanging grace.
In ev’ry high and stormy gale, My anchor holds within the veil.

His oath, His covenant, His blood, Support me in the whelming flood.
When all around my soul gives way, He then is all my Hope and Stay.

When He shall come with trumpet sound, O may I then in Him be found!
Dressed in His righteousness alone, Faultless to stand before the throne!

167 My soul keeps your testimonies; I love them exceedingly.

167 My soul keeps Your testimonies, And I love them exceedingly.

167 My soul keeps Your testimonies, And I love them exceedingly.

167 I obey your statutes, for I love them greatly.

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

167 I obey Your statutes, for I love them very much.

Commentary:

If we truly love the Lord, then we will love His Word and obey it.

Obedience motivated by love, not legalism (“strict, literal, or excessive conformity to the law...” *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*). Love focuses on the Lawgiver; legalism focuses on the law itself. Obedience is the measure of love. Great love produces great obedience; little love results

in little obedience. Jesus said, "If you love me, you will obey me." Love for the Lord and His Word manifests itself in obedience. (John 14:15, 23-24)

Application: "Cause me to grow in my love for You and Your Word."

168 I keep your precepts and testimonies, for all my ways are before you.

168 I keep Your precepts and Your testimonies, For all my ways are before You.

168 I keep Your precepts and Your testimonies, For all my ways are before You.

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

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

168 I obey Your precepts and statutes, because You see and know everything I do.

Commentary:

For all my ways are before you. Obedience motivated by a sense of accountability to the Lord; fear, awe, respect. God's watchful eye is upon us at all times (Hebrews 4:13; Revelation 2:23).

The fear of the Lord is a valid motivation for obedient living but perhaps not the highest motivation: "Perfect love casts out fear" (1 John 4:18).

Application: "Lord, please help me to live each day mindful of Your holy presence. Help me remember that You see and hear all I do and say."

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167 I obey Your statutes, for I love them very much.

168 I obey Your precepts and statutes, because You see and know everything I do.