**“SEEK ME, AS A LOST SHEEP HAVING GONE ASTRAY”**

**PSALM 119:153-176**

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1. LOOK AND REVIVE ME (vv. 153-160).

Within stanza 20, having eight verses each beginning with the Hebrew letter *Resh* (r), the author of Psalm 119 places an emphasis upon Yahweh “looking upon” and “considering” (same Hebrew verb—vv. 153, 159) his difficult circumstances and how desperately he needs to be revived (three times in vv. 154, 156, and 159). The psalmist himself has “beheld” (v. 158—the same verb that begins verses 153 and 159) the treacherous activity of his enemies and has “loathed” them since they do not keep His word; he has remained true to Yahweh and to His word and pleads for Yahweh’s help in his afflictions.

1. Look at my affliction and on me while I look on the treacherous wicked ones (vv. 153, 159, 158).
2. Rescue me—I don’t forget your law (153).
3. Consider how I love your precepts (159).
4. I behold the “treacherous ones” (158).
5. I “loathe them.”
6. They don’t keep your word.
7. Revive me according to your word, your judgments, and your lovingkindness—“loyal love” (154, 56, 59).
8. Take my case and plead it as an advocate (154a)
9. Legally “redeem” me as my kinsman redeemer (154a).
10. Your compassions/mercies are **great**—that is many (156).
11. Your loyal-love is always reliable (159).
12. My persecutors are continual trouble for me (155, 157).
13. Salvation is far from them, for they are far from you—do not seek your statutes (155).
14. My adversaries are many—but not as many as God’s mercies; they are no contest (157).
15. They do not cause me to turn away from your testimonies (157).
16. “The Sum of your word is truth” (160).
17. Every part of it from beginning to end.
18. Every one of God’s judgments/ordinances lasts forever.
19. Every one of them is righteous.
20. YOUR WORD IS MY FEAR, MY JOY, MY LOVE, MY THANKSGIVING, MY PEACE, AND MY HOPE (161-168).

Although the psalmist begins this twenty first stanza with another reference to his persecution at the hands of powerful “princes” and mentions their “falsehood” again in v. 163, his primary focus in this stanza is on his relationship with Yahweh and his attitude toward Yahweh’s divine revelation. He **repeats the fact of his “love” for Yahweh’s law or testimonies three times** (vv. 163, 165, and 167). Delitzsch summarizes well this stanza: “*In the midst of persecution, God’s word was still his fear, his joy, and his love, the object of his thanksgiving, and the ground of his hope.*” This stanza represents two Hebrew letters—the *Sin* (f) and *Shin* (v). Three verses begin with *Sin*—161, 162, and 166; the others begin with *Shin*.

1. My Fear (v. 161)
2. Princes persecute me “without cause”—gratuitously, no merit.
3. I don’t fear their power; I stand in awe of your words.
4. My Joy (162)
5. I rejoice at your word.
6. It brings far greater joy than great spoils of war; I find great value and treasures in it!
7. My love (163, 165, 167)
8. In contrast to my love for your law, is my hatred and despising of all **falsehood** (163).
9. The second verb is related to “**abomination.**”
10. Brings peace and avoids “stumbling” and “stumbling blocks” (165).
11. I love your testimonies “exceedingly—very much!” (167).
12. My thanksgiving (164)
13. I praise You seven times a day!
14. Your judgments are righteous.
15. My Peace (165)
16. This peace is “well-being” and harmony with God, self, others.
17. This peace is “great”—far beyond all that men or this world can give.
18. Nothing can cause those who love God’s law to stumble; their conscience is clear, the lives are clean, God even limits their enemies and this world in relation to His treatment of His people.
19. Thus, their pathway is clear and smooth.
20. My Hope (166)
21. For Divine salvation.
22. While “doing” His commandments.
23. My treasure to keep and to guard carefully (167-68)
24. I keep them with “my soul”—more than merely “myself,” but also with all my being (167).
25. I keep your “precepts and your testimonies.”
26. “All my ways are **before You.**”
27. TEACH ME, HELP ME, SEEK ME (VV. 169-176).

All eight verses of stanza 22 begin with the final letter of the Hebrew alphabet—*Tav* (t). As the previous stanza focused on the psalmist’s *praise*, this stanza focuses on His *supplication*. In the first four verses the author uses four different verbs that deal with either the expression of his voice, or with the components of speech such as his “lips” praising (v. 171) or his “tongue” singing—v. 172. The final four verses also begin with four different verbs each depicting a preferred form of Yahweh’s response to this psalmist’s impassioned pleas to Yahweh: His hand “ready to help” (173), His salvation ready to be delivered (174), His renewal/revival of the psalmist’s life (175), and His search for and rescue of the psalmist as a straying sheep (176). Such complete dependence upon God is the expression of humility and is the opposite of pride.

1. Teach Me (169, 171).
2. Give me Understanding (169, 170. 171, 172).
3. Let my “ringing cry” come near before You—into your very presence (169).
4. Let my “supplication” for grace come before You (170).
5. Deliver me according to your word (170).
6. You Teach me (171, 172).
7. All your commandments are righteous (172)
8. Let my lips utter praise (171).
9. Let my tongue sing of your word (172).
10. Help Me (173, 175, 170b, 174).
11. Your hand of power be for my help (173).
12. I have made your precepts my choice (173).
13. Your law in my delight (174).
14. Your judgments (or ordinances) help me (175).
15. Thus, let my soul live that I may praise you.
16. Deliver me according to your word (170b).
17. Seek me (176)
18. I am your servant.
19. I have gone astray.
20. Like a lost sheep
21. A sheep about to perish
22. My adversaries surround and take advantage of me—help me!
23. The entire time I have not forgotten your commandments.