**Hello Valley Heights Ladies!** Reviewing our May 7th Bible Study!

*A quick look at “Tav”---Psalm 119:169-176*

**The Word of God** **TRANSFORMS our HEARTS to FULLY TRUST the GOSPEL of GRACE!**

John 10:14,27,28 “*I AM the GOOD SHEPHERD*, and I know My own and My own *know* Me…My sheep *hear* My voice, and I know them, and they *follow* Me; and I give eternal life to them, and they will *NEVER* perish; and *NO ONE* will snatch them out of My hand.” These have to be some of ***THE*** most comforting yet convicting words in all of scripture! Let’s just stop and meditate on the intimacy and transparency of these declarations! Jesus, “lesous—*Jehovah who is my salvation*” says, “I *KNOW* my own”- “I *KNOW* them!” In vs. 168, the last line of the previous stanza the psalmist states, “For *ALL* my ways are before You.” The psalmist knows that God *SEES* everything and God *KNOWS* everything about his life!

Oh ladies, God *KNOWS* our lives too! He is saying, “I KNOW YOU, Don’t forget I created your inmost being and knit you together in your mother’s womb!” He knows how difficult and how challenging life can be! He knows the battles we face! He knows the enemy is prowling around looking for someone to devour! He knows our weaknesses! He knows the fiery trials He’s planned for us! He knows our hearts: our wayward thoughts, our fleshly desires, our roller-coaster emotions, our worldly pursuits, and our stubborn wills. He *KNOWS* we are *‘prone to wander!’* He knows *we are in need* of the Good Shepherd’s staff to be rescued, rebuked, restored, and revived! He knows we are in need of the Good Shepherd’s rod; the restraining power of the Word of God and the Spirit of God!

Let’s look at the relationship of being a *‘SHEEP’* who knows her ‘*SHEPHERD*’ and SEEKS the ***trustworthy*** ‘*SHELTER’* of His commandments through this last stanza-‘**TAV**’:

Vs.169 *SHEEP*- **T**rue sheep desire to be in the presence of their Shepherd and ***SEEK*** to listen carefully!

 *SHEPHERD*- **A**dopts us! “My own KNOW Me, HEAR My voice, and FOLLOW Me!” Jn. 10:14,27

  *SHELTER*- **V**ery Trustworthy! “I will be given understanding in accordance to HIS promises!”

Vs.170 *SHEEP*- **T**rue sheep desire to be heard and rescued from the ‘internal parasites’ that nag within!

 *SHEPHERD*- **A**ssures us! “I will give you a *HELPER*, that will be with you forever!” Jn.14:16

 *SHELTER*- **V**ery Trustworthy! “I will be delivered according to HIS divine authority!”

Vs. 171 *SHEEP*- **T**rue sheep desire to use their lips and tongue to select food that is high in nutrition!

 *SHEPHERD*- **A**cts for us! “He leads us to green pastures!” Ps.23:2

 *SHELTER*- **V**ery Trustworthy! “I will be taught and trained to skillfully feed on HIS commands!”

Vs. 172 *SHEEP*- **T**rue sheep desire to communicate to others their delight in the shepherd’s food!

 *SHEPHERD*- **A**ffects us! “My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me…” Jn.4:34

 *SHELTER*- **V**ery Trustworthy! “I will see HIS righteousness through all HIS commandments!”

Vs.173 *SHEEP*- **T**rue sheep desire the Shepherd’s strength and powerful hand to help and restrain them!

 *SHEPHERD*- **A**ssists Us! “Enables us to do ALL things through Him who strengthens us!” Phil 4:13

 *SHELTER*- **V**ery Trustworthy! “I will choose to remain close to HIM, to hear HIS words of guidance!”

Vs. 174 *SHEEP*- **T**rue sheep desire to be protected from the predators that may hinder their usefulness!

 *SHEPHERD*- **A**dores Us! “The Good Shepherd lays down His life for the sheep!” Jn. 10:11

 *SHELTER*- **V**ery Trustworthy! “I will take pleasure and will be satisfied in HIS directives for life!”

Vs. 175 *SHEEP*- **T**rue sheep desire to live life to its fullness desiring to reflect and imitate their Shepherd!

 *SHEPHERD*- **A**mazes Us! “He speaks so we may have His JOY made full in our lives!” Jn.17:13

  *SHELTER*- **V**ery Trustworthy! “I will be restrained, helped and shaped by HIS perfect priorities!”

Vs. 176 *SHEEP*- **T**rue sheep desire to be sought after, recognizing their feet and eyes have wandered from looking up and straight ahead to their ***GOOD SHEPHERD and GUARDIAN of their souls***!

 *SHEPHERD*- **A**pproaches us! “He goes after the one sheep which is lost until He finds it!” Lk.15:4-6

  *SHELTER*- **V**ery Trustworthy! “I will rest and lay on my Shepherd’s shoulders, remembering and eating the choicest portions of food that He has found and will continue to find for me, while I heal from His loving discipline!”

Dr. Lawson shares that, “This whole stanza builds and crescendo’s to an almost anticlimactic place where the psalmist ends up. As much as the psalmist has set out to be blameless, has been in pursuit of walking the faithful way, of living a Holy life, of waiting with hope upon God, as much as he is *SEEKING* God, for all of his remembering, for all of his obedience, for all of his praise, for all of his love and devotion to the Word of God---the psalmist is a sheep like you and me and still strays! Listen to the psalmist’s own words*, “I have gone astray like a lost sheep!”* In great ***HUMILITY*** the psalmist calls upon ***JESUS***, ***THE GREAT SHEPHERD*** of the sheep to **SEEK** and find him, “*seek Your servant*.” Why? Because he is a true worshipper of the *ONE TRUE GOD* and is so aware of his need of “God’s *transforming grace*, to enable him and to strengthen him to keep the very words he *loves* and *trusts* so much!”

The ***FINAL WORD*** of this incredible journey through 176 verses “does *NOT* ‘end in failure’, but in ***HOPE***! The psalmist affirms his loyalty of intention and purpose, “For *I do not forget* Your commandments!” “How could he forget apart from Christ and the Spirit of Truth!!! He cannot forget them because they have been “*ALL-SUFFICIENT* in his life,” even in the dark valleys to: direct him, to guide him, to convict him, to comfort him, to counsel him, to equip him and to be a lamp to his feet!”

It is my prayer ladies, that after studying this ‘stunning jewel’ of TRUTH that we too would be women of ***INTENTION*** and ***PURPOSE!***  That we have grown more confident and committed to the Word of God and will NOT forget that apart from Jesus Christ having FIRST sought us, we would ***never*** have the desire or ability to **SEEK HIM and LOVE HIM** with *ALL* of our heart, soul, mind and strength!! Apart from HIM, we can do *NOTHING*!! (Jn.15:5)

 May I close with Charles Spurgeon’s quote which has captured my own heart of our study of Psalm 119:

“Those who keep the Lord’s testimonies are sure to ***SEEK*** after HIMSELF. If His Word is precious we may be sure that *HE* Himself is still more so. Personal dealing with a personal God is the longing of *ALL* those who have allowed the Word of the Lord to have its full effect upon them. If we really know the power of the ***GOSPEL*** we must ***SEEK*** the God of the Gospel. “O that I knew where I might find *HIM*,” will be our wholehearted cry. See the growth which these sentences indicate: first, in the way, then walking in it, then finding and keeping the *TREASURE of TRUTH*, and to crown all, ***SEEKING*** after the Lord of the way Himself. Note also, that the further a soul advances in ***GRACE***, the more spiritual and divine are its longings: an outward walk does *NOT* content the gracious soul, nor even the treasured testimonies; it reaches out in due time after ***‘CHRIST’*** Himself, and when it in a measure finds Him, still yearns for more of Him, and SEEKS Him still.”

Psalm 119:2 “How blessed are those who observe His testimonies, Who ***SEEK HIM*** with all their heart!”

Joyfully learning to trust in the Gospel of Grace, Christyn