

The Lord is My Shepherd

A MEDITATION ON PSALM 23

Author: David

- **The shepherd boy, anointed King**

“I have been taking care of my father’s sheep and goats,” he said. “When a lion or a bear comes to steal a lamb from the flock, I go after it with a club and rescue the lamb from its mouth. If the animal turns on me, I catch it by the jaw and club it to death. (1Sa 17:34-35)

- **Greatest Warrior**
- **Greatest Fugitive**
- **Most Beloved King**

David’s Testimony: look at how God has led me through many seasons, through impossible situations, and in spite of my failures!

Statement of Faith

The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want (I have all that I need).

(Psa 23:1)



Statement of Faith

The LORD is my Shepherd:

- LORD – Yehovah – the Great I Am
- King and Creator is Shepherd??

I have everything I need

- Really? What about when you had no food or safe place to live?
- What is it we really need?

Statement of Faith

I have everything I need...

(A Psalm of David when he pretended madness before Abimelech, who drove him away, and he departed.)

Fear the LORD, you his godly people, for those who fear him will have all they need. Even strong young lions sometimes go hungry, but *those who trust in the LORD will lack no good thing.* (Psa 34:9-10)

- *What is it we really need?*

But How? and Why?

He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters.

He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness For His name's sake. (Psa 23:2-3)

But How? and Why?

He makes me to lie down in green pastures;

- **Notice the verb**
 - Surprisingly forceful
- **Lie down**
 - passage of time
 - rest
- **Green pastures**
 - Literally: fields with tender shoots

But How? and Why?

He makes me to lie down in green pastures;

- God places us in a certain 'pasture' for a season of time
- Think of the 'seasons' David experienced
- What 'seasons' might we experience?

But How? and Why?

He leads me beside still waters

- **Again, notice the verb**
 - God leads, He invites...
 - A gentle master
- **No matter what season or pasture we are in, the Shepherd will make the water of life available**
 - invites us for times of spiritual refreshing..
- **He makes the water of life available even in the desert...**
 - Will we drink?

But How? and Why?

He restores *my soul*; He leads me in the paths of righteousness For His name's sake.

- **My soul**

- Our 'heart', our will, our mind; the core of our being
- Do you have emotional wounds, baggage, habits?
- As we rest in His pastures, drink of His water, He restores our wounded souls

- **Paths of righteousness**

- Repeatedly following the Shepherd will create

But How? and Why?

He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness *For His name's sake.*

- When our wounded souls are restored and we walk in holy habits:
 - God's love, forgiveness, and truth flow out of us to others
 - **Others cannot help but see Him in us**
- For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him... (2Ch 16:9)

What about Evil, Trouble, Death?

Yes, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; For You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me. (Psa 23:4)

- Valley of the shadow of death?
- I thought God was a good shepherd?
- What kind of 'pasture' is this?
- Must I endure: ?

What about Evil, Trouble, Death?

Yes, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, *I will fear no evil; For You are with me*; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me. (Psa 23:4)

- If God is my Shepherd: I am kept from:
 - Crushing Pain?
 - Failures due to my mistakes?
 - Unjust condemnation and Rejection?
 - Pandemics?
 - Death?
 - Evil?

For You are with me...

What about Evil, Trouble, Death?

Yes, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; For You are with me; *Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.* (Psa 23:4)

- **Rod** : club, spear shaft, scepter
 - = weapon and symbol of authority
- **Staff** : from the verb 'to lean'; Walking stick, used for support and guidance
- He's a *powerful* Shepherd – there is **NO ENEMY** that can withstand His rod
- He's a *gentle* Shepherd – with his staff, he guides, corrects and supports us
- Truly, His Rod and His Staff are a comfort to me

But the Results...

Yes, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; For You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.

You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; My cup runs over...

I'm walking through the valley of the shadow...

- Where are my enemies?
- What do they see?

But the Results...

... Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me All the days of my life;
And I will dwell in the house of the LORD Forever.

- *Goodness and mercy*
- *The result of having God as my Shepherd is conclusive and final*

epilogue

1000 years after David penned these words...

A descendant of David had the audacity to say:

epilogue

I am the good shepherd; and I know My sheep, and am known by My own. As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep.

(John 10:14-15)

And...

For the Son of Man has come to save that which was lost. "What do you think? If a man has a hundred sheep, and one of them goes astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine and go to the mountains to seek the one that is straying? And if he should find it, assuredly, I say to you, he rejoices more over that sheep than over the ninety-nine that did not go astray. (Mat 18:11-13)

Invitation

- Is God my Shepherd? Really?
 - Do I see/hear/listen/obey?
 - Jesus is calling *me* now, calling *you* now
 - “My sheep know my voice”... (Are we listening?)
- What season has God placed me in?
 - Is God leading me to a new season, or asking me to abide in this season with more faith?
- Will this meditation on Psalm 23 change anything for me?