

Psalm 23

- v. 1. *The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.*
- A. David had been a shepherd of sheep made into a shepherd of men. **PSA 78:70-72.**
1. He was a shepherd who needed a shepherd and claimed none less than Almighty God as his Shepherd who fed and guided him.
 2. The LORD is Israel's shepherd (**PSA 80:1**) but he is personally David's shepherd. Our relationship with our God is all the more special when it is personal. **GAL 2:20.**
 3. David the shepherd and shepherd-king would feed, guide and reign again in the person of his seed, Jesus Christ. **ISA 40:10-11; EZE 34:23; JOH 10:11, 16.**
 4. Jesus Christ is the chief Shepherd of His shepherd-pastors (**1PE 5:4**) and the great shepherd of His sheep. **HEB 13:20.**
- B. The Lord's children are His sheep by virtue of His will, and no other (**PSA 100:3; JOH 1:12-13**); they are indeed a "made" crowd. **2CO 5:21; EPH 1:6; 2:6; COL 1:12.**
- C. The shepherd bears responsibility for the sheep. **ISA 53:6.**
- D. The shepherd is sympathetic towards the sheep's plight. **ISA 53:7 c/w HEB 2:17-18.**
- E. He gives the sheep the food of eternal life and supplies nourishment for their souls in this life. **JOH 6:51; MAT 4:4; JER 3:15.**
- F. He not only feeds them, but treats them with tender regard. **MAT 12:20; HEB 5:1-2.**
- G. He strives to recover them when they have gone astray. **MAT 18:10-14.**
- H. Even though the sheep may wander off and do their best to look like goats, He still knows them intimately. **JOH 10:2-3, 14; 2TI 2:17-19.**
- I. He has particular, discriminating, selfless favor towards them. **JOH 10:11, 26; MAT 25:31-34.**
- J. He personally guarantees their safety and urges them to maturity. **JOH 10:27-29; HEB 13:20-21.**
- K. The sheep can therefore say with David, "I shall not want."
1. Their Shepherd has given His life for theirs and they shall need no more than that to dismiss any charge against them in eternity. **ROM 8:31-34.**
 2. They may rest assured that their Shepherd will supply all their needs according to His riches in glory. **PHIL 4:19.**
 3. They should resolve therefore to be content. **PHIL 4:5-7, 11-13.**
- v. 2. *He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.*
- A. God knows our bodies have need of rest. **PSA 127:2; MAR 6:31.**
- B. God knows our souls have need of rest. **MAT 11:28-30; HEB 4:10-11.**
- C. God directs His sheep towards quietness and tranquility which comes through righteousness; hence His leading as set forth in the next verse. **PSA 119:165; ISA 32:17 c/w JOB 34:29.**
- D. Our Shepherd's leading means *green* pastures and *still* waters: fullness and peace. **ROM 15:13.**
- E. Our refusal of His leading means emptiness and turmoil. **RUTH 1:21; ISA 8:6-8; 48:22.**
- v. 3. *He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.*
- A. "He restoreth my soul..."
1. restore: To give back, to make return or restitution of (anything previously taken away or lost). **c/w JOB 33:27-30.**
 2. The best of sheep are prone to wander off and get lost (**PSA 119:176**) and therefore need to be returned by conversion. **PSA 19:7; JAM 5:19-20.**
 3. Upon return, the joy of salvation may also be restored. **PSA 51:12.**
- B. "...He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake."
1. The paths of righteousness are found in the law of the Lord.

GAL 5:16 c/w PSA 119:1-3, 35.

2. God's word provides sufficient light to direct our steps. **PSA 119:105.**
 3. We may be assured that if the path we are following is contrary to God's word, it is not God that is leading us. **PSA 119:128.**
 - a. The light of nature is untrustworthy. **JOB 39:13-17.**
 - b. Human philosophy is untrustworthy. **1CO 1:21-25.**
 - c. Emotions and "methinks" are untrustworthy. **PRO 28:26.**
 4. He leads in paths of righteousness *for His name's sake*. Anyone who claims Him while walking in unrighteousness defiles His name. **ROM 2:23-24; 2TI 2:19.**
- v. 4.** *Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.*
- A. Being led in the paths of righteousness does not mean a trial-free life where we will never have to face evil that could generate fear. **2TI 3:11-12; MAT 5:10.**
 - B. Death itself may well be the evil we face. **2CO 1:8-9.**
 1. The *shadow of death* is a place of bondage. **PSA 107:10.**
 2. Faith sees death as a defeated enemy. **HEB 2:14-15.**
 3. Therefore, its prospect need not move the man of faith. **ACT 20:22-24.**
 4. Faith sees death as a shadow which has no more power than the shadow of a sword or snake. It has no substance to separate us from God's love. **ROM 8:38-39.**
 5. For those who fear death it is a *sit-in* (**PSA 107:10**); for those who trust God it is a *walk-through*.
 - C. That which overcomes the fear of such evil is the knowledge that God is with you. **PSA 46:1; MAT 28:20; 2TI 4:16-17.**
 - D. Our Shepherd's rod and staff are our comfort (strength).
 1. The passing of the sheep under the shepherd's rod denoted counting one of a crowd holy unto God. **LEV 27:32 c/w EPH 1:4.**
 2. The rod and staff are for feeding and guiding (**MIC 7:14**), as is the gospel.
 3. The gospel of the victorious resurrection for God's elect is *comfort-food* to those who believe it. **1CO 15:1-2; 1TH 4:13-18.**
- v. 5.** *Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.*
- A. "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies..."
 1. When David's king and country rejected him, God gave him favor with the Philistines. **1SAM 27:1-12.**
 2. "When a man's ways please the LORD, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him" (**PRO 16:7**).
 - B. "...thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over."
 1. The anointing of the head with oil implied special appointment, luxurious treatment and blessing. **1SAM 10:1; PSA 133:1-3.**
 2. Believers, through Christ, similarly abound. **ISA 61:1-3; EPH 1:3.**
 - C. Mind how much this verse speaks of Christ, the Son of David.
 1. God appointed Christ a table in the presence of His enemies. **LUK 22:19-22, 29-30 c/w PSA 110:1-2.**
 2. He was anointed with the oil of gladness above His fellows (**PSA 45:7**) and the perfect fullness of the Spirit. **ACT 10:38 c/w JOH 3:34.**
 3. His cup ran over: "And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace"

(JOH 1:16).

- v. 6.** *Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.*
- A. “Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life...”
1. There was no doubt about this in David's mind. He was the object of covenant salvation that was more powerful than human failings. **2SAM 23:5.**
 2. Believers may be thankful that God's goodness and mercy “has their back.” **HEB 8:10-13.**
 3. Believers may also be thankful that God's mercies are ongoing and enduring.
LAM 3:22-23; PSA 136:1.
- B. “...and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.” **PSA 27:4; 2CO 5:1; REV 3:12; 7:13-17.**