

PSALM 23



Theme: **God takes care of me**

**The Lord Is My Shepherd
A Psalm of David.**

23 The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

**2 He makes me lie down in green pastures.
He leads me beside still waters.**

**3 He restores my soul.
He leads me in paths of righteousness
for his name's sake.**

**4 Even 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.**

**5 You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.**

**6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
all the days of my life,
and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord
forever.**

Psalm 23 (ESV)

1 The Lord is my shepherd I shall not want. (I WILL NOT LACK)

THE LORD - David identifies who the shepherd is.

IS - Here he places his confidence.

Can you say that? Do you have the confidence to say that the almighty God IS your Shepherd right now? Not was, as in: He helped you in the past. Not will be, as in: you look forward to something He will do... but IS. David had extreme confidence in who God is right now!

MY - Here he personalizes it.

The wonderful discovery is that the Lord is not just a shepherd who looks after the entire flock, but He is MY shepherd as well because He is interested in each of His sheep!
Psalm 23 is very personal.

There is no "we" or "us" or "they." but only "my" and "me" and "I"
and "he" and "you". It is an overflow of David's personal experience with God.

Just like David, you can have a personal and authentic relationship with the creator of Heaven and Earth.

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THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD!

With these five words David is setting the tone for his Psalm.

JESUS is MY shepherd...

1 The Lord is my shepherd (Because of this) I shall not want.

Sheep are totally dependent on a shepherd...

What do shepherds do?

A shepherd Protects the sheep, Provides for the sheep and Leads the sheep.

A shepherd is willing to lay down his life for the well being of his sheep.

John 10:11 (ESV)

I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.

No one took His life from Him, but He laid it down on His own accord.

John 10:17-18 (ESV)

For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it up again. 18 No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This charge I have received from my Father.”

Jesus could have stepped off the cross at any moment. This was the equivalent of someone bending over and putting their head under water, and choosing to deliberately drown when they had the power to raise their head at any moment. Jesus chose to die.

Why did He lay down His life?

Romans 5:6 (ESV)

For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. 7 For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die— 8 but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. 9 Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God.

Jesus laid down His life because of His love for us.

Jesus laid down His life to save us from the wrath of God that was brought on the world through sin.

Jesus laid down His life so that we could gain eternal life through Him. (JOHN 3:16)

Jesus laid down His life because of His love for us.

Jesus laid down His life because we needed a savior. (Ephesians 2:1-9)

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2 He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters.

3 He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Verse 2 and 3 extend the metaphor of the shepherd's care for the sheep.

Verse 2a He makes me lie down in green pastures.

Jesus knows exactly what we need and He is the one that brings spiritual nourishment and rest for our souls

Matthew 11:28-30 (ESV)

Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

Verse 2b He leads me beside the still water.

Jesus provides us with peace.

John 14:27 (ESV)

27 Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.

Philippians 4:4-7 (ESV)

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. 5 Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; 6 do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. 7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

We find PEACE in knowing He is with us in every moment of our life. Because of this we can REST in the fact that He is working in all things for our good. (ROMANS 8:28)

3 He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Jesus will always lead us into that which is right and that which is true. It is for 'His name's sake' that He does this.

Psalms 37:23 (ESV)

The steps of a man are established by the Lord, when he delights in his way;

Proverbs 3:5-6 (ESV)

Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. 6 In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.

We may not understand the path that we are on, but we have confidence in the one who is leading us.

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Jesus leads us into righteousness. A life that is pleasing to God lacking nothing.

John 14:6 (ESV)

Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

Jesus is the PATH that leads to God, He is the vehicle that gets us there and He is the destination.

There is no way to the Father except through the Son.

John 10:9 (ESV)

I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture.

The ultimate rest we will find is ETERNAL life with Him.

4 Even 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.

His rod is for protection and His staff is for direction.

I want you to notice the word **through** in this verse. It shows that in this life we will have troubles, but we don't have to camp out there. We do not have to fear the moment, because our confidence is in the fact that He will bring us **through** every difficult situation that we walk into.

This is a reminder that God is not only with us in the good times, but he is also with us in the darkest moments of our life. We take comfort in the fact that He is with us.

"No good thing does He withhold from those who walk uprightly." (PSALM 84:11)

Even the valleys of the shadow of death are only pathways to greener pastures.

The same God that brought you to it is the same God that will bring you THROUGH it.

The key to going through the valley is to keep your eyes on Him and not your circumstance.

Hebrews 11 reminds us of people like us that overcame their valleys through faith. Hebrews 12 teaches us to endure by keeping our eyes fixed on Jesus.

Psalms 121 (ESV)

I lift up my eyes to the hills. From where does my help come? 2 My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth. 3 He will not let your foot be moved; he who keeps you will not slumber. 4 Behold, he who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep. 5 The Lord is your keeper; the Lord is your shade on your right hand. 6 The sun shall not strike you by day, nor the moon by night. 7 The Lord will keep you from all evil; he will keep your life. 8 The Lord will keep your going out and your coming in from this time forth and forevermore.

Something powerful happens when our eyes look to heaven and our knees touch the earth. In every situation of life, good or bad, our focus must remain on Him.

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We should be CONSTANT in prayer and worry about nothing.

Philippians 4:6-7 (ESV)

do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. 7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

Here David pictures God as a gracious host who provides all that he needs... even in times of apparent difficulty. David is saying that the provision and grace of God gives him such confidence that in a time when he should be fearful and anxious (even while in the very presence of his enemies), he is still able to sit, relax and eat!

1. While his enemies were out for his destruction, God had prepared a place of provision.
2. He anointed his head with oil, which is a symbol of God's covering, blessing and favor.
3. My cup overflows. God's goodness was poured out on his life in abundance.

God is not in short supply of His goodness. He does not have to ration out His blessings.

John 10:10 (ESV)

The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy (THE SHEEP). I came that they (THE SHEEP) may have life and have it abundantly.

Jesus came to give us the LIFE of God in a measure that OVERFLOWS.

There is no NEED that He cannot supply.

6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

David closes out his Psalm with a word of life.

Surely goodness and mercy will follow me all the days of my life.

What you speak over your life and family is important.

Proverbs 18:21 (ESV)

Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruits. Don't allow your negative words to keep you in the valley.



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Psalm 27:13-14 (NKJV)

I would have lost heart (KJV says fainted), unless I had believed that I would see the goodness of the Lord In the land of the living.

I would have given up in the valley if I did not keep my eyes focused on the fact that there will be greener pastures. So what do I do?

14 Wait on the Lord; Be of good courage,
And He shall strengthen your heart; Wait, I say, on the Lord!

I have endurance in times of trouble because I know who it is I believe in, and I am persuaded that He who began a good work in me will bring it to completion.

Every situation that I face in life is temporary, so I do not fix my eyes on what I see, but the eternity that is before me.

I will dwell in the house of The Lord forever!

Revelation 21:4 (NKJV)

And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.”

That is the promise that we live for. That is the pasture we will find. That is what makes everything that we face in this life worth living.