

## Psalm 23

1 A Psalm of David. The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.

2 He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. 3 He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. 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.

5 Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. 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.

### Introduction notes:

1. "A Psalm of David" – The inspired heading tells us that David composed this song – though we don't exactly know when.
2. The compiler of the Psalms (whether Asaph or Ezra) placed this Psalm directly after Ps. 22 – The Messiah's Terror & Triumph. We cannot experience the LORD as Shepherd, if we do not know the LORD as our Substitutionary Sacrifice for our salvation against sin.

### Outline:

- I. The Shepherd's Person (v.1)
- II. The Shepherd's Performances and Presence (vv.2-4)
- III. The Shepherd's Preparations (vv.5-6)

### Observations:

1. We are to encourage ourselves in the Lord.
2. The first encouragement stems from our relationship to Him – The LORD is my Shepherd.
3. David himself was a shepherd (Ps. 78:70, 71) and understood the responsibilities and cares of the sheep and the fold (1 Sam. 17:34, 35).
4. The LORD-Shepherd is the Provider – if you lack something – it may be that it is not meant for you, or it may not be good for you, or He is preparing it for you to have in due time – Trust Him for He is our Supplier and Sustainer.
5. (v.2-4) The Shepherd's Performances:
  - A. He makes me to lie in green pastures – he feeds. We as His sheep feed upon the words of God.

B. He leadeth me besides the still waters. – This is refreshment and pleasure. – The joy as a result of the ministry of the Holy Spirit of God.

C. He restoreth my soul – Since we, like sheep, are prone to go astray, the LORD shows us our errors, commands us to repent, and brings us back or restores us to the duty and privileges of fellowship with Him.

D. He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake – God leads us to the duties of righteousness and leads us in the right paths. – by His Word and in our dispensation today, by His church. In David's day, it would be the Tabernacle, and in Solomon's day, the Temple.

6. (v.4) The strength and comfort of the dying believer. – The rod and staff are used to count sheep (Lev. 27:32), for protection from ferocious animals, for correction. It is a symbol of authority (Ps. 110:2). The believer is comforted even in the face of death because the Shepherd knows him, will protect him, and will own him and rule over him. Only the Shepherd has a right to own the sheep.

7. (vv.5-6) The Shepherd's Preparations.

A. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies – God takes care of us physically and eternally. Abundant blessings – even in this life.

B. Thou anointest my head with oil –

C. Goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life – God's grace will continuously follow after the believer as he lives the rest of his life on earth.

D. I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever – All this (goodness and mercy) and Heaven, too! Praise God, the LORD our Good Shepherd!

**Lesson:** The Lord Jesus is the Good Shepherd – and we receive God's grace because of Him. (cf. Jn. 10:11, 13)

[Jehovah (the LORD) is Israel's Shepherd (Gen. 49:24; Ps. 74:1-2; 80:1)]

[Also, Israel's Shepherd will once again deal with Israel after the rapture of the believers and during the Seven-year Tribulation Period, and into the Millennial Kingdom, and ultimately in the New Jerusalem]

Solomon acknowledged the LORD to be "the one Shepherd" is He who gave all the words of the wise (The Scriptures) (Ecc. 12:11).

Paul said...our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep (Heb. 13:20).

Peter called Jesus...the chief shepherd (1 Pet. 5:4).

The NT believer has the Lord for His shepherd, and is led to the church, and will ultimately have a part of the New Jerusalem.