

BOOK OF
PSALMS
CHAPTER 23

Explanation

- **Phillip Keller – A Shepherd Looks at Psalm 23**
 1. **Written in 1970**
 2. **Available at Christianbook.com for \$2 to \$10**
- **I have preached from this Psalm in a series of 10 messages for 5 different times...**
- **This is the first time I tried to do this Psalm in one Sunday.**

Psalm 23

The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Psalm 23

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

Psalm 23

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

Introduction

- **My experience with Psalm 23**
 - I attended many funerals where this was read.
 - I led 50 funeral services and had this read.
 - I buried my father, mother, & others & used it often
 - I read it often for the sick, the struggling, or stumped

Introduction

- **My experience with Psalm 23**
- **Leaders in crisis: Lincoln, FDR, Bush:**

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Introduction

- **My experience with Psalm 23**
- **Leaders in crisis: Lincoln, FDR, Bush 9/11:**

Tonight, I ask for your prayers for all those who grieve, for the children whose worlds have been shattered, for all whose sense of safety and security has been threatened. And I pray they will be comforted by a power greater than any of us, spoken through the ages in Psalm 23: "Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil, for You are with me.

Introduction

- **My experience with Psalm 23**
- **National leaders: Lincoln, FDR, Bush**
- **The attraction for billions of people is the bold assertion of God as THE shepherd.**
 - **It is more about life than death and grief.**
 - **It is a Psalm of life & an invitation to live.**

Introduction

- Therefore, it is a great comfort because it is about the journey with the Good Shepherd
- Are you ready to travel through life with Him?

Our Three Questions

- 1. What does it say?**
 - **Authorial intent to intended audience**
- 2. What does it mean?**
 - **Timeless theological truth**
- 3. How does it apply?**
 - **Landing it in our lives**

Psalms

Inspired

songs and poems

**That depict the heart of the Lord
& His saints in each season of life**

Psalm 23:1 My Identity of The Shepherd

The LORD is my shepherd;

יְהוָה - YeHWaH – I AM

Jesus (Yeshua) is YHWH saves

I shall not want.

Psalm 23:1 My Identity of The Shepherd

The LORD is my shepherd;

YHWH – I AM

Jesus (Yeshua) is YHWH saves

I shall not want.

Incomplete verb – it is not completely done

I will be continuously free from want

Psalm 23:2-3 He Abilities of The Shepherd

He makes me lie down in green pastures.

He leads me beside still waters.

He restores my soul.

He leads me in paths of righteousness for His name's sake.

Psalm 23:2-3 He Abilities of The Shepherd

He makes me lie down in green pastures.

You can if you provide what they need

Freedom from fear of:

- **tensions,**
- **aggravation of pests,**
- **& hunger.**

Psalm 23:2-3 He Abilities of The Shepherd

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Psalm 23:2-3 He

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Psalm 23:2-3 He

Abilities of The Shepherd

He makes me lie down in green pastures.

He leads me beside still waters.

He restores my soul.

Sheep may become cast down...

Good shepherds play life guard...

David uses this in Psalm 42-Why cast down?



Psalm 23:2-3 He

Abilities of The Shepherd

He makes me lie down in green pastures.

He leads me beside still waters.

He restores my soul.

He leads me in paths of righteousness for his
name's sake.

Psalm 23:2-3 He

Abilities of The Shepherd

He leads me in *paths of righteousness* for his name's sake.

He doesn't give them a GPS.

- He is like the pillar of cloud.
- He walks in it before them

Psalm 23:2-3 He Abilities of The Shepherd

He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

He walks in it before them.

He knows where, when, & how to go to right spots.

Psalm 23:2-3 He Abilities of The Shepherd

He leads me in *paths of righteousness* for His
name's sake.

He walks in it before them

He knows where, when, & how to go to right spots

His reputation & their trust in him is at stake...

Psalm 23:4-5 You

The Right Path of The Shepherd

Even though *I walk through* the valley of the
shadow of death, (deep darkness)

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 overflows.

Psalm 23:4-5 You

The Right Path of The Shepherd

Even though *I walk through* the valley of the *shadow of death, (deep darkness)*

- Shepherd never intends to remain in valley
- The valley is not death,
- It is the valley of deep darkness...
a crisis,
a fearsome place for sheep.

Psalm 23:4-5 You

The Right Path of The Shepherd

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shadow of death,

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Psalm 23:4-5 You

The Right Path of The Shepherd

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.

Rod was a weapon & used for discipline

Staff pulled a sheep up or to shepherd for comfort

Hebrew word for comfort means breathe deeply

Psalm 23:4-5 You

The Right Path of The Shepherd

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.

**You prepare a table before me in the presence of
*my enemies***

You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

Psalm 23:4-5 You

The Right Path of The Shepherd

**You prepare a table before me in the presence of
*my enemies***

The shepherd travels ahead to prep the new pasture.
The pastures are on a table land, not a valley.

Psalm 23:4-5 You

The Right Path of The Shepherd

**You prepare a table before me in the presence of
*my enemies***

The shepherd travels ahead to prep the new pasture.
That table (mesa) is set where there are predators.
So the work must be thorough to ensure safety.

Psalm 23:4-5 You

The Right Path of The Shepherd

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shadow of death,

I will fear no evil, for You are with me;

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Psalm 23:4-5 You

The Right Path of The Shepherd

You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

Oil is used by the shepherd for healing & repel pests

Psalm 23:4-5 You

The Right Path of The Shepherd

You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

Oil is used by the shepherd for healing & repel pests

A good shepherd will not be stingy but use it abundantly... overflowing amounts.

Psalm 23:6 I

Benefits of The Shepherd

**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 23:6 I

Benefits of The Shepherd

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,

These qualities result from nature & character of the shepherd, not from actions of sheep.

Sheep do not earn or deserve such goodness & mercy!

Psalm 23:6 I

Benefits of The Shepherd

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,

The word “**follow**” is more of pursuit than a wagon. Good shepherds “**pursue**” their sheep with goodness & mercy like a mother bear “**pursues**” her cubs.

Psalm 23:6 I

Benefits of The Shepherd

and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD
forever.

Word “**dwell**” is from the ancient Greek translation,
good for commentary not as inspired Word.

“**Dwell**” should be “**return**” as V 3 “**restores**” my soul

Psalm 23:6 I

Benefits of The Shepherd

and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD
forever.

Word “**forever**” is not everlasting. It is a word of measurement, “**length**” of days.

David is referring to the **length** of his life on earth.

Eternal truths from Psalm 23

- Last week Forrest mentioned we are to leave our old life & press on to Christ...
- He also used a chart to show us the movement of Psalm 6 & other Psalms.
- Let's see if that works with Psalm 23

What do we do and learn?

**Recognize
the occasion**

**Take it to
the cross**

**Respond in
praise**

**Feel the
weight of sin**

**Receive
grace**

Eternal truths from Psalm 23

A. YHWH is identified as the Shepherd & the writer (and us) as the sheep.

What do we do and learn?

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Eternal truths from Psalm 23

A. YHWH is the Shepherd & we are the sheep.

B. We sheep by nature are a mess.

1. Sheep are stinky & dirty.

2. Sheep are dumb, thick skulled, small brained.

Buzz Bomb



Eternal truths from Psalm 23

A. YHWH is the Shepherd & we are the sheep.

B. We sheep by nature are a mess.

- 1. Sheep are stinky & dirty.**
- 2. Sheep are dumb, thick skulled, small brained.**
- 3. Sheep get into trouble... a lot! Romans 3:23**

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Eternal truths from Psalm 23

A. YHWH is the Shepherd & we are the sheep.

B. We sheep by nature are a mess.

C. Jesus became flesh to walk in the path

1. John 1:14 & 29 Word became flesh / Lamb of God

2. Hebrews 13:20 This Lamb rose from the dead...

3. John 10:7-11 & 1 Cor. 1:30 We enter by Him & are made righteous in Him

Eternal truths from Psalm 23

- A. YHWH is the Shepherd & we are the sheep.**
- B. We sheep by nature are a mess.**
- C. Jesus became flesh to walk in the path**
- D. That path may be dangerous or delightful**
 - 1. Gal 2:20 It is the cross we must face often / daily**
 - 2. It ends old nature & opens the door for His Spirit to bring His glorious life & love into our hearts!**
 - 3. Every one faces such Xairos moments for the better**

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- B. We sheep by nature are a mess.
- C. Jesus became flesh to walk in the path
- D. That path may be dangerous or delightful
- E. **The Shepherd is with us on that path**
 - 1. He keeps in close contact with Holy Spirit & Word
 - 2. **Matthew 28:20b** He is “with you always till the end”
 - 3. **Goodness & mercy PURSUE us as a hound a fox!**

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- F. So that we will return to Him to His “oikos” (house)

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- D. That path may be dangerous or delightful
- E. The Shepherd is with us on that path
- F. **So that we will return to Him to His “oikos” (house)**
 - 1. **John 14:1-4 We will live in the House He prepares**
 - 2. **John 14:12-17 We will do works He did because He gives us His Holy Spirit.**
 - 3. **Revelation 5:8-14 His sheep will worship Him... •**

What do we do and learn?

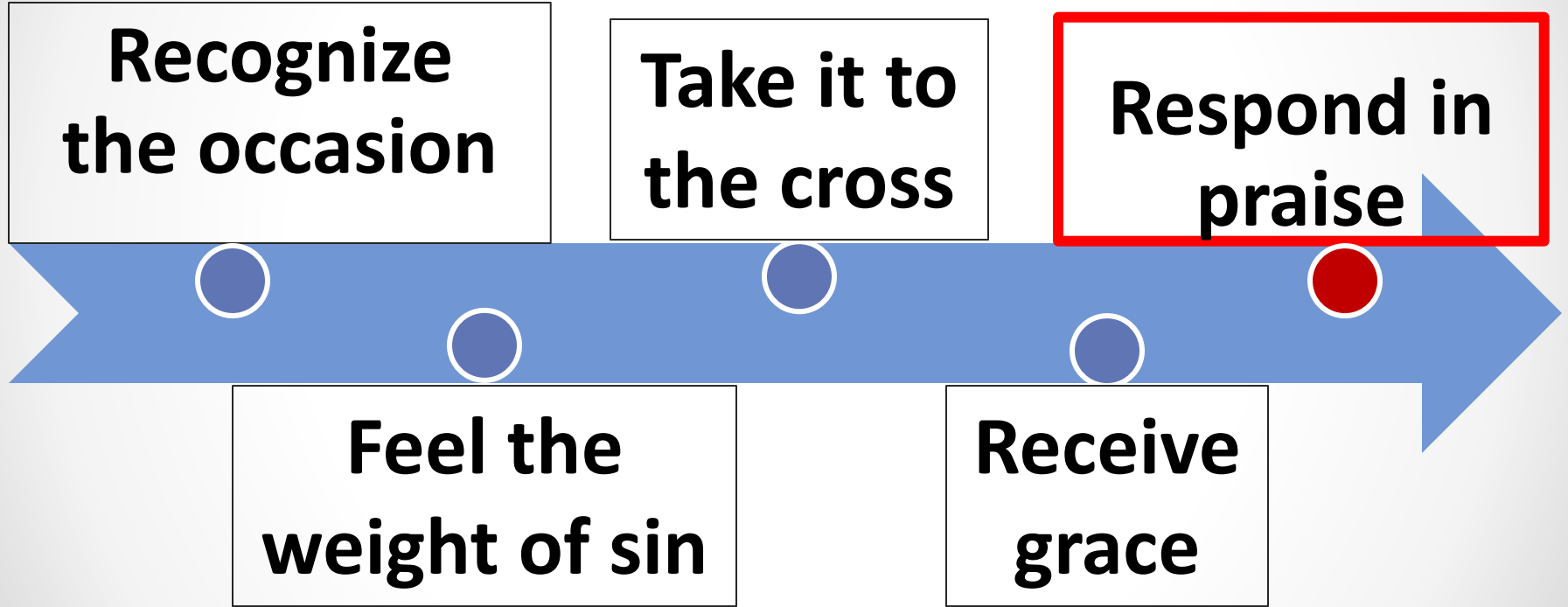
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How shall we then live?

A. Read 1 Peter 2:18-25 to understand this Psalm in life.

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- B. Be sure that Jesus IS YOUR Shepherd.
- C. **Be content with what He has given to you NOW.**

How shall we then live?

- A. Read 1 Peter 2:18-25 to understand this Psalm in life.
- B. Be sure that Jesus IS YOUR Shepherd.
- C. Be content with what He has given to you NOW.
- D. Be ready to move thru the current or next dark valley
 - 1. Draw near to Him during that time to love Him
 - 2. Trust Him to work all things together for your good
 - 3. Gratefully leave the land of contentment with hope

How shall we then live?

- A. Read 1 Peter 2:18-25 to understand this Psalm in life.
- B. Be sure that Jesus IS YOUR Shepherd.
- C. Be content with what He has given to you NOW.
- D. Be ready to move thru the current or next dark valley
- E. **Be constantly filling with the Holy Spirit. Eph 5:18-21**

Are You Ready?

**This is the story of the journey for
Adam & Eve, Noah, Abe & Sarah, David,
& their descendent Jesus
It can be your story too...**

Are You Ready?

**Are you ready to journey through life
with the Good Shepherd?**