

Scripture Reading: Psalm 23

In this Psalm, God woke me up one morning after dreaming about it, and inspired me to write these 3 things down that are contained in this special Psalm:

1. Goodness
2. Guidance
3. Guarding

Background Observation: --Believer's Bible Commentary: A Thorough, Yet Easy-to-Read Bible Commentary That Turns Complicated Theology Into Practical Understanding.

“The Twenty-Third Psalm is probably the best-loved poem in all literature.

Whether put to music and sung or recited in a Sunday School program, it has a charm that is perennial and a message that is deathless.

"Blessed is the day," wrote an old theologian, "when Psalm 23 was born!"

J. R. Littleproud's outline is hard to improve upon:

The secret of a happy life—every need supplied.

"The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want."

The secret of a happy death—every fear removed.

"Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I shall fear no evil; for You are with me."

The secret of a happy eternity—every desire fulfilled.

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

Despite its worldwide popularity, the Psalm is not for everyone.

It is applicable only to those who are entitled to say, **"The LORD is my Shepherd."**

It is true that the Good Shepherd died for all, but only those who actually receive Him by a definite act of faith are His sheep.

His saving work is *sufficient* for all, but it is *effective* only for those who actually believe on Him.

Everything therefore hinges on the personal pronoun *my*.

Unless He is *my* Shepherd, then the rest of the Psalm does not belong to me.

On the other hand, if He is really mine and I am really His, then I have everything in Him!"

“This psalm of David is one of the best-known texts of Scripture, a favorite of the psalms, but as Harry Ironside said, though it *is the most loved Psalm... it is the one least believed.*” Joseph Addison Alexander said of this psalm: *"An exquisite description of God's care over his people under the figure of a shepherd and his flock."*

Analytical Bible Expositor - Analytical Bible Expositor – Psalms.”

THE OUTLINE (Main points) OF THE CHAPTER:

- A. The Great Shepherd of the Flock (Psalm 23:1)
- B. The Goodness Supplied to the Flock (Psalm 23:2-6)

A. **The Great Shepherd of the Flock**

1. **The Character of the Shepherd (Psalm 23:1)**

"The LORD is my shepherd" ([Psalm 23:1](#)).

As many have pointed out, [Psalm 22](#), [23](#), and [24](#) present in type the threefold ministry of Christ.

In the New Testament this *threefold* ministry is represented under the "shepherd" figure.

In [John 10:11](#) Christ is called the "good shepherd" who "giveth his life for the sheep" ([John 10:11](#)).

- This corresponds to [Psalm 22](#) which speaks of Christ's cross.

In [Hebrews 13:20](#), Christ is termed the "great shepherd of the sheep" Who cares for the sheep—"Make you perfect in every good work to do his will" ([Hebrews 13:21](#)).

- This corresponds to [Psalm 23](#).

In [I Peter 5:4](#) Christ is called the "chief shepherd" and this term is associated with the end times when Christ shall rule and reign and reward His saints with "a crown of glory that fadeth not away" ([I Peter 5:4](#)).

- This corresponds to [Psalm 24](#) which portrays Christ as the "King of glory" ([Psalm 24:10](#)).

2. **The Commissary of the Shepherd** ([Psalm 23:1](#))

"I shall not want."

This "includes the present, I do not want, with an additional assurance that the provision will be still continued" (Alexander).

B. **The Goodness Supplied to the Flock**

The supplying of the flock is magnificent.

We will note ten specific areas of supply which the Great Shepherd ([Hebrews 13:20](#)) has supplied for His sheep.

Hebrews 13:20 (KJV)

²⁰ Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that *great shepherd of the sheep*, through the blood of the everlasting covenant,

1. **The Supply of Rest** ([Psalm 23:2](#))

"He maketh me to lie down in green pastures."

- **The prodding to rest.** "Maketh me to lie down."
- **The place of rest.** "In green pastures."

This is not talking about food—that comes later.

Green pastures are the best place to lie down and rest.

Jesus Christ knows the best resting places.

2. **The Supply of Refreshment** ([Psalm 23:2](#))

"He leadeth me beside the still waters."

Few things so *refresh* one as a nice drink of water especially on a hot day.

3. **The Supply of Restoration** ([Psalm 23:3](#))

"He restoreth my soul."

This speaks of rejuvenation and re-energizing.

In serving the Lord, we often need to be **re-energized**.

We sometimes become discouraged, but the compassionate Shepherd restores our vision, enthusiasm, and energy for service.

4. **The Supply of Roadway (Psalm 23:3)**

"He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake."

There are many conferences today on church leadership. But few conferences are about the leadership of this text.

Yet this is the leadership, that we need the most.

- **The Person in the leading.** *"He leadeth me."*

Christ **leads** the saint, but many saints do not follow.

- **The path in the leading.** *"In the paths of righteousness."*

The Shepherd leads the sheep on the **right** paths.

- **The purpose in the leading.** *"For his name's sake."*

The shepherd benefits by leading his sheep on the right path.

5. **The Supply of Reassurance (Psalm 23:4)**

"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."

Here is comfort in crisis and in discomfoting circumstances.

The psalmist gives three reasons why he is comforted/**reassured** in the time of crisis.

- **The shepherd's dwelling.** *"Thou art with me."*

- **The shepherd's defense.** *"Rod."*

- **The shepherd's discipline.** *"Staff."*

This makes it most comforting/**reassuring** in the valley of dangers and fears.

6. **The Supply of Repast (Psalm 23:5)**

"Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies."

The psalmist uses a figure not related to sheep to emphasize the supply of food for the sheep.

- **The preparation of the table.** *"Thou preparest a table before me."*

- **The provision of the table.** *"Table."*

- **The place of the table.** *"In the presence of mine enemies."*

7. **The Supply of Reception (Psalm 23:5)**

"Thou anointest my head with oil."

In a figure that represents the welcoming of a guest at a banquet in the east, the psalmist speaks of another supply by the shepherd, namely, being received by the shepherd.

8. **The Supply of Rejoicing (Psalm 23:5)**

"My cup runneth over."

This expresses the joy which God gives unlike the world.

9. The Supply of Riches (Psalm 23:6)

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

Divine blessings are assured perpetually to those who belong to the Shepherd.

10. The Supply of Residence (Psalm 23:6)

"I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever."

This is the climax of the psalm.

This great climax of blessing comes when the *"LORD is my shepherd."*

Conclusion:

You will never experience these blessings unless He is your Shepherd.

Can you honestly say, *"The Lord is MY Shepherd tonight?"*

Invitation Hymn: *"Living by Faith"*

*Written and preached by: B. Beach, WHBC-p.m. 1/15/23

*Some portions borrowed from: The Analytical Bible Expositor—Psalms.