

Psalm 23: The Lord Our Shepherd And Host.

1. We Are Presently Blessed: 1-5.

This is by far the most quoted and memorized Psalm. This Psalm has comforted the downcast, strengthened the weak, given hope to the hopeless, given courage to the fearful...and we as well turn to it as we seek to *focus on Jesus*, our Shepherd.

As David writes this, he must've been thinking about the shepherd-boy and shepherd-king he was; how he led, provided for and protected his sheep and people. Above all he was meditating about how God led, provided for, protected and promised him a great future.

The child who has a problem comparing humans to animals...

God was like a **shepherd** to David, and David was like a sheep to God and so are we. He is both personal and corporate; He nurtures us individually and collectively. Jesus is our shepherd; He alone is our Leader, as a Leader, He oversees our health and safety as His flock. In Christ our needs are met. This implies that we need to be content with His provision, not to pursue anything outside His will.

- i. "I shall not want" doesn't mean God will give us everything we ask for, it means, "All my needs are supplied by the LORD, my shepherd."
- ii. "I shall not want" means, "I decide to not desire more than what the LORD, my shepherd gives."

Philippians 4:11-12 - *Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be **content**. I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.*

1 Timothy 6:6 - *Now godliness with contentment is great gain.*

a. Physical Needs.

As a Shepherd, He leads us to feed on green pastures and to drink fresh water. Sheep are needy animals and so are we. We need food, shelter, clothing and more and God provides. The moment we wander off from contentment in God's provision we'll get ourselves in trouble.

b. Spiritual Needs.

Green grass is symbolic of His Word and water His Spirit; He nourishes us spiritually and refreshes us with a fresh flow of His Spirit as long as we ask Him too.

When we grow weary and discouraged, God is at our door with encouragement and strength by His Word and His Spirit.

- He leads us to righteousness, His right way. The LORD is daily setting us apart from the world and removing sinful impurities in our lives for Himself.

2 Thessalonians 2:13 - *But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God from the beginning chose you for salvation through **sanctification** by the Spirit and belief in the truth,*

Psalms 5:8 - *Lead me, O LORD, in Your **righteousness**...*

- The Lord Comforts us.

Just like David, the author of this Psalm, we suffer in different ways in this world; we often find ourselves in the valley of the shadow of death due to our sinful decisions or due to the ugly things this fallen world throws at us, in both ways, we should not be tormented by fear, but faith in our Shepherd.

2 Corinthians 1:3-4a - *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our tribulation...*

Mathew 28:20 - *...I am with you always, I'll never leave you nor forsake you.*

Never once did we ever walk alone, never once does He leave us on our own...

- The Lord Hosts Us.

The hosts us for a meal; anointing with oil was an act of hospitality and the cup running over is symbolic of His ever flowing joy. His invitation and presence doesn't eliminate **our enemies**, but enables us to experience God's goodness in their midst. We have Satan as our arch enemy and there are those who don't wish as well as God's people. The LORD showers us with His goodness nevertheless.

2. We Have A Blessed Future: 6.

We are promised goodness (wealth and favour) and mercy (God withdrawing His wrath from us having satisfied it in Christ) shall continuously follow us.

"While I am here I will be a child at home with my God; the whole world shall be his house to me; and when I ascend into the upper chamber I shall not change my company, nor even change the house; I shall only go to dwell in the upper room of the house of the Lord forever." Charles H. Spurgeon.

After enjoying His goodness and mercy on this earth, we will go upstairs to enjoy some more.

The Child-The Lord is my shepherd...and that's all I need to know. Green pastures, still waters, paths of righteousness, valleys, dinner and forever in His house.