

## PSALM 23 – The Life of the Person who Makes the Lord Their Shepherd

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### HE LEADETH ME – Joseph Gilmore, sung by George Beverly Shea

*1 He leadeth me, O blessed thought! O words with heavenly comfort fraught! Whate'er I do, where'er I be Still 'tis God's hand that leadeth me.*

*Refrain: He leadeth me, He leadeth me, By His own hand He leadeth me; His faithful follower I would be, For by His hand He leadeth me.*

*2 Sometimes 'mid scenes of deepest gloom, Sometimes where Eden's bowers bloom, By waters still, o'er troubled sea, Still 'tis His hand that leadeth me. (Refrain)*

### PSALM 23 – The Life of the Person who Makes the Lord Their Shepherd

We never tire of this Psalm! Everybody has a master passion, a shepherd. How wonderful to our LORD as our Shepherd! ***The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.***—***Psa 23:1***. Perhaps no single Psalm has taken such a hold of the imagination and the heart of believers as the 23rd Psalm. David begins to communicate how blessed it is to have the LORD as our shepherd. David knew much about being a shepherd, when he was a boy! It is thought this Psalm may have been written later in David's life, after walking with the LORD a long time. As he thought about his own life and how well God had taken care of him. When he looked at his life, he wanted to write a Psalm about the power of God that communicates the only explanation for my life was not my talent or abilities. The only explanation for my life is that the LORD is my shepherd. There is a certain quality of life that comes with the LORD being our shepherd in my life that nothing else rises up to it, even remotely. So, David was a shepherd. He knew sheep. The whole idea is to bring the image in our mind of a shepherd tending sheep. God is the shepherd. We are the sheep! When we think of God referring to us a sheep, we think of them as being so cute, with their little lambs running around! But sheep are notoriously dumb. They can actually wander off, just over a little knoll away from the flock and they might as well be miles away. They can't find their way back to the flock to save their life! They are just out there as lost as lost can be. They are not that bright and are well known as wanderers. It's nothing for a sheep to wander into any kind of danger, like right off a cliff! But they are a great example as we are. We too, are well known wanderers. We get ourselves into all kinds of trouble that we need God to get us out of. Also, sheep are completely defenseless. They don't have fangs or claws. The rest of the animal kingdom looks at them and they just a meal on four legs. They see a lamb and just say this is going to be so easy and we are going to eat so well. They are defenseless. When we realize when God speaks of us as sheep, it's really not that flattering in a very real important kind of way.

### PSALM 23 - The LORD is My Shepherd – The One Who Is! The “He (13X) - Me (17X)” A Psalm of David

***Psa 23:1 The LORD is*** (is, not if) ***my shepherd (Jehovah Raahe); I shall not want (lack no good thing!)***

- 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.***" 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.
- However, if He is really mine and I am really His, then I have everything in Him! I shall not lack or want anything!

***Psa 23:2 He makes*** (causes) ***me to lie down in green pastures; He leads*** (goes before) ***me beside the still waters*** (waters of resting places).

- He causes us to lie down – no friction in the flock. There is no pecking order when in the presence of the Shepherd.
- This speaks of food for my body and my soul, the best food for sheep! He understands all our needs to be fed, He feeds us spiritually and physically!
- Sheep don't like rapids! They like quiet waters – picture of peace and contentment. We live in a frenzied world. Where do we go to quiet down? We need a quiet place, a place of refreshment and that's at the feet of Jesus!

***Psa 23:3 He restores my soul*** (deep part of my being); ***He leads*** (prodding encouraging) ***me in the paths*** (old proven, well-worn paths) ***of righteousness For His name's sake.*** (From provision to guidance)

- Is your soul cast down right now? That I've got nothing left! When our soul grows sorrowful, He revives it! When it is sinful, He sanctifies it! When it is weak, He strengthens it! **He** does it!

- We are not the heroes of every story! David, later in life, has no regrets for following the LORD on the path, He has put in front of us. Thank You for leading me on Your path of righteousness. There is a relationship in all of this! Great leaders are great followers.

*Psa 23:4 Yea, though (even when) I walk through the valley of the shadow of death (place of deepest darkness - passage to higher ground!), I will fear no evil; For You are with me; Your rod and Your staff (crook, care for the sheep), they comfort me.*

- This verse has been a comfort to many on a dying bed. Every word in it has a wealth of meaning.
- Walking in circumstances in life, right up to death. We become more conscious of Him than every before.
- There can be that time when every other voice will fail us, as we may go into a coma, getting ready to go to heaven. LORD, You will shepherd me all the way to heaven!

*Psa 23:5 (last phase – communion) You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; My cup runs over. (a reflection of heaven)*

- Laws of hospitality would allow one to have protection even if he were an enemy of his host in the tent. Oh, the peace, which our LORD gives to His people, even in very difficult and trying circumstances.
- To go day by day to God the Holy Spirit, that we may have our heads anointed with oil.
- Oil like a medicine, was a blessing!
- He gives us not only a full cup, but a cup that runs over. There was always a full cup of blessings.

*Psa 23:6 Surely (Only) goodness and mercy shall follow (pursue, hunt) me All the days of my life; And I will dwell (settle down, come back to, come home to), in the house of the LORD Forever.*

- Confidence in the future – goodness and mercy! It will be there, not matter what! Good is ahead!
- Our Shepherd is leading us home!

#### SUMMARY:

- The point that David is making in *Psalm 23*, is that **whatever inadequacies a lamb has, they can completely be made up by that lamb's shepherd!** That point is related to our lives. Whatever inadequacies we have, however the greatness of our needs, whatever our vulnerabilities, whatever our weaknesses, whatever our limitations in life and humanity, but when the LORD is our shepherd, **He is greater than all of those things!** He is the Great Equalizer! He overwhelms our weaknesses with His strength.
- David here describes the life of the person who makes the LORD their shepherd. Of course, the Bible says the volume of the Book testifies of Jesus. It's a picture of Him, ultimately, as **He describes Himself in John Chapter Ten as the Good Shepherd. ...My sheep hear My voice...and they follow Me...one flock, one Shepherd!**

*Pass Me Not O Gentle Savior – Frances J. Crosby – sung by Gaither Choir-Romance Wilson*

*Pass me not, O gentle Savior, Hear my humble cry; While on others Thou art calling, Do not pass me by.*

*Refrain: Savior, Savior, Hear my humble cry, While on others Thou art calling, Do not pass me by.*

*Thou the spring of all my comfort, More than life to me, Whom have I on earth beside Thee, Whom in Heav'n but Thee. (Refrain – 2X)*

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**PRAY FOR OUR CHURCH/PERSECUTED CHURCH; SCHOOLS; POLICE OFFICERS/MILITARY; ISRAEL:**