

"THE BOOK OF PSALMS"

Psalm 23 - The Shepherd Psalm

Objectives in Studying This Psalm

- 1) To remind ourselves of the wonderful provision, protection, and preservation the Lord furnishes His people
- 2) To note how this psalm foreshadows the blessings provided by "The Good Shepherd", Jesus Christ

Summary

This much-beloved psalm of David makes use of the **Shepherd** motif to describe the deep faith and hope available to the child of God, made possible the watchful care of the Lord. It also mixes other metaphors, especially that of a gracious **Host**.

As outlined below, David begins by illustrating the **provision** of the Lord, both physical and spiritual (**1-3**). David then describes the **protection** of the Lord, as he travels through dangerous places and in the presence of enemies (**4-5**). The psalm ends with an expression of faith and hope in the Lord's **preservation**, that God will furnish the goodness and mercy needed throughout life, so that he made abide in the house of the Lord forever (**6**).

The Christian sees in this psalm a wonderful foreshadowing of "**The Good Shepherd**", Jesus Christ, who gave His life for His sheep and even now watches over them (cf. **Jn 10:11-15; He 13:20; 1 Pe 2:21-25; 5:4**).

A good follow-up to this psalm is **Psalm 100**, which expresses the praise we should render to God as His people and the sheep of His pasture.

Outline

I. The Shepherd's Provision (23:1-3)

A. No lack of physical necessities (1-2)

1. The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want (cf. **Lk 12:22-32**)
2. He makes me to lie down in green pastures
3. He leads me beside the still waters (cf. **Re 7:17**)

B. No lack of spiritual necessities (3)

1. He restores my soul (cf. **Re 3:19**)
2. He leads me in the paths of righteousness, for His name's sake (cf. **1 Co 10:13**)

II. The Shepherd's Protection (23:4-5)

A. Through the valley of the shadow of death (4)

1. I will fear no evil, for He is with me (cf. **He 13:5-6**)
2. His rod and staff comfort me (cf. **He 12:5-11**)

B. In the presence of enemies (5)

1. He prepares a table before me in their presence (cf. **Jn 16:33**)
2. He anoints my head with oil, my cup runs over (cf. **Ep 3:20**)

III. The Shepherd's Preservation (23:6)

A. All the days of one's life (6a)

1. Surely goodness and mercy will follow me
2. All the days of my life (cf. **2 Ti 4:18**)

B. Forever (6b)

1. I will dwell in the house of the Lord
2. Forever (cf. **Jn 14:1-3**)

Review Questions for the Psalm

1) What are the main points of this psalm?

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2) Who is the author of the psalm?

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3) What is the main figure used in this psalm? The main idea? (1)

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4) How does David illustrate the physical necessities provided by the Lord? (2)

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5) How does David describe the spiritual necessities provided by the Lord? (3)

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6) What protection or comfort does the Lord provide when one walks through the valley of the shadow of death? (4)

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7) What provisions does the Lord furnish in the presence of one's enemies? (5)

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8) What does the Lord provide to ensure that He will preserve us in this life? (6)

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9) What wonderful hope do we have for eternity? (6)

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