

The LORD is my Shepherd. Psalm 23:1–6

Psalm 23:1–6 (NKJV)

- 1 The LORD *is* my shepherd; I shall not want.
- 2 He makes me to lie down in green pastures;
He leads me beside the still waters.
- 3 He restores my soul;
He leads me in the paths of righteousness
For His name's sake.
- 4 Yea, 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.
- 5 You prepare a table before me in the presence
of my enemies;
You anoint my head with oil;
My cup runs over.
- 6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
All the days of my life;
And I will dwell in the house of the Lord
Forever.

Introduction

Psalm 23 is the most beloved and well known Psalm of all 150 Psalms. More than Psalm 1 or 19 or 51, 119, and 139. It has been memorized by millions.

Psalm 23 is the John 3:16 of the Old Testament.

The Charles Haddon Spurgeon called it “the pearl of psalms.”

Nineteenth-century preacher and commentator J. J. Stewart Perowne observed that “there is no psalm in which the absence of all doubt, misgiving, fear [and] anxiety is so remarkable.”

Alexander Maclaren called it a “sunny little psalm. (that) has dried many tears and supplied the mould into which many hearts have poured their... faith.”³

Boice, J. M. (2005). [*Psalms 1–41: An Expository Commentary*](#) (p. 207). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

This Psalm is known by more people who never attend a church and consider themselves unbelievers than any other Psalm.

It is often quoted at the funerals of those that do not know Christ and eternally separated from God forever.

It is also one of the most abused Psalms.

Some use it to give false hope to those who do not know God and are lost. The assumption is that God will shepherd all people, no matter your religious beliefs through the valley of the shadow of death and then enter the House of the Lord for ever.

Others wrongly believe that it teaches that God has promised prosperity and happiness all the days of your life. But this cannot be further from the truth.

While still others isolate this Psalm from its canonical context and remove it from the very reason this Psalm can be True.

Psalm 23 is preceded by Psalm 22 and followed by Psalm 24.

This may seem simplistic and obvious, but it is so often missed.

Psalm 22 is the Psalm of crucifixion and Promise of Salvation to all the ends of the earth, It specific and Prophetic

Psalm, 23 has meaning and fulfillment because of Psalm 22.

Psalm 24 will happen, because of the fulfillment of Psalm 22 and the Promise of Psalm 23

Spurgeon, C. H

The position of this Psalm is worthy of notice. It follows the twenty-second, which is peculiarly the Psalm of the Cross. There are no green pastures, no still waters on the other side of the twenty-second Psalm. It is only after we have read, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me!” that we come to “The Lord is my Shepherd.” We must by experience know the value of the blood-shedding, and see the sword awakened against the Shepherd, before we shall be able truly to know the sweetness of the good Shepherd’s care.

Spurgeon, C. H. (n.d.). [*The treasury of David: Psalms 1-26*](#) (Vol. 1, p. 353). London; Edinburgh; New York: Marshall Brothers.

Psalm 22 pictures the Good Shepherd dying for the sheep (John 10:11); Ps. 23 the Great Shepherd caring for the sheep (Heb. 13:20–21); and Ps. 24 the Chief Shepherd coming for the sheep (1 Peter 5:4). In other words, Christ died for us (past), Christ lives for us (present), and Christ will come for us (future).

Wiersbe, W. W. (1993). [*Wiersbe’s Expository Outlines on the Old Testament*](#) (Ps 22–24). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

Using the images of a shepherd and a gracious host, David reflected on the many benefits the Lord gave him in the dangers of life, and concluded that

God's persistent, loving protection would restore him to full communion.

Ross, A. P. (1985). [Psalms](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 1, p. 811). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

Depth and strength underlie the simplicity of this psalm. Its peace is not escape; its contentment is not complacency: there is readiness to face deep darkness and imminent attack, and the climax reveals a love which homes towards no material goal but to the Lord himself.

Kidner, D. (1973). [Psalms 1–72: an introduction and commentary](#) (Vol. 15, p. 127). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

Under a metaphor borrowed from scenes of pastoral life, with which David was familiar, he describes God's providential care in providing refreshment, guidance, protection, and abundance, and so affording grounds of confidence in His perpetual favor

Jamieson, R., Fausset, A. R., & Brown, D. (1997). [Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible](#) (Vol. 1, p. 354). Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.

THIS psalm was written by David, either when he was in distressed circumstances, being persecuted by Saul, and was in the forest of Hareth, 1 Sam. 22:5. as some think

Gill, J. (1810). [An Exposition of the Old Testament](#) (Vol. 3, p. 626). London: Mathews and Leigh.

1. The Person who is My Shepherd
2. The Provision of My Shepherd
3. The Protection of My Shepherd.
4. The Preparation of My Shepherd.

I. The Person who is My Shepherd

¹ The **LORD** is my shepherd;

occupies here the first and emphatic place

Kidner, D. (1973). [*Psalms 1–72: an introduction and commentary*](#) (Vol. 15, p. 127). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

LORD

Yhvh: the proper name of the God of Israel

Original Word: יהוה

Part of Speech: Proper Name

Transliteration: Yhvh

Phonetic Spelling: (yeh-ho-vaw')

Definition: the proper name of the God of Israel

This is the personal Covenant name of God.

It speaks of His Eternal presence. The

Sovereign Eternal Omnipresent, Omnipotent

God who is the creator and King of the

Universe.

The all sufficient one who creates for His mere pleasure and glory and yet needs nothing.

¹ The LORD *is* my **shepherd**;

He is called in this text
Shepherd.

Spurgeon, C. H.

What condescension is this, that the Infinite Lord assumes towards his people the office and character of a Shepherd

Spurgeon, C. H. (n.d.). [The treasury of David: Psalms 1-26](#) (Vol. 1, p. 353). London; Edinburgh; New York: Marshall Brothers.

David uses the most comprehensive and intimate metaphor yet encountered in the Psalms, preferring usually the more distant ‘king’ or ‘deliverer’, or the impersonal ‘rock’, ‘shield’, etc.; whereas the shepherd lives with his flock and is everything to it: guide, physician and protector.

Kidner, D. (1973). [Psalms 1–72: an introduction and commentary](#) (Vol. 15, p. 127). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

This would have been very familiar to the readers of this Psalm. David, who wrote it was himself a shepherd.

David sees in the LORD the qualities of a Shepherd who loves his sheep, tends and feeds his sheep, and provides and protects them from threats and danger.

In Israel, as in other ancient societies, a shepherd's work was considered the lowest of all works. If a family needed a shepherd, it was always the youngest son, like David, who got this unpleasant assignment. Shepherds had to live with the sheep twenty-four hours a day, and the task of caring for them was unending. Day and night, summer and winter, in fair weather and foul, they labored to nourish, guide, and protect the sheep.

Boice, J. M. (2005). *Psalms 1-41: An Expository Commentary* (pp. 207–208). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

“So close is the connection between shepherd and sheep that to this day Middle Eastern shepherds can divide flocks that have mingled at a well or during the night simply by calling their sheep, whereupon they follow their shepherd's voice. Shepherds are inseparable from their flocks, and their work is demanding, solitary and sometimes dangerous (Gen. 31:38–40; 1 Sam. 17:34–35).

Waltke, B. K., Houston, J. M., & Moore, E. (2010). *The Psalms as Christian Worship: A Historical Commentary* (p. 437). Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company.

Conditions of shepherding in ancient Israel, however, differed from most modern practices:

“Sheep were not fenced in and left to fend for themselves. Instead they were totally dependent on shepherds for protection, grazing, watering, shelter and tending to injuries. In fact, sheep would not survive long without a shepherd

Waltke, B. K., Houston, J. M., & Moore, E. (2010). [*The Psalms as Christian Worship: A Historical Commentary*](#) (p. 437). Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company.

The constant need of the attention of the Shepherd, speaks loudly to the nature of the sheep. They are vulnerable, ignorant, clumsy, fearful, needy. Without the shepherd, they would be likely starve, die of thirst, be attacked by predators, and be lost.

....Jehovah has chosen to be our shepherd, David says. The great God of the universe has stooped to take just such care of you and me.

Boice, J. M. (2005). [*Psalms 1-41: An Expository Commentary*](#) (pp. 207-208). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

Luke 15 gives some indication of just how much need there is for the Shepherd to care for His sheep. And this speaks to the Lord's desire to pursue and find and care for His lost sheep.

Luke 15:2-6 (NKJV)

² And the Pharisees and scribes complained, saying, “This Man receives sinners and eats with them.” ³ So He spoke this parable to them, saying:

⁴ “What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he loses one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness, and go after the one which is lost until he finds it? ⁵ And when he has found *it*, he lays *it* on his shoulders, rejoicing. ⁶ And when he comes home, he calls together *his* friends and neighbors, saying to them, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost!’

Psalm 80:1 (NKJV)

¹ Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel,

Ezekiel 34:11–12 (NKJV)

¹¹ ‘For thus says the Lord God: “Indeed I Myself will search for My sheep and seek them out. ¹² As a shepherd seeks out his flock on the day he is among his scattered sheep, so will I seek out My sheep and deliver them from all the places where they were scattered on a cloudy and dark day.

Psalm 79:13 (NKJV)

¹³ So we, Your people and sheep of Your pasture,

Will give You thanks forever;
We will show forth Your praise to all generations.

Isaiah 40:11 (NKJV)

¹¹ He will feed His flock like a shepherd;
He will gather the lambs with His arm,
And carry *them* in His bosom,
And gently lead those who are with young.

Jeremiah 23:3–4 (NKJV)

³ “But I will gather the remnant of My flock out of all countries where I have driven them, and bring them back to their folds; and they shall be fruitful and increase. ⁴ I will set up shepherds over them who will feed them; and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, nor shall they be lacking,” says the Lord.

In the New Testament Christ is call the
Shepherd

John 10:11 (NKJV)

¹¹ “**I am the good shepherd.** The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep.

Hebrews 13:20 (NKJV)

²⁰ Now may the God of peace who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant,

1 Peter 2:25 (NKJV)

²⁵ For you were like sheep going astray, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

1 Peter 5:4 (NKJV)

⁴ and when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away.

¹ The LORD is my shepherd;

He is not just a Shepherd or any shepherd.

He is MY Shepherd.

We are not only His Flock as

Ezekiel 34:31 (NKJV)

³¹ “You are My flock, the flock of My pasture; you *are* men, *and I am* your God,” says the Lord God.

But He is MY GOD and MY Shepherd.

He is not the Shepherd of the World, but the Shepherd of Me. This means He specially

watches out for me. Cares for me. Provides for Me. Nourishes me. Loves Me. Protects Me. He has a 24 hr 7 day a week watch over me.

From the eternal and sufficient resources of the Everlasting Shepherd, He does 3 things on behalf of His sheep.

1. Provides
2. Protects
3. Prepares

2. The Provision of My Shepherd

- 1 The Lord *is* my shepherd; **I shall not want.**

chaser: to lack, **need, be lacking, decrease**

Original Word: חָסַר

Part of Speech: Verb

Transliteration: chaser

Phonetic Spelling: (khaw-sare')

Definition: to lack, need, be lacking, decrease

to diminish, devoid, without, deprived, run dry, continually decrease.

Sheep are some of the most helpless creatures and without the shepherd, they would lack everything. But our God who is our Good Shepherd, shall supply all our needs. We will not go lacking or wanting.

Psalm 34:9–10 (NKJV)

⁹ Oh, fear the Lord, you His saints!

There is no want to those who fear Him.

¹⁰ The young lions lack and suffer hunger;

But those who seek the Lord shall not lack any good *thing*.

Psalm 84:11 (NKJV)

¹¹ For the Lord God *is* a sun and shield;

The Lord will give grace and glory;

No good *thing* will He withhold

From those who walk uprightly.

Matthew 6:33 (NKJV)

³³ But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. ³⁴ Therefore do not worry about tomorrow,

Luke 12:30–32 (NKJV)

³⁰ For all these things the nations of the world seek after, and your Father knows that you need these

things. ³¹ But seek the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added to you.

³² “Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

Romans 8:32 (NKJV)

³² He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?

Philippians 4:19 (NKJV)

¹⁹ And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

With the image of the Shepherd and the sheep in mind, David continues to grant us the beautiful picture of the Gracious, loving and gentle care of God for His people.

from verse to verse, David switches from the Sheep and the care of the Shepherd, to the Soul and the care of the LORD.

2 He makes me to lie down in green pastures;

(“pasture,” here a countable plural, *ne’ôf*) designates a grazing place and connotes delightful and rich provisions. “Green,” a gloss for *deše’*, refers to green vegetation: “to the new fresh grass that sprouts after the rains have fallen on Israel ... (Isa. 15:6). Grass can sprout in the steppe ..., which then serves as pastureland ... for livestock (Joel 2:21–22).” The greenness of vegetation is an aesthetic delight as well as a functional prerequisite to life. The plural suggests the Shepherd never runs out of finding green pastures for his sheep.

Waltke, B. K., Houston, J. M., & Moore, E. (2010). [*The Psalms as Christian Worship: A Historical Commentary*](#) (p. 438). Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company.

After the morning grazing, sheep typically lie down for several hours at midday in a shady or cool place (Song 1:7). And so the good Shepherd *allows me to rest* (*yarbîšēnî*, see n. 66; cf. Gen. 33:13), a situation that assumes the sheep is sated. Driven hard for one day, a sheep dies (Gen. 33:13).

Waltke, B. K., Houston, J. M., & Moore, E. (2010). [*The Psalms as Christian Worship: A Historical Commentary*](#) (p. 438). Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company.

Phillip Keller is a pastor and author who for eight years was himself a shepherd. Out of that experience he has written *A Shepherd Looks at*

Psalm 23. It throws light on this and other statements.

Sheep do not lie down easily, Keller says. In fact, “It is almost impossible for them to be made to lie down unless four requirements are met. Owing to their timidity they refuse to lie down unless they are free of all fear. Because of the social behavior within a flock sheep will not lie down unless they are free from friction with others of their kind. If tormented by flies or parasites, sheep will not lie down. Only when free of these pests can they relax. Lastly, sheep will not lie down as long as they feel in need of finding food. They must be free from hunger.”

Fear. Friction. Flies. Famine. Sheep must be free from each of these to be contented. And as Keller notes, only the shepherd can provide the trust, peace, deliverance, and pasture that is needed to free the sheep from them.

Boice, J. M. (2005). [*Psalms 1–41: An Expository Commentary*](#) (p. 209). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

It is worthy to note that, the psalm doesn't begin with the shepherd taking the sheep out can finding green grass to eat, but rather to rest. But righty so, because the christian live begins with rest.

Rest from legalism

Rest from Religion

Rest from Bondage to Sin

Rest from the constant barrage of sinful additions

Rest from the heavy guilt of sin

Rest from the doubts of ones relationship with God

Rest from Conviction

The religion of Judaism in the time of Jesus had 100s of laws, very detailed laws that burdened the people of Israel. The Sabbath was no longer a day of rest and the worship of God no longer a joy. It was a burden filled with guilt and oppressive religion of self-righteous, man centered religion.

Matthew 11:28–30 (NKJV)

²⁸ Come to Me, all *you* who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For My yoke *is* easy and My burden is light.”

labor — **Original Word:** κοπιᾶω P.A.PT

Part of Speech: Verb

Transliteration: kopiaó

Phonetic Spelling: (kop-ee-ah'-o)

Cognate: 2872 kopiáō (from [2873](#) /kópos, "exhausting labor") – to labor until worn-out, depleted (exhausted). [See 2873](#) (kopos).

are heavy laden **Original Word:** φορτίζω Pf P. PT.

Having been loaded down.

Phonetic Spelling: (for-tid'-zo)

Cognate: 5412 phortízō – overload (pack up), causing someone to be (literally) "weighted-down."

[See 5413](#) (phortion).

Note:

There are warning in the NT. that those that do not believe will not enter into rest.

Hebrews 4:1 (NKJV)

4 Therefore, since a promise remains of entering His rest, let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of it.

2 He makes me to lie down in green pastures;

Clearly implied by the green pastures and the being caused to lie down, its satisfaction.

The sheep are full, they are not hungry.

Ezekiel 34:15 (NKJV)

¹⁵ I will feed My flock, and I will make them lie down,” says the Lord God.

The green grass the the pastures is a clear reference to the food for the sheep, and is analogous to the food for the Soul. The Word of God.

Thats why Paul and Peter picked up on this. The Elder in the church is to Feed the Flock The Word of God.

Acts 20:28 (NKJV)

²⁸ Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.

John 21

Peter told to Feed my lambs and fead my sheep.

1 Peter 5:2 (NKJV)

² Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly;

We can go further and say that the Lord provides a green pasture for his sheep every time the Word of God is truly preached. This challenges all who know the Lord to prize biblical preaching heartily. And it soundly rebukes all those ‘preachers’ who lead their people away from the green grass the Lord has provided in his Word to the brown, withered grass of human wisdom.

Ellsworth, R. (2006). [*Opening up Psalms*](#) (pp. 45–46). Leominster: Day One Publications.

¹ Peter 2:2–3 (NKJV)

² as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby, ³ if indeed you have tasted that the Lord *is* gracious.

2 He makes me to lie down in
green pastures;
He leads me beside the still waters.

the still waters—are, literally, “waters of “stillness,” whose quiet flow invites to repose. They are

contrasted with boisterous streams on the one hand, and stagnant, offensive pools on the other.

Jamieson, R., Fausset, A. R., & Brown, D. (1997). [*Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible*](#) (Vol. 1, p. 354). Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.

Rough, rapid and raging waters would scare the sheep. They are already skittish, fearful and easily startled. These waters would not refresh and cause rest but rather the opposite would happen. They would stay away.

Also, stagnant, dirty water would poison the sheep and could kill the sheep. So no refreshment there either.

God provides for his people not only food and rest, but refreshment also and pleasure. The consolations of God, the joys of the Holy Ghost, are these still waters, by which the saints are led, streams which flow from the fountain of living waters and make glad the city of our God. God leads his people, not to the standing waters which corrupt and gather filth, not to the troubled sea, nor to the rapid rolling floods, but to the silent purling waters;

Henry, M. (1994). [*Matthew Henry's commentary on the whole Bible: complete and unabridged in one volume*](#) (p. 773). Peabody: Hendrickson.

3 He **restores** my soul;

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

restores shub: to turn back, return

Original Word: שׁוּב

Part of Speech: Verb

Transliteration: shub

Phonetic Spelling: (shoob)

to restore v. — to bring back into original existence, use, function, or position.

Genesis 3:19 (NKJV)

¹⁹ In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread
Till you return to the ground,
For out of it you were taken;
For dust you *are*,
And to dust you shall **return.**”

Genesis 18:33 (NKJV)

³³ So the Lord went His way as soon as He had finished speaking with Abraham; and Abraham **returned** to his place.

Psalms 22:27 (NKJV)

²⁷ All the ends of the world

Shall remember and **turn** to the Lord,
And all the families of the nations
Shall worship before You.

Psalm 19:7 (NKJV)

⁷ The law of the Lord *is* perfect, **converting** the
soul;

The testimony of the Lord *is* sure, making wise the
simple;

Phillip Keller explains this by the situation known to shepherds as a “cast (or cast down) sheep.” What happens is this. “A heavy, fat or long-fleeced sheep will lie down comfortably in some little hollow or depression in the ground. It may roll on its side slightly to stretch out or relax. Suddenly the center of gravity in the body shifts so that it turns on its back far enough that the feet no longer touch the ground. It may feel a sense of panic and start to paw frantically. Frequently this only makes things worse. It rolls over even further. Now it is quite impossible for it to regain its feet.” In this position gases build up in the body, cutting off circulation to the legs, and often it is only a matter of a few hours before the sheep dies. The

only one who can restore the sheep to health is the shepherd.

Boice, J. M. (2005). *Psalms 1–41: An Expositional Commentary* (pp. 209–210). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

It is Only God who can turn us upright again.

3 He **restores** my soul;
He leads me in the paths of
righteousness
For His name's sake.

Notice that it is HE who restores my soul.

2 He makes me to lie down in green pastures;
He leads me beside the still waters.

3 He restores my soul;
He leads me in the paths of righteousness
He is the only means a soul can be restored,
converted and returned to its original created
state.

You are a soul in a body. You are not your body,
You are a living soul in a body. Who you
really are in life is a soul with thought word
and deed.

We are dead in sin prior to salvation, and are in need of new life, complete restoration to become the new man in Christ.

This is God's Work, not man.

You must be born from above, born again.

No matter how profound and important the world of psychiatry and psychology thinks it is, it can never convert the soul, it can never restore the soul.

Only God is the soul healer.

³ He restores my soul;

He leads me in the paths of righteousness

Sheep are foolish creatures. In fact, they are probably the most stupid animals on earth. One aspect of their stupidity is seen in the fact that they so easily wander away. They can have a good shepherd who can have brought them to the best grazing lands near an abundant supply of water, and they will still wander away to where the fields are barren and the water undrinkable. They are creatures of habit. They may be brought to good grazing land by their shepherd, but, having found it,

they may keep on grazing until every blade of grass and every root is eaten; the fields are ruined, and they themselves are impoverished. No other class of livestock requires more careful handling than do sheep. Therefore, a shepherd who will move them from field to field yet always keep them near an abundant supply of water is essential for their welfare.

In his translation of this psalm Martin Luther rendered the phrase “paths of righteousness” by *auf rechter Strasse*. The connotation is not just of a straight way, but of a right way: a righteous way. We stray by sinning, but God leads us into upright moral paths. Isaiah said,

We all, like sheep, have gone astray,
each of us has turned to his own way;
and the Lord has laid on him
the iniquity of us all (Isa. 53:6).

Boice, J. M. (2005). [*Psalms 1–41: An Expositional Commentary*](#) (p. 210). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

He does this through the Power of His word
and His word leads us to righteousness.

Righteousness restores the soul
Sin destroys the soul

Righteousness heals the soul
Evil hurts the soul
Righteousness renews the mind
Sin corrupts the mind.
Righteousness leads to life
Sin leads to Death.

Psalm 51:10–12 (NKJV)

- ¹⁰ Create in me a clean heart, O God,
And renew a steadfast spirit within me.
- ¹² Restore to me the joy of Your salvation,
And uphold me *by Your* generous Spirit.

Psalm 119:1–3 (NKJV)

- ¹ Blessed *are* the undefiled in the way, Who walk in
the law of the Lord!
- ² Blessed *are* those who keep His testimonies,
Who seek Him with the whole heart!
- ³ They also do no iniquity;
They walk in His ways.

Psalm 119:9 (NKJV)

- ⁹ How can a young man cleanse his way?
By taking heed according to Your word.

James 1:19–22 (NKJV)

¹⁹ So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; ²⁰ for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God.

²¹ Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.

²² But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.

Romans 12:2 (NKJV)

² And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what *is* that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

It is the Word of God that gives us the will of God that Restores the Soul of Man to the original created intent.

These Words are :

Psalms 19:10–14 (NKJV)

¹⁰ More to be desired *are they* than gold,
Yea, than much fine gold;

Sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.

¹¹ Moreover by them Your servant is warned,
And in keeping them *there is* great reward.

¹² Who can understand *his* errors?
 Cleanse me from secret *faults*.

¹³ Keep back Your servant also from presumptuous
sins;

Let them not have dominion over me.

Then I shall be blameless,

And I shall be innocent of great transgression.

¹⁴ Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of
 my heart

Be acceptable in Your sight,

O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer.

One last thought, which removes all doubt as to
 why the Lord does all of this.

Is it just for our comfort.

Is it just for our provision

Is it just to make us content and satisfied.

NO

all these are secondary at best.

The main reason is found at the end of verse 3

3 He restores my soul;
He leads me in the paths of
righteousness
For His name's sake.

It is for His Glory, for His Purpose for the Praise
of His name. You and I and our restored and
rested Soul are given this by grace and are
forever on display for His Glory

Psalm 79:9 (NKJV)

⁹ Help us, O God of our salvation,
For the glory of Your name;
And deliver us, and provide atonement for our
sins,
For Your name's sake!

Ephesians 1:4–6 (NKJV)

⁴ just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of
the world, that we should be holy and without blame
before Him in love, ⁵ having predestined us to
adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself,
according to the good pleasure of His will, ⁶ to the
praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made
us accepted in the Beloved.

Romans 11:36 (NKJV)

³⁶ For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen.

2. The Provision of My Shepherd

3. The Protection of My Shepherd.

4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil;

This verse is often used to comfort those who are dying, and it is not wrongly used in this way. God is certainly a source of comfort in a person's dying moments.

However, this verse primarily speaks of the shepherd's ability to protect his sheep in moments of danger. The picture, as Keller points out, is of the seasonal passage from the lowlands, where sheep spend the winter, through the valleys to the high pastures, where they go in summer. The valleys are places of rich pasture and much water, but they are also places of danger.

Wild animals lurk in the broken canyon walls. Sudden storms may sweep along the valley floors. There may be floods. Since the sun does not shine into the valley very well, there really are shadows which at any moment may become shadows of death.

It is important to note that “the valley of the shadow of death” is as much God’s right path for us as the “green pastures” which lie beside “quiet waters.” That is, the Christian life is not always tranquil nor, as we say, a mountain-top experience. God gives us valleys also. It is in the valleys with their trials and dangers that we develop character

Boice, J. M. (2005). *[Psalms 1–41: An Expository Commentary](#)* (p. 211). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

The shepherd knows that to provide for his sheep there will be danger. He has to take them where they would never go on their own. We should not be surprised that the Christian's life is full of trouble and danger. Danger from the devil, danger from the demons, danger from men, danger from doctrine, danger outside the church and sadly sometimes inside the church.

The Bible is replete with warnings about the dangers in Christian life.

Acts 20:29–31 (NKJV)

²⁹ For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. ³⁰ Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves. ³¹ Therefore watch,

Ephesians 6:11–12 (NKJV)

¹¹ Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. ¹² For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual *hosts* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*.

Hebrews 3:12–13 (NKJV)

¹² Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God; ¹³ but exhort one another daily, while it is called “*Today*,” lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

All of this and more would be enough to paralyze most Christians. Fear is a powerful thing and can cause the Church to cease being the church.

We too often fear the dangers of what men can do or even what we believe the devil can do and don't fear God enough.

There is a right kind of fear. A healthy fear. A needed fear.

Matthew 10:28 (NKJV)

²⁸ And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

Psalms 119:120 (NKJV)

¹²⁰ My flesh trembles for fear of You,
And I am afraid of Your judgments.

Isaiah 66:2 (NKJV)

² ...

“But on this *one* will I look:
On *him who is* poor and of a contrite spirit,
And who trembles at My word.

But so many can get fearful of their circumstances, family and co workers. Their diagnosis at the doctor can bring fear. Their anxieties can cause fear.

Death can cause fear.

The valleys are filled with shadows that have eyes staring out of the darkness and it would seem at any moment something will pounce on you and kill you.

Sometimes you can feel the breath of your enemy breathing down your neck

Yet the Bible declares over and over again in many different ways that we should not be characterized by fear, but rather trust.

And to be clear, what I do not mean is what I call “sloppy trust” the “Let go and Let God” approach... Or in the Reformed circles,

“I believe in the Sovereignty of God”

This kind of “sloppy trust” that says I don’t fear a car accident that can take my life, I trust God, so I will show my faith in the Sovereignty of God, by not putting on a seat belt.

Or

I have no fear of death, and I will trust God, so I won't go to the doctor, I won't take that medication, I won't because I have faith.

NO.....,

the way all of these things should be approached is,

I will do all I can that is common sense protection and the trust God get in the car with my seat belt and drive.

Or if I'm sick and there is a medication that works that will help, take the medication and trust God with your health.

I believe in the Sovereignty of God as strongly as the next Reformed Theologian, but that does not mean I don't use common sense and the means of seatbelts and medication and exercise to keep me healthy.

So what is the reason, why we don't have to fear?

Because...

4 Yea, 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.

Many commentators on Psalm 23 have noticed that the second person pronoun “you” replaces the third person pronoun “he” at this point. Earlier we read, “*He* makes me lie down ... *he* leads me beside quiet waters ... *he* guides me.” But now, “I will fear no evil, for *you* are with me; *your* rod and *your* staff, they comfort me” (italics added). We are never so conscious of the presence of God as when we pass through life’s valleys.

Boice, J. M. (2005). [*Psalms 1–41: An Expositional Commentary*](#) (p. 211). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

Isaiah 41:10 (NKJV)

¹⁰ Fear not, for I *am* with you;
Be not dismayed, for I *am* your God.
I will strengthen you,
Yes, I will help you,
I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.’

Psalm 46:1–2 (NKJV)

¹ God *is* our refuge and strength, A very present help in trouble.

2 Therefore we will not fear,
Even though the earth be removed,
And though the mountains be carried into the
midst of the sea;

Psalm 3:6–8 (NKJV)

6 I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people
Who have set *themselves* against me all around.

7 Arise, O Lord;
Save me, O my God!
For You have struck all my enemies on the
cheekbone;
You have broken the teeth of the ungodly.

8 Salvation *belongs* to the Lord.
Your blessing *is* upon Your people.

Matthew 28:20 (NKJV)

²⁰ teaching them to observe all things that I have
commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even
to the end of the age.” Amen.

Acts 18:9–10 (NKJV)

⁹ Now the Lord spoke to Paul in the night by a
vision, “Do not be afraid, but speak, and do not keep

silent; ¹⁰ for I am with you, and no one will attack you to hurt you; for I have many people in this city.”

4 Yea, 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.**

The Rod, is a club to beat away predators or kill them if need be. It is for protection from evil
The Staff was one with a crook, that would be used to maneuver or direct the sheep. or if they fell in a ditch or ravine to help grab them and get them out. Protection for Life

The Rod speaks of Gods power over evil and evil forces.

The Staff speaks of God gracious love, care and provision for His own.

With the staff He will guide you and pull you out of the ravine when needed and at times if the devil gets to close, to club him in the head.

These both speak of the Shepherds Rule and Reign in His Sovereign please both over our lives the evil world. We can take great Comfort in this.

1 John 4:4 (NKJV)

⁴ You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.

Romans 8:28–31 (NKJV)

²⁸ And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to *His* purpose. ²⁹ For whom He foreknew, He also predestined *to be* conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. ³⁰ Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.

³¹ What then shall we say to these things? If God *is* for us, who *can be* against us?

2. The Provision of My Shepherd

3. The Protection of My Shepherd.

4. The Preparation of My Shepherd.

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

All true believer have enemies. I can assure you
that if you do not love the world. Those of the
world will hate you.

John 15:18–19 (NKJV)

¹⁸ “If the world hates you, you know that it hated
Me before *it hated* you. ¹⁹ If you were of the world,
the world would love its own. Yet because you are
not of the world, but I chose you out of the world,
therefore the world hates you.

2 Timothy 3:12 (NKJV)

¹² Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ
Jesus will suffer persecution.

1 Peter 2:11–12 (NKJV)

¹¹ Beloved, I beg *you* as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul, ¹² having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by *your* good works which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation.

But even though we have enemies. We can be at peace and trust our Shepherd with our lives.

Some believe that this portion takes turn from The shepherd and the sheep to a Home and preparing for dinner. And that may be the case, and would fit with the theme of provision and protection.

But there might be another thing in David's mind.

Keller may be right when he sees this as the shepherd's preparation of the high tablelands or mesas where the sheep graze in summer. A good shepherd will prepare these before the sheep arrive, removing physical hazards, destroying poisonous plants, and driving predators away.

Keller also has a chapter in which he describes how ancient shepherds used a mixture of olive oil, sulfur,

and spices to protect their sheep from insects and promote the healing of infectious skin diseases.

Boice, J. M. (2005). [*Psalms 1–41: An Expository Commentary*](#) (p. 211). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

5 You **anoint** my head with oil;
My cup runs over.

anoint as in Heb., *makest fat*. That is, thou dost pour oil on my head so abundantly that it seems to be made fat with it. The expression indicates abundance. The allusion is to the custom of anointing the head on festival occasions, as an indication of prosperity and rejoicing and the whole is indicative of the Divine favour, of prosperity, and of joy

Barnes, A. (1870–1872). [*Notes on the Old Testament: Psalms*](#) (Vol. 1, p. 213). London: Blackie & Son.

My cup runneth over. It is not merely *full*; it runs over. This, too, indicates abundance; and from the abundance of the favours thus bestowed

Barnes, A. (1870–1872). [*Notes on the Old Testament: Psalms*](#) (Vol. 1, p. 213). London: Blackie & Son.

In biblical imagery oil and wine also speak of joy and prosperity, since olives and grapes take time to grow and oil and wine require time to prepare. In

periods of domestic turmoil or war these tasks were not performed.

Moreover, oil and wine were highly valued in the dry, barren lands of the Near East. In Palestine, where the sun shines fiercely most of the year and the temperatures continually soar up into the hundreds, the skin becomes cracked and broken and throats become parched. Oil soothes the skin, particularly the face. Wine clears the throat. When a guest arrived at the home of a friend, hospitality demanded the provision of oil and wine so the ravages of travel might be overcome

Boice, J. M. (2005). [*Psalms 1–41: An Expository Commentary*](#) (pp. 211–212). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

6 Surely goodness and mercy shall
follow me
All the days of my life;
And I will dwell in the house of the
Lord
Forever.

Because of the Care of the the Shepherd,
and His Provision and Protection,

These twin guardian angels will always be with me at my back and my beck. Just as when great princes go abroad they must not go unattended, so it is with the believer. Goodness and mercy follow him always —“*all the days of his life*”—the black days as well as the bright days, the days of fasting as well as the days of feasting, the dreary days of winter as well as the bright days of summer. Goodness supplies our needs, and mercy blots out our sins

Spurgeon, C. H. (n.d.). [*The treasury of David: Psalms 1-26*](#) (Vol. 1, p. 356). London; Edinburgh; New York: Marshall Brothers.

Psalm 30:11–12 (NKJV)

¹¹ You have turned for me my mourning into dancing;
You have put off my sackcloth and clothed me with gladness,

¹² To the end that *my* glory may sing praise to You and not be silent.

O Lord my God, I will give thanks to You forever.

Psalm 103:17 (NKJV)

¹⁷ But the mercy of the Lord *is* from everlasting to everlasting

On those who fear Him,

And His righteousness to children’s children,

2 Timothy 4:18 (NKJV)

¹⁸ And the Lord will deliver me from every evil work and preserve *me* for His heavenly kingdom. To Him *be* glory forever and ever. Amen!

And I will dwell in the house of the
Lord
Forever.

John 14:2–3 (NKJV)

² In My Father's house are many mansions; if *it were* not *so*, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, *there* you may be also.

THIS WORLD IS NOT MY HOME
Arr by Albert E Brumley

Verse 1:

This world is not my home, I'm just a passing
thru,
My treasures are laid up somewhere beyond the
blue;
The angels beckon me from Heaven's open
door,
And I can't feel at home in this world anymore.