

Psalm 23
“The LORD is my Shepherd”

This most beloved and magnificent Psalm of David is preceded by the Messianic Psalm 22. The prophecies of Christ’s suffering, death, and the very words from the cross precede Psalm 23, for apart from the redemptive work of Christ, no one can come unto the LORD (John. 14:6; Acts 4:12).

Verse 1 The English word LORD is all capitals, signifying it is the Hebrew YHWH. It is the personal and singular name of God in the Old Testament. Jesus’ statement in John 10:11 and 14 that He is the good shepherd is a claim of Deity. The present tense is consistent with the I AM of the burning bush (Ex. 3:14) and Jesus’ words (John 8:58). David knew the traits of a shepherd (1Sam. 17:34). The shepherd loves, owns, protects and provides for the sheep (John 3:16; 1Cor. 6:19-20; Phil. 4:19). David knew the LORD as **my** shepherd; therefore he would not want (Matt. 6:33, 7:7-8).

Verse 2 The green pastures are the truth of the scriptures wherein we are to meditate (Psalm 1; Matt. 4:4). The shepherd leads, so we must respond by following (Matt. 23:37; Acts 16:31). This is a picture of the sovereignty of God and human responsibility in perfect harmony.

Verse 3 The only One who can restore a soul is the LORD. Our response is to be obedient and filled with the Holy Spirit (Eph. 5:18-20). The result is an abundant and full life (John 10:10; Rom. 8:1; Eph. 2:4-6). We are to hunger and thirst after righteousness (Matt. 5:6).

Verse 4 We are never forsaken, even at the time of death (Rom. 8:38-39). Notice we walk through this valley; we do not stay there (Ps. 116:15). The rod and staff are symbolic of the Shepherd’s protection and remind us that He is always with us. Christ conquered death and through Him so will we (Rom. 6:2-5), for in Christ to die is gain (Phil. 1:21).

Verse 5 In the midst of enemies, trials and persecution, He gives us the peace that passes understanding (John 16:33; Phil. 4:4-7). Anointing the head signifies prosperity and rejoicing (Matt. 6:17; Lk. 7:46; Eph. 3:20).

Verse 6 The LORD is a fountain of love and grace and mercy and goodness. They will follow us until the end of this life. Whether the days are good or evil, we are complete in Christ (Col. 2:9-10). His mercy and grace

are there. As sons of the King, we will dwell with Him forever (John. 8:35, 14:1-4)!!! Praise His holy name!