

Psalms 23

10/16/12

Vs. 1 states the premise of the whole Psalm: If the LORD is an individual's "shepherd," Vs. 2-5 list the many responsibilities the LORD has undertaken for the "sheep;" Vs. 6 teaches the permanent blessing that comes to a faithful sheep. Psalm 23 is the most requested Bible passage to read at a funeral. It so speaks consolation that many a "battered soul" has found comfort in the troubling time of death. Once again, as a prophet, David writes of his "Lord" who was yet to come. Jesus Christ is this "shepherd," as the Apostle Peter wrote: "For you were like sheep going astray, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls (1 Peter 2:25).

Vs. 1 "The LORD *is* my shepherd; I shall not want."

The sad fact and harsh reality, however, is that not everybody is a "sheep" protected by the LORD as "shepherd!" Jesus set the limit: "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me" (John 10:27). Jesus set the price: "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep" (John 10:11). Since "the church of God [*is that*]" which He purchased with His own blood" (Acts 20:28), then everyone saved by the blood of Jesus Christ has been added to His church (Romans 6:3-4; Acts 2:38, 41, 47)! Those who are in the church of Christ must "seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness" and are promised food, drink, and clothing (Matthew 6:31-33).

Vs. 2 "He makes me to lie down in green pastures;"

A shepherd removes danger from the pasture. Jesus destroyed the work of the Devil (1 John 3:8; Hebrews 2:14-15).

Vs. 2 "He leads me beside the still waters."

Jesus spoken word calmed stormy seas (Mark 4:37-39), and His written word does the same (Colossians 3:15-17).

Vs. 3 "He restores my soul;"

Jesus healed bodies by miracles (Luke 4:40), and now heals souls who obey His Gospel (1 Peter 2:21-25; 3:20-22).

Vs. 3 "He leads me in the paths of righteousness For His name's sake."

Moses' Law did not contain "the promise by faith in Jesus Christ" which now saves (Galatians 3:21-29).

Vs. 4 "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; For You *are* with me;"

Jesus fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah 9:1-2 in Matthew 4:12-17 as He preached His coming kingdom. Jesus Christ is the light for the darkness and despair of sin (2 Corinthians 1:9-10; Luke 1:76, 79; John 1:1-5, 8-9; 8:12). The ominous nearness of death is overcome by nearness to the resurrected Jesus Christ.

Vs. 4 "Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me."

Jesus has the rod of authority to rule (Matthew 28:18-20; Hebrews 1:8 from Psalm 45:6-7) and the staff of protection (John 10:26-30).

All Scriptures and comments, unless otherwise noted, are based on the New King James Version.

The Fellowship Room

Vs. 5 "You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;"
Jesus established His supper for disciples to be eaten each week (Matthew 26:26-29; 1 Corinthians 11:20, 23-26; Acts 20:7).

Vs. 5 "You anoint my head with oil;"
Honored guests were perfumed (Luke 7:46) and Jesus' disciples at His table are dedicated with His blood (Hebrews 10:19-22).

Vs. 5 "My cup runs over."
Jesus provides the "living water" (Revelation 7:13-17).

Vs. 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."
Only Jesus Christ can promise "goodness and mercy" in this life, and that one may "dwell in the house of the LORD Forever." Jesus provides His disciples "goodness" (Romans 15:14) and "mercy" (Matthew 5:7; 1 Timothy 1:12-16) then "eternal life" (Mark 10:29-30; John 10:27-28).

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