

THE GOOD SHEPHERD (PART I)

PSALM 23 BIBLE STUDY | 9.9.19 | ALPHA BAPTIST CHURCH

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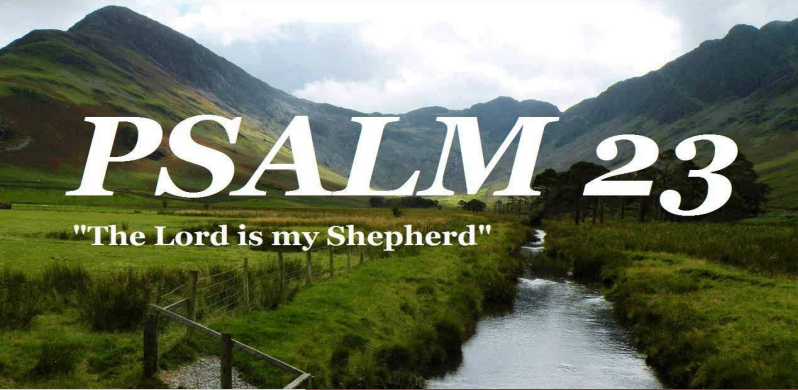
INTRODUCTION

What
do you
Want

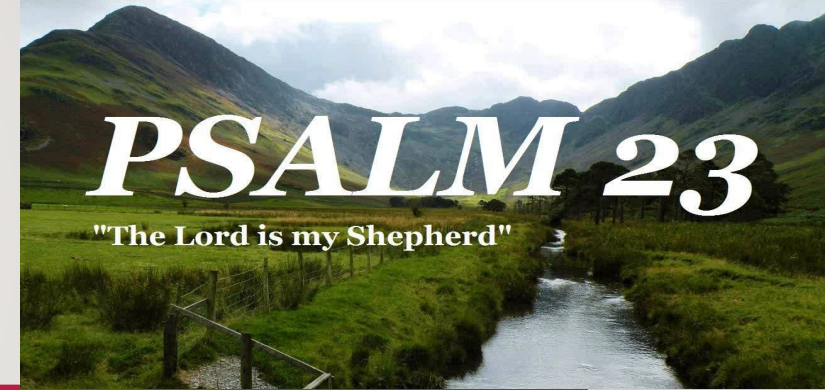


GOD
YOUR GRACE AND
MERCY BROUGHT ME
THROUGH

- Psalm 23: likely the most well-known passage in the Bible (Futato, 103) and most popular Psalm (Jacobson, 238; Longman, 134; Craigie, 208)
- Though its context is unclear (Goldingay 346; Craigie, 205), clearly it is a psalm of confidence and trust in the LORD (Longman, 133; Jacobson, 238; Goldingay, 345; Craigie, 205-6)
- The psalmist likely looks back at what God **has done** for His people (Wilcock, 87; Craigie, 206), and trusts that God will **continue** to be God
- The psalmist's ultimate desire is not the **presents** of God, but the **presence** of God (cf. Futato, 102; Kidner, 127; Jacobson, 244)



PSALM 23 (KJV)



- The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: He leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: Thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: And I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever. (Ps 23:1-6, KJV)

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PSALM 23:1 THE LORD

YHWH
The Name of God



- The **LORD** = YHWH, “the personal name of God” (TWOT, 210 cf. TDOT, 500); 1st word (Futato, 102; Kidner, 127; Goldingay, 347; *inclusio* in v. 6; Craigie, 206)
- Most scholars agree that it is pronounced “Yahweh” (TDOT, 500) coming from the Hb. verb meaning **to be, become** (היה hāyâ [hāyah]; TDOT, 513)
- But Moses said to God, “Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?” And God said, “**I will be with you**. And this will be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you will worship God on this mountain.” Moses said to God, “Suppose I go to the Israelites and say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you,’ and they ask me, ‘What is his name?’ Then what shall I tell them?” God said to Moses, “**I AM WHO I AM**. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: ‘**I AM** has sent me to you.’ ” (Ex 3:11-14, NIV; NIDOTTE, 1295-6)
- Alternatively: “I will be who I will be”, “I will cause to be what I will cause to be” (NIDOTTE, 1296; TLOT, 522; Freedman takes this view cf. TDOT, 513f.), or (likely best) “I will be who I am” / “I am who I will be” (NIDOTTE, 1296)
- God does not do act **arbitrarily**; He is **faithful** to Himself (NIDOTTE, 1296) and His character



SHEPHERD



- Sheep depend on their shepherd to find them pasture and water (Matthews et. al. IVP)
- Shepherds also provided shelter, medication, and help with birth (Matthews et. al. IVP)
- Without their shepherd, sheep are essentially helpless (Matthews IVP); they wouldn't survive (Waltke, 437)
- Shepherd implies authority to rule (Walton, 340) – a “shepherd-king” (Longman, 134)
- In the past, while Saul was king over us, you were the one who led Israel on their military campaigns. And the LORD said to you, ‘You will **shepherd** my people Israel, and you will become their **ruler**.’ ” (2 Sam 5:2, NIV; cf. 1 Ch 11:2; Walton, 340; Wilcock, 87; Longman, 134; cf. Is 44:28; Goldingay, 348)
- He chose David his servant and took him from the sheep pens; from tending the sheep he brought him to be the **shepherd** of his people Jacob, of Israel his inheritance. And David **shepherded** them with integrity of heart; with skillful hands he led them. (Ps 78:70-72, NIV; Wilcock, 86; Waltke, 436)



PSALM 23:1

DIVINE SHEPHERD



- People in the ancient Near East (ANE) often thought of their gods as shepherds (NIDOTTE, 1144; Walton, 340; Futato, 101; Longman, 134; Goldingay, 348; Craigie, 206)
- The LORD was often depicted as the caring Shepherd of His people Israel – who were supposed to trust Him like sheep (cf. Jer 31:10; NIDOTTE, 1144; cf. Ezek 34; UBS, 231; Longman, 134; Jacobson, 240; Goldingay, 348)
- Hear us, **Shepherd** of Israel, you who lead Joseph like a **flock**. (Ps 80:1ab, NIV; NIDOTTE, 1144; TLOT, 1247; TDOT, 88; Broyles, 124; Jacobson, 240; cf. Num 27:17; 1 Ki 22:17; Goldingay, 348)
- Save your people and bless your inheritance; be their **shepherd** and carry them forever. (Ps 28:9, NIV; TLOT, 1247; UBS, 231; TDOT, 88; cf. Ps 74:1; Broyles, 123; Longman, 134)
- Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the LORD our Maker; for he is our God and we are the people of his pasture, the **flock** under his care. (Ps 95:6-7abc, NIV; cf. Ps 79:13; Zec 9:16; Broyles, 123; Futato, 101; Craigie, 206)
- Your path **led** through the sea, your way through the mighty waters, though your footprints were not seen. You led your people like a **flock** by the hand of Moses and Aaron. (Ps 77:19-20, NIV; UBS, 231; Goldingay, 350)





PSALM 23:1

THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD



- *The LORD is my shepherd | I do not lack (Ps 23:1, AT)*
- Jacob: Then he blessed Joseph and said, “May the God before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked faithfully, the God who has been **my shepherd** all my life to this day, the Angel who has delivered me from all harm —may he bless these boys. May they be called by my name and the names of my fathers Abraham and Isaac, and may they increase greatly on the earth.” (Gen 48:15-16, NIV; cf. Gen 49:22-24; NIDOTTE, 1144; TDOT, 550; TLOT, 1247; TDOT, 88; Walton, 340; Wilcock, 86; Broyles, 125; Longman, 134; Craigie, 206)
- The most surprising word is **my** (Broyles, 125; Futato, 101) — usually it applied to an entire nation (Craigie, 206)
- The LORD, the Shepherd, provides Provision and Protection (Goldingay, 352); Sustenance and “security” (cf. Kraus)





GOD
PROVIDES

PSALM 23:1 I DO NOT LACK (ANYTHING)



GOD PROVIDES

- I shall not **want** can be misleading (UBS, 231). **Lack** (חָסַר | ḥāsēr): “have a need” (TWOT, 309; cf. BDB, 341), “not to have” (UBS, 231); word often used when describing God’s sufficient provision for His people (TWOT, 309)
- Manna & Quail: And when they measured it by the omer, the one who gathered much did not have too much, and the one who gathered little **did not have too little** [ḥāsēr]. Everyone had gathered just as much as they needed. (Ex 16:18, NIV; TWOT, 309; TDOT, 88 cf. Ps 34:10; Jacobson, 241; cf. Goldingay, 348)
- The LORD your God has blessed you in all the work of your hands. He has watched over your journey through this vast wilderness. These forty years the LORD your **God has been with you**, and you **have not lacked** [ḥāsēr] anything. (Dt 2:7, NIV; TWOT, 309; TDOT, 88; HALOT, 338; Broyles, 124; Futato, 101; Goldingay, 348; Craigie 206)

PSALM 23:1

(THEREFORE) I DO NOT LACK (ANYTHING)

- Observe the commands of the LORD your God, walking in obedience to him and revering him. For the LORD your God is bringing you into a good land—a land with brooks, streams, and deep springs gushing out into the valleys and hills; a land with wheat and barley, vines and fig trees, pomegranates, olive oil and honey; a land where bread will not be scarce and **you will lack [ḥāsēr] nothing** ; a land where the rocks are iron and you can dig copper out of the hills. (Dt 8:6-9, NIV; cf. TWOT, 309; NIDOTTE, 226-227; TDOT, 88; HALOT, 338; Goldingay, 348)
- For forty years you sustained them in the wilderness; they **lacked [ḥāsēr] nothing**, their clothes did not wear out nor did their feet become swollen. (Neh 9:21, NIV; NIDOTTE, 226-7; Futato, 101; Goldingay, 348)
- **Because** of trust in the LORD's provision and protection, (cf. TDOT, 88; UBS, 231), the psalmist can sing this with confidence (cf. Ps 34:10; Is 51:14; TWOT, 309; NIDOTTE, 226-227)
- “As the shepherd supplies all the needs of his sheep, so God supplies all the needs of [H]is people” (Longman, 135)



PSALM 23:2

THE GRASS IS ALWAYS GREEN



- *In pastures of new green grass He lets me lie down, | by waters of complete rest He guides me (Ps 23:2, AT)*
- **New green grass** (נֶשֶׁךְ | *deše*): “new fresh grass (**after the rain...**)” (NIDOTTE, 999 cf. TWOT, 199; 2 Sam 23:4; TDOT, 308-9)
- **Lie down** (רָבַח | *rābaṣ*): “lie stretched out” (BDB, 918)
- Shepherds had sheep rest after they finished grazing (Waltke, 438) and were full (Goldingay, 349)
- Tell me, you whom I love, where you graze your flock and where you **rest** [*rābaṣ*] your sheep at midday. (Song 1:7abc, NIV; TWOT, 830; Waltke, 438)
- **Makes me lie** can imply coercion and mislead (UBS, 232; cf. Ezek 34:15; Jacobson, 241; Goldingay, 349)
- The shepherd is not **forcing** the sheep take a nap!



PSALM 23:2

TAKE ME TO THE WATER



- **Waters of complete rest:** a resting place by the water (HALOT, 600; Goldingay, 350).
- **Guide** (נָהַל | *nāhal*): gently “lead with care” (TWOT, 559 cf. NIDOTTE, 44)
- He tends his flock like a **shepherd**: He gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them close to his heart; he **gently leads** [*nāhal*] those that have young. (Is 40:11, NIV; cf. Hos 4:16; Mic 7:14; TLOT, 1247; TDOT, 88; NIDOTTE, 44; HALOT, 675; Longman, 134; Goldingay, 349; Waltke, 439)
- They will neither hunger nor thirst, nor will the desert heat or the sun beat down on them. He who has compassion on them will **guide** [*nāhal*] them and lead them beside springs of **water**. (Is 49:10, NIV; HALOT, 675; BDB, 625; Goldingay, 349)
- **Rest** (מְנוּחָה | *měnûḥâ*): a term associated with the Promised Land (TDOT, 284), protection from enemies, etc. (Jacobson, 241)





PSALM 23:2

TAKE ME TO THE WATER



- In your **unfailing love** [תֹּן | ḥesed] you will lead the people you have redeemed. In your strength you will **guide** [nāhal] them to your holy **dwelling**. (Ex 15:13, NIV; HALOT, 675; cf. 2 Sam 15:25; Is 33:20; Broyles, 123; Futato, 101; Goldingay, 349; Craigie, 207; Waltke, 439)
- So they set out from the mountain of the LORD and traveled for three days. The ark of the covenant of the LORD went before them during those three days to find them a place to **rest** [mēnûḥâ] (Num 10:33, NIV; Broyles, 10:33; Futato, 101; Kidner, 127; Craigie, 207)
- But he brought his people out like a **flock**; he **led** them like **sheep** through the **wilderness**. He **guided** [nāhal] them safely, so they were unafraid; but the sea engulfed their enemies. And so he brought them to the border of his holy land, to the hill country his right hand had taken. He drove out nations before them and allotted their lands to them as an inheritance; he settled the tribes of Israel in their homes. (Ps 78:52-55, NIV; UBS, 231; Goldingay, 350)
- Green pastures & still waters imply rest & refreshment (Wilcock, 86), which **refresh the soul** (Goldingay, 350)





PSALM 23:3

SOUL



- In Hebrew, a **soul** (נֶפֶשׁ | *nepeš*) is not necessarily a disembodied spirit (as in Greek thought) but “breath, life, desire” (NIDOTTE, 133)
- Sometimes it literally means “breath” (NIDOTTE, 133); it is related to a word that means “throat” (TWOT, 588): Save me, O God, for the waters have come up to my **neck** [*nepeš*]. (Ps 69:1, NIV; TWOT, 588)
- Then God said, “I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food. And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds in the sky and all the creatures that move along the ground—everything that has the **breath** [*nepeš*] of life in it...” (Gen 1:29-30a, NIV; NIDOTTE, 133)
- And God said, “Let the land produce **living creatures** [*nepeš*] according to their kinds: the livestock, the creatures that move along the ground, and the wild animals, each according to its kind.” And it was so. (Gen 1:24, NIV; NIDOTTE, 133)
- Then the LORD God formed a man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a **living being** [*nepeš*]. (Gen 2:7, NIV; NIDOTTE, 133)
- **Soul** can represent a **whole person** (physical & nonphysical). Even a body that’s **not breathing**: [The high priest] must not enter a place where there is a dead **body** [*nepeš*]... (Lev 21:11a, NIV; NIDOTTE, 133)

PSALM 23 MY SOUL



- Soul can also simply mean **me** or **myself** or **I** (NIDOTTE, 133)
- Your statutes are wonderful; therefore **I** [*nepeš*] obey them. (Ps 119:129, NIV)
- I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, **I** [*nepeš*] know that full well. (Ps 139:14, NIV)
- I spread out my hands to you; **I** [*nepeš*] thirst for you like a parched land. (Ps 143:6, NIV)
- Soul can also refer to one's inner desire, will (NIDOTTE, 133), "appetite, emotion and passion" (BDB, 659; cf. TWOT, 587-9; Briggs, 209). Perhaps because panting breath is related to **desire** (cf. Jer 2:24; Prov 23:2, Eccl 6:7; Isa 5:14; Hab 2:5; Dt 6:5; NIDOTTE, 133)
- The **appetite** [*nepeš*] of laborers works for them; their hunger drives them on. (Pr 16:26, NIV)



PSALM 23:3 HE RESTORETH MY SOUL



- *My soul He refreshes. | He leads me in right(eous) tracks | for the sake of His Name (Ps 23:3,AT)*
- **Refresh** (שׁוּב | *šûb*): “repent, turn; return, go back”(qal) “bring back, restore”(polel)(NIDOTTE, 55 cf. BDB, 998)
- Could refer to repentance: “Even now,” declares the LORD, “**return** [*šûb*] to me with all your heart, with fasting and weeping and mourning.” (Joel 2:12, NIV; cf. Is 49:5; Ps 60:1; Kidner, 127)
- But likely “**to bring back liveliness, vitality**” (HALOT, 1431); “He causes my [*nepeš*] to return” (UBS, 232)
- Like a snow-cooled drink at harvest time is a trustworthy messenger to the one who sends him; he **refreshes** [*šûb*] **the spirit** [*nepeš*] of his master. (Pr 25:13, NIV; BDB, 661; TWOT, 589; cf. Lam 1:11, 16, 19; Kidner, 127)
- After Boaz married Ruth and they had a son, the women told her mother-in-law Naomi “He will **renew** [*šûb*] **your life** [*nepeš*] and sustain you in your old age.” (Ru 4:15a, NIV; TDOT, 510; BDB, 661; TLOT, 748)
- Refreshment implies there will be times of **hardship** (Broyles, 123)



PSALM 23:3 ON THE RIGHT TRACK

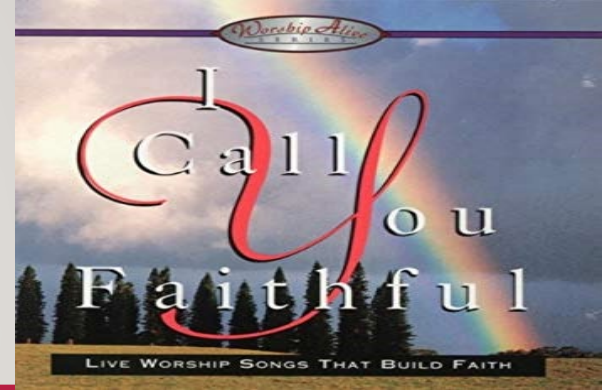


- The LORD will **guide** [nāḥâ] you always; he will satisfy your **needs** [nepeš] in a sun-scorched land and will strengthen your frame. You will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters never fail. (Is 58:11, NIV; NIDOTTE, 76)
- By day the LORD went ahead of them in a pillar of cloud to **guide** [nāḥâ] them on their way and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, so that they could travel by day or night. (Ex 13:21, NIV; TWOT, 568-9; cf. Ex 13:17, 15:13, 32:34; Dt 32:12; Neh 9:12; Ps 77:20, 78:14; Goldingay, 350; Waltke, 439)
- **Track** (מַעַלְמֵי | maʿgāl): lit. “**wagon track**” (HALOT, 609; cf. Waltke, 439; Briggs, 211), “**course**” (NIDOTTE, 1010); fig. “**course of action or life**” (BDB, 722, DCH, 379; Pr 4:26; 5:21; Longman, 135; Jacobson, 242)
- **Righteous tracks** likely refer to paths to the places of abundance for the sheep (UBS, 232-3). For humans: tracks that are “right with [H]im” (Motyer, 500) **morally** (Kidner, 128 cf. Longman, 135; Waltke, 439) and the right path **for our good** (Pr 4:11; Is 26:7 cf. Pr 2:9; Jacobson, 242).
- Both right **conduct** and right **consequences** (Waltke, 440)





PSALM 23:3 FOR HIS NAME'S SAKE



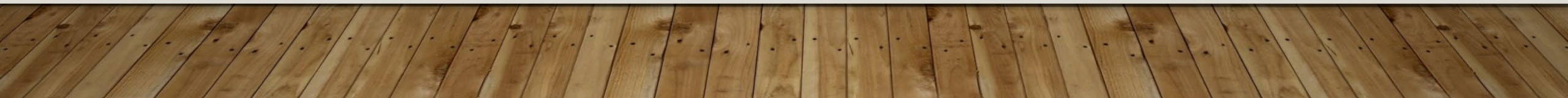
- Since you are my rock and my fortress, **for the sake of your name** lead [nāḥâ] and guide [nāḥal] me. Keep me free from the trap that is set for me, for you are my refuge. (Ps 31:3-4, NIV; TWOT, 559; NIDOTTE, 44; TDOT, 260; Jacobson, 242; Goldingay, 349, 350)
- Yet he saved them for **his name's sake**, to make his mighty power known. He **rebuked the Red Sea**, and it dried up; he led them through the depths as through a desert. (Ps 106:8-9, NIV; Broyles, 125; Craigie, 207)
- A shepherd may guide sheep through potentially dangerous paths to get to more abundant pasture (Futato, 103; Goldingay, 351)
- For His Name's sake = For the sake of His **reputation** (UBS, 233; Waltke, 440). Shepherding His people brings honor to God's Name (Futato, 103)
- God will be true to His character (UBS, 233; Motyer, 500) – The Great I AM is **faithful!** (Jacobson, 242; Goldingay, 350; cf. Ps 138:2; Waltke, 440)



PSALM 23:4

SHADOW OF DEATH?



- *Even though I walk through the darkest valley | I fear no evil because You are with me | Your rod and your staff comfort me (Ps 23:4, AT)*
 - Shadow of Death: (לַץ (šēl) = **shadow** + מוֹת (māwet) = **death** → (לַץ מוֹת | šalmāwet) **shadow of death** (cf. NIDOTTE, 807; Longman, 135). This can be misleading; likely doesn't refer to "clinical death" (Waltke, 441)
 - Yet likely just a **superlative**: "**dark as death**" (Kidner, 128); like saying "dead tired" (Goldingay, 351 cf. Craigie, 207)
 - Shadow of death refers to "**deep darkness**" (TWOT, 767) and "**extreme danger**" (BDB, 853), which can **include** the threat of death (TDOT, 398; Davis, 507; Job 38:17; Kidner, 128; Goldingay, 351) – but **not** necessarily (Futato, 101)
 - The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of **deep darkness** [šalmāwet] a light has dawned (Is 9:2, NIV; NIDOTTE, 809; Waltke, 441)
 - They did not ask, 'Where is the LORD, who brought us up out of Egypt and led us through the barren wilderness, through a land of deserts and ravines, a land of drought and **utter darkness** [šalmāwet], a land where no one travels and no one lives?' (Jer 2:6, NIV; cf. Ps 44:19; NIDOTTE, 809; BDB, 853; Broyles, 125; Kidner, 128; Craigie, 207; Waltke, 441)
 - Much broader application than times when one is near death (Longman, 133; Futato, 101)
- 



IMMANUEL
God with us

PSALM 23:4 GOD WITH US



IMMANUEL
God with us

- Switch from 3rd person to 2nd person: **You** are with me! (UBS, 233) – **more personal** language (Motyer, 500; Kidner, 129) with **more danger** (Jacobson, 243). 3rd person: 23:1-3, 6; 2nd person: 23:4-5 (Goldingay, 346)
- **With** (תָּמַע | 'immād) is related to the word **Immanuel** (עִמָּנוּאֵל) (cf. Is 7:14; TWOT, 675), “**God with us**” (Mt 1:23)
- [To Abraham] **I am with you** and will watch over you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you.” (Gen 28:15, NIV; Jacobson, 243)
- [To Jeremiah] But the LORD said to me, “Do not say, ‘I am too young.’ You must go to everyone I send you to and say whatever I command you. Do not be afraid of them, for **I am with you** and will rescue you,” declares the LORD. (Jer 1:8, NIV cf. 1:19; 15:20; 30:11; 42:11; 46:28; Jacobson, 243)
- So do not fear, for **I am with you**; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand. (Is 41:10, NIV; cf. Is 43:5; Hag 1:13, 2:4; Jacobson, 243; cf. Goldingay, 351)
- The psalmist will not fear because of the LORD’s **presence** (cf. Longman, 136; Waltke, 441)



PSALM 23:4

GUARDING & GUIDANCE



- **Rod** (שֵׁבֶט | *šēbet*): a club worn on a shepherd's belt (Matthews et. al. IVP; Kidner, 129; Goldingay, 351) that could be used as a weapon (2 Sam 23:21; TWOT, 897); shepherds would use it for their sheep's **protection** (TWOT, 897; UBS, 234; Motyer, 500; Wilcock, 86; Kidner, 129; Jacobson, 244; Craigie, 207; Waltke, 441) from **predators** (Walton, 340; Futato, 102; Longman, 136)
- David defended his sheep from lions and bears (1 Sam 17:34-37; Kidner, 129 cf. Ex 2:17-19; Goldingay, 348; Waltke, 437)
- **Shepherd** your people with your **staff** [*šēbet*], the flock of your inheritance, which lives by itself in a forest, in fertile pasturelands. Let them feed in Bashan and Gilead as in days long ago. "As in the days when you came out of **Egypt**, I will show them my wonders." (Mic 7:14-15, NIV; TWOT, 897; Broyles, 124; Longman, 134)
- **Staff** (מִשְׁעֶנֶת | *miš'enet*): used as a **support** for walking (UBS, 234 cf. Ex 21:19; Motyer, 500; Kidner, 129; cf. Zec 8:4; Goldingay, 351)
- Shepherd staffs were also used to guide sheep (Matthews et. al. IVP; Wilcock, 86; Futato, 101; Kidner, 129; Goldingay, 351; Craigie, 207), prodding them in the right direction (Walton, 340; Longman, 136)
- Comfort (נָחַם | *nāham*) here doesn't mean merely sympathize, but practically **encourage** (Waltke, 442)



PSALM 23:5 DIVINE DINNER



- *You prepare before me a table | in front of my enemies | You anoint with oil my head | my cup overflows (Ps 23:5, AT)*
- Switch from God the **Shepherd** to God the **Host** (UBS, 234; Wilcock, 86; Longman, 136; Jacobson, 244).
- **Prepare a table:** refers to a feast (UBS, 234) and generous hospitality (Gen 18:18; Ex 2:18-20; Walton, 341 cf. Pr 9:1-6; Longman, 136) – likely in a wealthy household (Waltke, 442)
- They willfully put God to the test by demanding the food they craved. They spoke against God; they said, “Can God really **spread a table** in the **wilderness**? (Ps 78:18-19, NIV; Broyles, 125; Jacobson, 244; Craigie, 207)
- May refer to the communal meal that followed thanksgiving offerings (Lev 7:15-16; Dt 12:5-7; 1 Sam 1:3-4, 9; Broyles, 124; Dt. 12:17-19, 14:22-29; Jacobson, 244; Goldingay, 352; Craigie, 208) or the Feast of Tabernacles (Futato, 103)
- I have seen you in the **sanctuary** and beheld your power and your glory. Because your love is better than life, my lips will glorify you. I will praise you as long as I live, and in your name I will lift up my hands. I will be fully satisfied as with the **richest of foods**; with singing lips my mouth will praise you. (Ps 63:2-5, NIV; cf. Ps 22:26; 36:8, 116:13, 17-18; Broyles, 124)





PSALM 23:5

DIVINE DINNER PROTECTION

- Many think this psalm is about a worshipper on a journey to the **temple** (or tabernacle) of the LORD (Broyles, 124). Would enemies be in the temple, though?
- David had a feast in the presence of his enemies (2 Sam 17:27-29; Motyer, 500; Wilcock, 86)
- **In front of** (תָּקַד | *neged*): likely implies a **taunting** tone (UBS, 234 cf. BDB, 617)
- This may be a feast around the time of a victory celebration – “with defeated rivals as **reluctant guests**” (Kidner, 129; Jacobson, 244) – where God is depicted as a “protective shepherd king” (2 Sam 9:7-13; 2 Ki 25:27-30; Walton, 341; cf. Jacobson, 244; Goldingay, 352; Waltke, 442)
- Back in the day, to eat with someone resulted in a lasting bond of mutual even covenantal loyalty (cf. Ex 24:8-12; **Lord’s Supper** - 1 Cor 11:25; Kidner, 129; Longman, 136)
- Psalmist sings confidently of God’s protection in hostile circumstances (v. 4) and hostile people (v. 5) (Motyer, 501)



PSALM 23:5

DIVINE HOSPITALITY



- **Anoint** (אָנײַט | *dāšēn*): lit. “make fat” (NIDOTTE, 1000; TDOT, 310; cf. TWOT, 199)
- Anointing a guest’s head with oil (אָנײַט) was the part of the ancient cultural etiquette for **hospitality** and honoring guests (UBS, 234; BDB, 1032; TDOT, 251; HALOT, 1568; NIDOTTE, 172; Futato, 101)
- The oil would give guests’ foreheads a certain shine and fragrance (Matthews et. al. IVP); Olive oil could be used to treat dry/cracked skin (Walton, 341)
- Simon the Pharisee vs. the Woman with the jar of alabaster: You did not **put oil on my head**, but she has poured perfume on my feet. (Lk 7:46, NIV; UBS, 234; Goldingay, 352; Briggs, 210)
- Cup is likely filled to the brim with wine (TDOT, 360; UBS, 235)
- **Overflow** (רָײַף | *rěwāyâ*): lit, “saturation” (TWOT, 836); fig. refers to “superabundance” (NIDOTTE, 1078 cf. Craigie, 208; Waltke, 443) and shows God’s **generosity** (UBS, 235)



PSALM 23:6 PURSUIT OF FAITHFULNESS



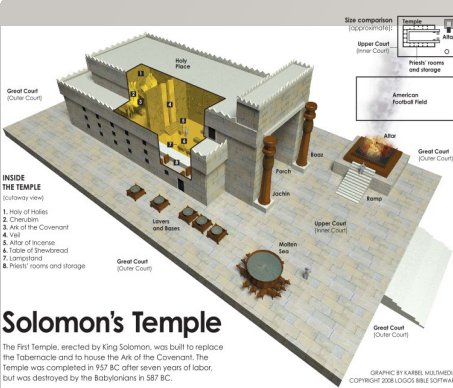
- Surely, goodness and loyal love will pursue me all the days of my life | and I will return to the house of the LORD for the length of my days (Ps 23:6, AT)
- **Loyal love** (תּוֹנָה | *hesed*): often translated “**lovingkindness**” (TWOT, 305; BDB, 339; Craigie, 208) or “**steadfast love**” (TWOT, 305; Kidner, 130). Refers to when a stronger party freely delivers a weaker party (Waltke, 443)
- **Pursue** (רָדַף | *rādap*): “follow” may be too weak of a translation (contra UBS, 235). The LORD’s goodness and loyal love “aggressively pursues” (Davis, 507 cf. Broyles, 124; Goldingay, 353)
- Normally it is enemies who **pursue** psalmists in order to **harm** them (Jacobson, 244; Goldingay, 353; Kraus, 308)
- My times are in your hands; deliver me from the hands of my enemies, from those who **pursue** [*rādap*] me. (Ps 31:15, NIV; cf. Ps 7:5, 35:3, 71:11, 109:16; Jacobson, 244; cf. Ps 7:1, 18:37; 69:26 cf. positive -- Ps 34:15, 38:20; Goldingay, 353)
- The LORD’s goodness and loyal love will chase after us **continually** (Goldingay, 353; Waltke, 443)



PSALM 23:5 FOR THE REST OF MY DAYS

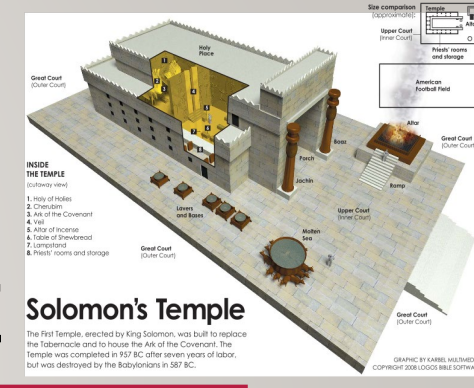


- **Length** (אָרֶךְ | 'ōrek): Lit. says “**to length of days**” (cf. Motyer, 501; Matthews et. al. IVP; Futato, 102; Kidner, 130), which fig. just means “a very long time” (UBS, 236)
- Some say this phrase may refer to “everlasting afterlife” (Ps 91:16, Is 53:10; TWOT, 72 cf. Ps 93:5; Lam 5:20; Is 53:10; Waltke, 444) and that the psalmist has confidence he will be with God in the next life (Davis, 507) – but this may be unlikely (Futato, 102)
- Yet, to have confidence that we’ll dwell with the LORD **forever** is not wrong (cf. Rom 8:35f.; Kidner, 130; Longman, 137)



PSALM 23:6

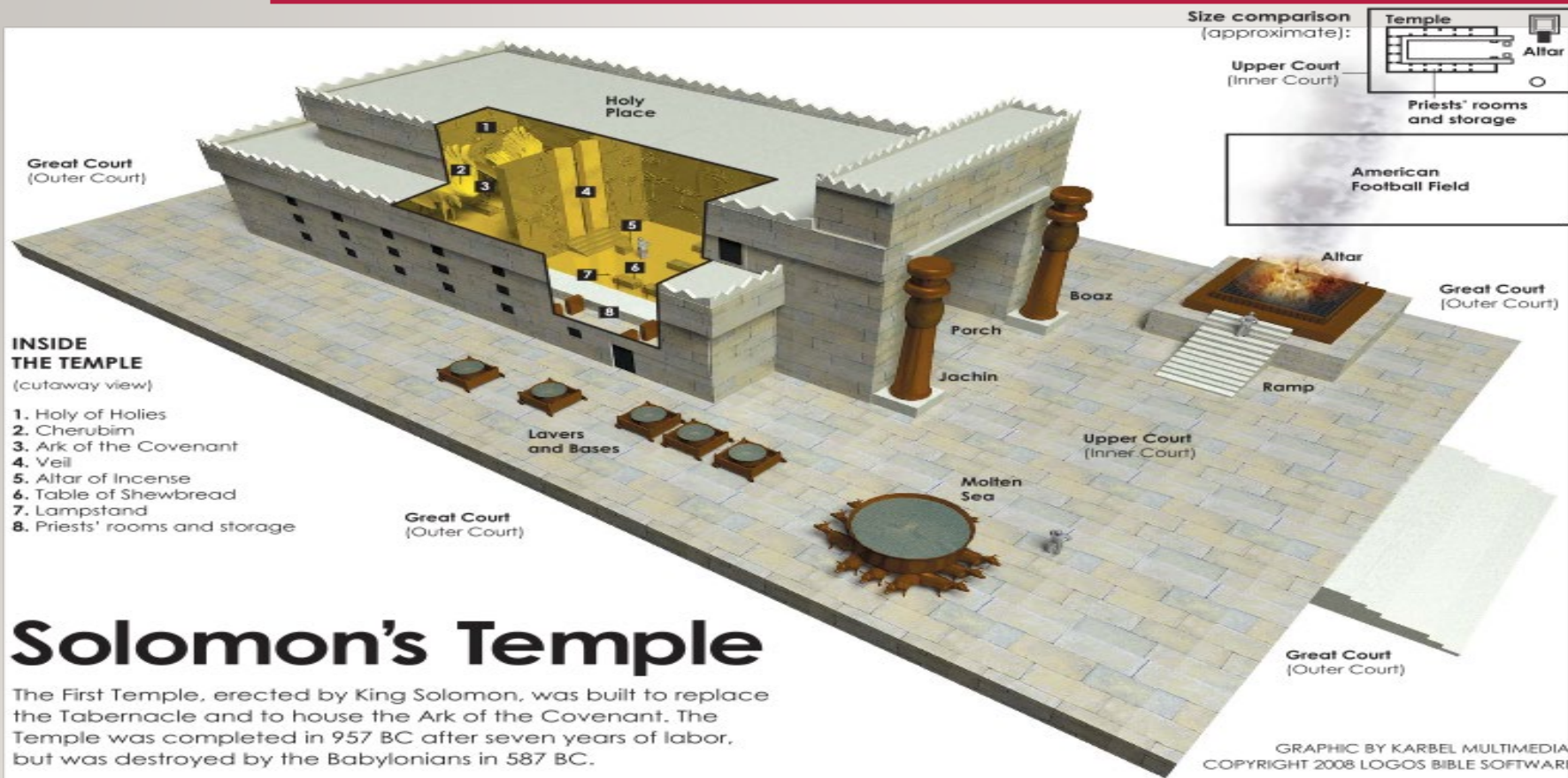
DWELL/RETURN TO THE LORD'S HOUSE



- Surely, goodness and loyal love will follow me all the days of my life | and I will return to the house of the LORD for the length of my days (Ps 23:6, AT)
- Verb may be **return** (שוב | *šûb* cf. MT; Broyles, 125; following pursuit; Waltke, 444) or **dwell** (יָשַׁב | *yāšab* cf. LXX) (Matthews et. al. IVP; Jacobson, 244). Look similar depending on conjugation (cf. UBS, 235-236; Motyer, 501; Futato, 101)
- **House of the LORD:** most likely refers to the Temple (UBS, 236; Walton, 341; Longman, 137)
- One thing I ask from the LORD, this only do I seek: that I may **dwell** [*yāšab*] in the **house of the LORD** all the days of **my life**, to gaze on the beauty of the LORD and to **seek him in his temple**. (Ps 27:14, NIV; Matthews IVP; Futato, 102)
- Know that the LORD is God. It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, the **sheep** of his pasture. Enter his **gates** with thanksgiving and his **courts** with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name. (Ps 100:3-4, NIV; Broyles, 123; Jacobson, 240)
- Either way, the final destination is in the presence of **God** (Jacobson, 244; Goldingay, 353)

PSALM 23:6

DWELL/RETURN TO THE HOUSE OF THE LORD



- **The LORD** begins and ends the psalm (Ps 23:1, 6; Futato, 102)
- For the length of his days, the psalmist wants to be in the presence of the LORD (UBS, 236; Longman, 137) – **continuously** (Walton, 341), “**time and [time] again**” (Matthews et. al IVP)
- God’s **presence** is the ultimate **present**



1ST AND 2ND EXODUS



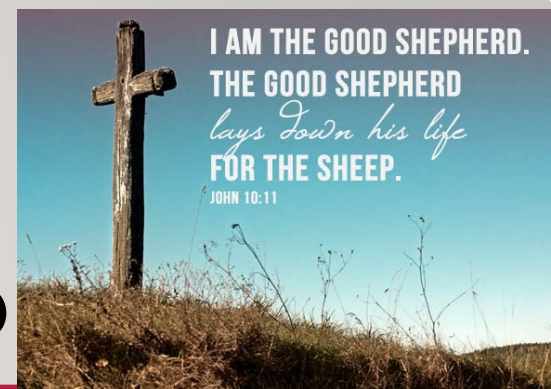
- Psalm 23 is “intensely personal” but it echoes the corporate experience of Israel (Broyles, 124-5 cf. Goldingay, 349) – the **bedrock** of Israel’s faith (Craigie, 205)
- The LORD **led** Israel through the mighty waters of the Red Sea, and through the wilderness, -- like a **flock** (Ps 77:19-20, 78:52-55) to a place of **rest** (Num 10:33)
- The LORD provided manna and quail in the wilderness; His people did not **lack** (Ex 16:18, Dt. 2:7; Neh 9:21). The LORD brought them into the Promised Land – where they would not **lack** (Dt 8:6-9)
- After the Exodus, Moses sang that the LORD, in **loyal love** would **guide** the people to His holy dwelling (Ex 15:13). The LORD **guided** them with a pillar of fire by night and a cloud by day (Ex 13:21, etc.)
- The wilderness was described as "a land of drought and **utter darkness**" (Jer 2:6, NIV). The LORD shepherded Israel with a **staff** when they came out of Egypt (Mic 7:14-15). The LORD told Moses, "I will be **with you**" (Ex 3:12 cf. Dt 2:7)
- Two men, Moses and Elijah, appeared in glorious splendor, talking with Jesus. They spoke about his **departure** [ἐξοδος | **exhodos**], which he was about to bring to fulfillment at Jerusalem. (Lk 9:30-31, NIV)





NEW TESTAMENT

THE GOOD/GREAT/CHIEF SHEPHERD



- “I am the good shepherd. **The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.** (Jn 10:11, NIV; Wilcock, 87; Futato, 103; cf. Lk 15:4-7; Longman, 137; Jacobson, 245; Craigie, 209; Waltke, 445; Kraus, 309)
- For “you were like **sheep** going astray,” but now you have returned to the **Shepherd** and Overseer of your souls. (1 Pet 2:25, NIV; Craigie, 209)
- And when the **Chief Shepherd** appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away. (1 Pet 5:4, NIV; Wilcock, 87; Waltke, 445)
- For the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their **shepherd**; ‘he will **lead** them to **springs of living water.**’ ‘And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.’” (Rev 7:17, NIV; Wilcock, 87; Waltke, 439)
- Now may the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that **great Shepherd of the sheep**, equip you with everything good for doing his will, and may he work in us what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen. (Heb 13:20-21, NIV; Wilcock, 87; Waltke, 445)

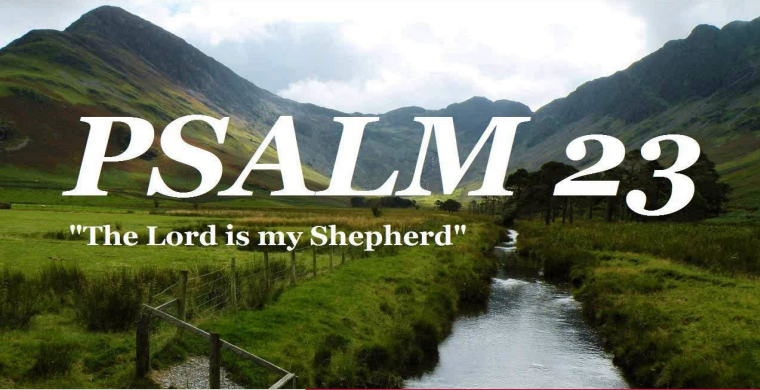
SEEK GOD'S
FACE
NOT HIS
HAND

PSALM 23 CONCLUSION

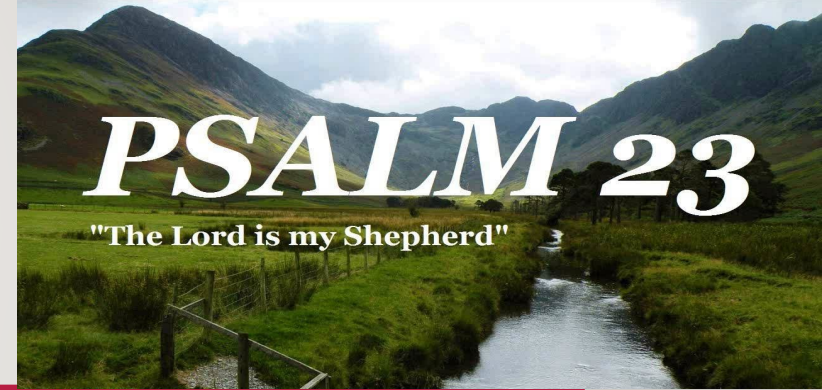
**REMEMBER ...
WHAT GOD HAS DONE FOR US**



- The psalmist likely looks back at what all God has done for Him and His people during the **First Exodus** and sings confidently that God will continue to be God. We can look back at the **Second Exodus** (Christ's death and resurrection) and sing confidently that God will continue to be God
- A song of trust in God's **daily bread** and **daily guidance** (Futato, 102) – even in the midst of trouble! (Longman, 137): hostile **circumstances** and hostile **people**.
- The LORD is our shepherd: He has **authority** over us humble sheep (cf. Craigie, 209). He protects/provides, sustains/secures, guards/guides
- Augustine: God has made us for Himself, and our souls are restless, until they find rest in Him (Futato, 102 from *Confessions*, 1.1). Our ultimate desire should not be God's **presents** but God's **presence**
- Not merely a psalm about dying; it's a psalm about living (Goldingay, 353). We are God's **temple** (1 Cor 3:16, 6:19); God is with us **now**.
- And surely **I am with you always**, to the very end of the age." (Mt 28:20b, NIV; Jacobson, 243). In response, we should affirm with confidence: "**You are with me!**" (Jacobson, 246)



PSALM 23 (KJV)



- The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: He leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: Thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: And I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever. (Ps 23:1-6, KJV)

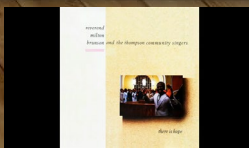
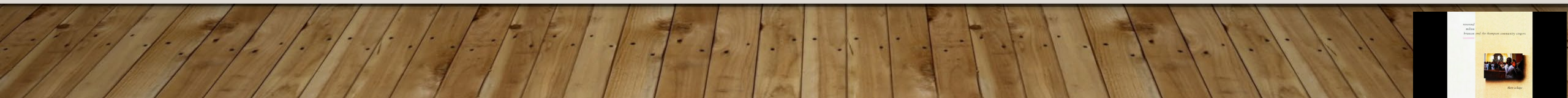
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