

Bibles - Psalm 23 – used in funerals, movies, literature, even some non-Christians know of it

Written by David – A Psalm of David – The Gospel

- Likely, influenced by his early life as a shepherd
- The same area and fields where the Angel announced the birth of Christ
- When did he write it? Possibly in his latter years. After experience and reflection
- This psalm is written by a “sheep” to the Good Shepherd.
 - It is Christian’s claim on belonging to the family of God
 - It proclaims the benefits of this relationship

A Shepherd Looks At The 23rd Psalm – Phillip Keller

Question: Is the Lord our Shepherd?

- In order for that to be true the Shepherd needs to be our Lord!
- Lord of all of our life?

Notice how he transitions from talking about to talking to God

V1 - The Lord *is my* shepherd; *I* shall not want.

V2 - **He** makes *me* to lie down in green pastures; **He** leads *me* beside the still waters.

V3 - **He** restores *my* soul; **He** leads *me* in the paths of righteousness For **His** name’s sake.

V4 - 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*.

V5 - **You** prepare a table before *me* in the presence of *my* enemies; **You** anoint *my* head with oil; *my* cup runs over.

V6 - Surely goodness and mercy shall follow *me* all the days of my life; and *I* will dwell in the house of **the Lord** Forever.

- Why sheep?
- **Cat vs. Sheep – Sheep are:**
 - **Dumb, slow to learn, not attractive, demanding, stubborn, strong, unpredictable, followers, restless, dependent and all the same**
- Who is the Shepherd and who are the sheep? **Read:**
 - **John 10:7,9,11,14-15,18,30 – God/Jesus is the door and the good shepherd**
 - **His sheep are those who He knows**

vv1-3 –God is adequate; He is my personal God; He provides for my needs. **Phil. 4:19**

- V3 - “His name’s sake” - “His riches in glory”
- v1 - “The Lord *is my* shepherd” “The Lord” is Jehovah-Elohim
- Covenant making God of Israel. Many *names of Jehovah in the OT reflected in this psalm.*
 - Outright ownership of our lives
 - He created me – Gen.
 - He bought me with a price through Christ – The Gospels
- V1 - “I shall not want”—Jehovah-jireh, the Lord will provide” (Gen. 22:14)
 - Not lacking
 - A sense of contentment
- V2 - “green pastures” and “still waters”- Jehovah-Shalom, “the Lord our peace” (Judg. 6:24)
 - Keller – 4 Things required to make a sheep lie down
 - Free of fear, tension, pests and hunger
 - The Word and the Spirit of God accomplish this
 - Brings peace and plenty
 - **John 6:35** – “bread of life
 - **John 4:10** – woman at the well “living water”
- V3 - “restores my soul”—Jehovah-Rophe, “the Lord who heals” (Ex. 15:26)
 - If all this is true why is this necessary? **Psalm 42:5, 11**
 - “stuff happens” – **John 16:33**, **Read: Acts 14:22**
 - Sometimes we get “fat and happy”
 - “Comfortable”, “Too much of the world”

- **An escaped sheep was found with 60 pounds of wool.**

Shrek the sheep ran away and hid in a cave in New Zealand for 6 years. When Shrek was finally found in 2004, the sheep had gone unshorn for so long that it had accumulated 60 pounds of wool on its body, enough to make 20 suits! The sheep became famous and even got to meet the Prime Minister. Shrek finally passed away last month at the age of 16.

- V3 - "paths of righteousness"—Jehovah-Tsidkenu, "the Lord our righteousness" (Jer. 33:16)
 - Sheep left to their own devices and natural tendencies will become sick and die
 - They must be "moved" from one area to another
 - Like sheep we must be "led by the Lord"
 - Jesus and the cost –
 - Loving God and others more than myself
 - Be set apart
 - Relinquish my will
 - Be a servant
 - Accept where God has me
 - Choose His will
 - Do everything as "unto the Lord" **Col 3:22-24**

v4 – He gives us serenity by protection and correction.

- "you are with me"—Jehovah-Shammah, "the Lord is there" (Ezek. 48:35)
- Valley vs. Mountain top experience – Bakerfield, CA
 - M – better view, cleaner air
 - V – more fruit
- We "walk through", not stop, not stay, not die, ***but through***, because He is with us
- **Rod AND Staff**
 - Rod – protection through defense and a deterrent – The Word of God (Jesus) keeps us from sin/harm and going astray
 - Staff – comfort through gentle correction – The Holy Spirit lifts us up, guides our steps and helps us. Chastens - Prov. 3:11; Heb. 12:5-6; Rev. 3:19
- He is always with us – **Matt. 28:20**

v5 – He brings us assurance and certainty (without doubt) by preparing us and caring for us abundantly.

- "table" means "something spread out" like a mesa
- "presence of my enemies"—Jehovah-Nissi, "the Lord our banner" (Ex. 17:15)
- **Read: Rom. 8:31-39**
- Christ has gone before us and experienced everything we will – **Heb. 4:15**
- "anoint my head"—Jehovah-M'Kaddesh, "the Lord who sanctifies" (Lev. 20:8)
- He is there to "sooth" us daily from spiritual "flies" and "scabs" **Rom. 8:1-2**

V6 – He preserves us and perpetually provides Eternal peace. Through the Grace of Christ.

- This is a promise
 - For those who believe
 - This is the end
 - By faith we believe.
- "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life" – **Rom. 8:28**
- I will dwell in the house of **the Lord** Forever. **Read: John 14:1-6**
- Old covenant - the sheep died for the shepherd
- New covenant - the Shepherd died for the sheep
 - **Read: John 3:16, 36**
- When we accept Him as our Savior, *we will meet our Shepherd in heaven!*

Worship Team - Prayer Teams
Is the Shepherd our Lord?