

## **Psalm 23**

*\*Read Responsively; Congregation reads highlighted words.*

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

He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters.

**He restores my soul.** He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Even 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.

You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; **my cup overflows.**

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and **I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.**

Make **proximity** to Yahweh\* the **measure** of your life

- \*Jesus is Yahweh in human form.

Theological Concept: **union life** (NT: *in Christ*; >200)

- All spiritual blessings are found in Jesus
  - Exclusive source & conduit = Jesus
- Direction & destiny tied to our Shepherd
- Look nowhere else!!

**How do CIRCUMSTANCES (+/-) affect us?**

- T/F: *I tend to live at the **level of my circumstances.***
- T/F: *I live at the **level of Yahweh** ... He is with me.*

## **Psalm 23:1-4a**

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. **He makes me** lie down in green pastures. **He leads me** beside still waters. **He restores my soul.** He leads me in **paths** of righteousness for **his** name's sake. Even though I walk through **the valley** of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are **with me** ... → ...*Table & House of the Lord!!*

God (Yahweh) makes **provision** for people out of His **abundant** goodness.

- *Shall not want ...*
  - *Green pastures; still waters ... Table & House!*

God (Yahweh) has a prepared **path** and prepared **place** for His people.

➤ SOMETHING IS MISSING ... ???

God (*Yahweh*) has a prepared path and prepared place for His **prepared** people.

➤ *He makes ... He leads ... He restores ...*

Most of us want the **provision**, but not the **preparation**!

- Principle of **Provision** (*Yahweh*)
- Principle of **Proximity** (*My Shepherd ... with*)
- Principle of **Preparation** (*makes, leads, restores*)

The **provision** is often in the **preparation**!

1) Dealing with our “**self-life**” (which gets in the way of our “*with God*” life)

6 Blows to our Pride in Psalm 23:

- God is “I am Who I am” and while I am not ...
- I have to be made to lie down
- I need restoration at the deepest level
- I need to be led
- My wants/desires may not be legitimate to God
- God acts for His Name, not mine.

How Does God Make Us Lie Down:

A) He lets us **tire ourselves out**

Burdens of the Self-Life:

- Pretense
- People-pleasing
- Having my own way ~control
- Seeking vindication

How Does God Make Us Lie Down:

A) He lets us **tire ourselves out**

B) He lets us “experience” what it is like to do **life without Him**

C) He shows us what **we are really like** (~soul)

D) He stops us **dead in our tracks**

Before I get raised up & brought into the Table/House, I (often) must be **brought down**!

2) **Restoring** the soul.

What’s Wrong with the Soul:

- There is **evil** within it (Romans 3:10-12)

### **Romans 3:10-12a**

... as it is written: “**None** is righteous, no, **not one**; 11 no one understands; **no one** seeks for God. 12 All have **turned aside** ...

### **What’s Wrong with the Soul:**

- There is **evil** within it (Romans 3:10-12)
- It is **wounded** (Psalm 34:18)
- It is **divided** (James 1:8)

### **The Process**

- A) The **fear of the Lord** comes to the soul
- B) A vision of **Jesus** that is **redemptive & restorative**
- C) No **greener grass** than being with Jesus

### **3) Leading on a **particular path** (~ *righteousness*)**

- Recognize that God **has ways**

### **A follower of Christ realizes:**

- They have been/are being **ACTED upon** by Yahweh
- They decide to **cooperate**