

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