

**Psa. 23:0 A Psalm of David.**

This is the author's signature on the psalm.

**Psa. 23:1 The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.**

One can't help but think immediately of how David would relate so closely to the Lord as His shepherd. He had been a shepherd boy; in fact, he was out watching over the sheep when Samuel came to anoint him as king. David knew what was expected of a shepherd.

David claimed YHWH, the self-existent, eternal God as **his** shepherd; he felt connected personally to the Lord, not just as one of many in the nation of Israel. In that acknowledgement is the basis for all the following statements. God is the source of all power and provision. Thus, David's next statement, "I shall not want." He was well aware that God was sufficient to meet his every need.

**Psa. 23:2 He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.**

It is the shepherd's duty to find good feeding grounds and water sources for the sheep. This verse is a reference to being at rest and being given tender, pleasant nourishment. Obviously, this Psalm was written at a time in David's life when he was feeling safe and secure under the watchful eye of the Lord.

This verse is also an acknowledgement of David's submission to the Lord. He was content to follow where the Lord was leading and confident that His direction would result to David's benefit.

**Psa. 23:3 He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.**

The Hebrew for *restoreth* made reference to many things; deliver, refresh and reward stood out to me as I tried to connect with David's thoughts. Again, David recognized that it was God who provided for all his needs—both physically and spiritually. The *soul* makes reference to the whole being. There are times when we may be fine physically, but with great need spiritually. Other times we may be doing fine spiritually, but find ourselves in physical need. The Lord is a shepherd that can provide nourishment, healing and protection of both areas.

Again, David acknowledges that he is following God's leading in his life. He knows that God will only lead him in the paths that are right and prosperous (from the Hebrew). David knows that he is not worthy of such faithful, loving treatment. God is acting in honor of His name--His character and honor.

**Psa. 23:4 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.**

David is also a realist. As a shepherd, he had defended his flock from the danger of predators. He knows that he will face times of trouble, maybe even times that threaten his life. Still, he is confident in His Shepherd's ability to take care of him through those times. He has nothing to fear in the presence of the Shepherd. His Lord is the source of power and authority in the universe.

David knew that a shepherd sometimes has to provide correction to the sheep through the use of his rod. The Hebrew for *staff* comes from a root that means protector. The use of the rod and staff go hand-in-hand. Part of protection includes correction. David realizes that he can count on the Lord to be a good Shepherd and will correct David as necessary as He provides for Him and protects him. That is a comfort to David.

**Psa. 23:5 Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.**

God's provision for David is obvious to his enemies. It is obvious for anyone who is paying attention to see that David is favored of the Lord. He is providing for David with abundance and richness that satisfies. He is treating David according to the customs of that time that speak of how one would treat an honored guest.

**Psa. 23:6 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.**

David is confident that with the Lord as his Shepherd he will only experience goodness and mercy all the days of his life. He knew the truth declared by the Apostle Paul.

Rom. 8:28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his* purpose.

David also recognized that his life would have an ending, but he also knew that he would dwell with the Lord forever. Again, we don't know exactly how much the man of faith in Old Testament times knew about that future or how they knew it, but they knew. Job expressed the same confidence.

Job 19:25 For I know *that* my redeemer liveth, and *that* he shall stand at the latter *day* upon the earth:

Job 19:26 And *though* after my skin *worms* destroy this *body*, yet in my flesh shall I see God:

The Holy Spirit tells us through the writer of Hebrews that the patriarch of old knew it.

Heb. 11:13 These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of *them*, and embraced *them*, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.