

The 23rd Psalm

David spent his early years caring for sheep (1 Samuel 16:10,11), and knew firsthand how completely dependent sheep are upon the shepherd for provision, guidance and protection.

Read Psalm 23

David compares the Lord to a shepherd who lovingly tends his flock. Through this passage, we learn that God tenderly cares for those who belong to Him. Jesus said, “I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me” (John 10:14). Those who have trusted Christ as Savior have the assurance that He will watch over and nurture them.

Jesus is a personal Shepherd

David wrote: “The Lord is my shepherd”. Everyone can have an intimate relationship with the Creator of the universe. But that fellowship is possible only through His Son.” Look up: John 10:30, John 14:9

He is a providing Shepherd

Psalm 23:1 says, “The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not be in want.” A good shepherd desires that His sheep to have only what is best for them; God gives us what we truly need. Look up: Philippians 4:19

Sometimes that means we will ask for things but won't receive them. If the Father delays in granting your request, you can be certain He has a reason that is in your best interest.

When we submit to the Lord, He promises to supply what we need. And when we delight in Him, we allow God to transform the desires of our hearts to His holy will. Look up: Psalm 34:9

Our God is a pardoning Shepherd

“He restores my soul” (Psalm. 23:3). Every believer has strayed from God at some point, but thankfully, the Good Shepherd eagerly restores fellowship with Him when we confess our sins. Look up: 1 John 1:8-9

And that intimacy fills us with incomparable joy and peace (Psalm. 23:5).

Why do God's people wander away from Him?

Often a Christian drifts because he has believed Satan's lies or listened to the world's perspective. That's why it is important for believers to discern the Shepherd's voice. Spend time reading the Gospels and Paul's epistles. Jesus will never tell you to do something that contradicts the Word of God.

The Lord is a protecting Shepherd.

“Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil” (Psalm. 23:4). Everyone goes through valleys, or low points, in life. We may face sorrow, heartache, doubt, or other kinds of adversity, but Christians need not be afraid. The constant presence of our Shepherd provides the assurance we need to always feel safe. If you walk obediently before Him, He will bring good out of the hardships you endure.

Look up: Hebrews 13:5, Romans 8:28

Like Lot in Genesis 19:6-8, hosts were expected to protect their guests at all costs.

God offers the protection of a host even when enemies surround us.

Jesus is a preparing Shepherd

David anticipated his heavenly home: “You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.” (Psalm. 23:5-6).

Jesus promised that He would prepare an eternal home for those who receive His gift of forgiveness and trust Him with their lives. Those of us who know the Lord have the assurance that death is not the end but, rather, a beginning.

What has Jesus prepared for those who receive Him? Look up: John 3:3, John 14:1-3

Nothing compares to the awesome promise believers have in Jesus Christ. The Good Shepherd, wants an intimate personal relationship with us. He wants to provide for our needs, forgive our sins, and protect us from evil. In hardship, His followers can turn to Him for comfort and they can rest in His promise to bring good out of every situation. And then some day, all who belong to Jesus will join Him in heaven, where a place will have been prepared for each of us.