

Psalm 23, Bible Study Outline

By James Moriello, Firm Foundation Christian Church, Woonsocket RI, 2021

1. Authorship: “A Psalm of David”
 - a. David was a shepherd and a king, a type of Christ (1 Samuel 17:15; John 10:14; 2 Samuel 2:4; Matthew 2:2)
2. Theme: God’s Shepherding Care of His People
3. 23:1- “The LORD is my shepherd;
I shall not want.”
 - a. “LORD”, the personal name for God appropriately used here
 - b. John 10:4-5,14, He knows us by name and we know Him by name
 - c. He is our provider, protector, and guide
 - d. We are sheep trained by holiness, yet still needing continual aid, we are fully dependent upon the shepherd
 - e. Isaiah 53:6, foolish when we go it alone
 - f. All men have a shepherd, the Lord or the devil or the world (John 10 backdrop is Ezekiel 34)
 - g. No lack physically or spiritually, we are beyond the reach of want in the eternal sense (John 10:27-28)
 - h. Reliance of sheep upon their shepherd to fight off beasts
4. 23:2- “He makes me to lie down in green pastures;
He leads me beside the still waters.”
 - a. Water supply needed for the sheep in the dry season
 - b. “still waters”, Isaiah 8:6-8 applied
5. 23:3- “He restores my soul;
He leads me in the paths of righteousness
For His name’s sake.”
 - a. Rescue and cleansing from the blackness of sin, 1 John 1:9
 - b. Psalm 119:176 applied, paths sometimes difficult for us to navigate, but the Living Word and written Word are our compass
6. 23:4- “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.”
 - a. We do not walk through the valley alone, Isaiah 46:4, applied to life from the shepherding imagery
 - b. “shadow of death”, Job 12:22, 19:25-27
 - c. “fear no evil”, even death itself, 1 Corinthians 15:54-58
 - d. “rod...staff”, six feet long with a crook at the end, used to navigate the hill country, to guide the sheep along the journey and into the sheepfold

7. 23:5- “You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;
You anoint my head with oil;
My cup runs over.”
 - a. “prepare a table”, protection from enemies
 - b. “table”, covering spread on the ground
 - c. “anoint”, olive oil carried to treat wounds
 - d. “my head with oil”, a proper welcome for a guest (Luke 7:46)
 - e. “my cup runs over”, superabundance of divine provisions
8. 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
Forever.”
 - a. Blessings of being a Christian in this life, “goodness and mercy”
 - b. 2 Corinthians 3:17-18 applied, the “follow you” and the “follow through”
 - c. The end of the saints, Ezra 9:8 as earthly provision, and Revelation 21-22 as the heavenly provision