

Gleanings of Grace

Psalm 23

Lesson 20

Psalm 23 is one of the most beloved psalms of David who, as a shepherd himself, knew the aspects of good shepherding. This psalm is often quoted at funerals. We must not forget however, that most of this psalm reflects upon *all the days of our lives*, reminding us of how wonderfully cared for we are, simply because we are sheep who belong to the Good Shepherd. Enjoy.

OBSERVATION: Psalm 23

1. Read Psalm 23 using the Observation Worksheet (the last page of this homework). After reading through the chapter, what would you say to someone if they asked you what it is about?
2. Key words help us to better understand the verses. We have listed below key words. Mark each one in a distinctive way (either with a symbol, highlighting, or some form of boxing, circling, or underlining). Mark each of the key words each time they are used in the text. Remember to mark any personal pronouns/titles that refer to the *LORD*.
Key Words: *LORD* and *me/my/I*
3. Psalm 23 begins with, *The LORD is my shepherd*. This psalm is a very personal psalm. Scan the psalm and list what *LORD* does for you, because He is your *shepherd*.

Background:

1. 1 Chronicles 11:2 reveals God's calling on David's life. What was David chosen to do?
 - a. What phrases does Psalm 78:70-72 use to describe David as a shepherd?

2. What do Isaiah 40:11 and Isaiah 63:11-13 tell us about God's viewpoint of a good *shepherd*?

3. Who is the *great Shepherd*? Hebrews 13:20
 - a. Jesus is also the *good Shepherd*. What does John 10:1-30 declare about Him as our *good Shepherd*?

Read Psalm 23:1

1. The psalm introduces the *LORD* as our *shepherd*. Using your own words, describe a *shepherd*.
 - a. When you consider that God is your *shepherd*, what are some qualities or actions you can expect of Him?
 - 1.) In times when you have been in a place of self-pity, what are some ways you have erroneously felt that God has failed to *shepherd* you?

2. What is David's response to the fact that *The LORD* is his *shepherd*?
 - a. A secular dictionary defines the word *want* as: "to desire to possess or do; to wish for; to be short of something desirable or essential." What do you think David meant when he stated, *I shall not want*?

3. Reflect upon the following verses and describe what they say about what we *want*.

Psalm 34:9,10

Luke 12:28-32

- a. What truths did you glean from these verses?
4. In what ways do you identify with David's declaration of *I shall not want* because *the LORD is your shepherd*?
 5. Considering this verse, what reasons might someone have to not identify with this verse?
 6. The name of God that might be represented in this verse is Jehovah-Jireh, the LORD will provide. In what ways is this name reflected in this verse?

Read Psalm 23:2

1. According to Psalm 23:2, what two things does the LORD do?
2. What words might describe *green pastures* and *still waters* in the life of a believer today?
3. The following verses are God's promises to His people in the future. However, as His sheep, we experience some of these today. Although these promises have not been completely fulfilled, we do experience them in part. In what ways have you found these verses true in your own life?

Ezekiel 34:14

Revelation 7:17

4. The name of God that might be represented in this verse is Jehovah-Shalom, the LORD our peace. In what ways is this name reflected in this verse?

Read Psalm 23:3

1. According to Psalm 23:3, what two things does the LORD do?
2. Define the word *restore*.
3. What do these verses teach us about the LORD *restoring our soul*?
Psalm 19:7

Psalm 51:10,12

Micah 7:18,19
 - a. Share a few thoughts about how God has *restored your soul*.
4. *He leads me in the paths of righteousness*. What do these verses add to your understanding?
Psalm 5:8

Isaiah 42:16
 - a. Share a few thoughts about how God has *lead you in the paths of righteousness*.
5. The names of God that might be represented in this verse are Jehovah-Rophe, the LORD our healer and Jehovah-Tsidkenu, the LORD our righteousness. In what ways are these names reflected this verse?
6. Write the last phrase of Psalm 23:3 in capital letters.
 - a. In what ways can walking in the truths of this psalm honor God's *name*?

Read Psalm 23:4

1. In this verse, the personal pronoun changes from *He* to *You*. David is not speaking *about* the Shepherd, but is speaking *to* the Shepherd. *Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death*. David is not only referring to *death* here, but the variety of life's sorrows. Acknowledging this, what are some *valleys* we can *walk through*?

a. What did David say he *will* do?

1.) What comfort do you find in these verses?

Psalm 27:1-4

Psalm 118:6

Isaiah 41:10

1 Corinthians 15:55-57

2. *You are with me.* What are your thoughts as you reflect upon what you have because God is *with you*?
3. *Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.* The *shepherd* uses his *rod* and *staff* to guide the *sheep*. Describe how you view the way that God guides you.
4. The name of God that might be represented in this verse is Jehovah-Shammah, the LORD is there. In what ways is this name reflected in this verse?

Read Psalm 23:5

1. Psalm 23:5 speaks of God's abundant provision. Record the three statements of David in this verse.
2. What do you think it means that the LORD *prepares a table before you in the presence of your enemies*?
3. *You anoint my head with oil.* What does Psalm 45:7 reveal about this *oil*?
 - a. In what ways has God made your heart *glad*?
4. Meditate on the last phrase of Psalm 23:5 and complete this sentence using as many words and phrases as you would like. *My cup runs over* because:

5. The name of God that might be represented in this verse is Jehovah-Nissi, the LORD our banner. In what ways is this name reflected in this verse?

Read Psalm 23:6

1. Psalm 23:6 addresses both the present and the future of the believer. What does he declare about this present life?
 - a. In what ways have you discovered this to be true in your life?

2. What does he declare about the future of the believer?
 - a. What does 2 Corinthians 5:1 promise the believer?
 - 1.) Describe the joy that this promise gives you.

3. The name of God that might be represented in this verse is Jehovah-M'kaddesh, the LORD who sanctifies (sets apart for Himself). In what ways is this name reflected in this verse?

REVIEW: Psalm 23

1. How has this psalm spoken to your perspective of:

God's care for you

The challenges you face

His guidance and correction

Your future

*So we, Your people and sheep of Your pasture,
Will give You thanks forever;
We will show forth Your praise to all generations.
- Psalm 79:13*

Observation Worksheet

Psalm 23:1-6

¹ The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.

² He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters.

³ He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake.

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.

⁵ You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; my cup runs over.

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.