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The
Songs
23

PSALMS - The SONGS

Twenty-three

My Cup Overflows-Because The LORD is My Shepherd

READ AND OBSERVE

Read through **Psalm 23** and mark every reference to the LORD, including pronouns and synonyms, with a red triangle.

Read through **Psalm 23** and mark every reference to the psalmist, along with all pronouns and synonyms, with a blue capital "P".

Read through **Psalm 23** and mark every reference to fear with a pointy purple circle surrounded by yellow.

Read through **Psalm 23** and mark every time phrase with a blue box.

Read through **Psalm 23** and mark every contrast with a pink diagonal line.

Read through **Psalm 23** and divide the passage into the following segments. Mark and title these segments in your text using brackets in the margin.

1. Path of righteousness
2. Path of the shadow of death
3. Path of returning to the LORD's house

READ AND ANSWER

Psalm 23:1-3

What does the psalmist say the LORD is?

Whose Shepherd?



Isn't it amazing to think of David, out of his experiences as a shepherd, writing this Psalm to honor His LORD, the true Shepherd?

**David knows full well the life of the lambs
and he knows full well the life of the shepherd.
He places himself in the position of a lamb,
and His LORD in the position of the Shepherd
and draws an analogy that comforts even the weariest of souls.**

**I have no doubt that David, himself,
was feeling pleasure, reassurance, and serenity as he wrote...**

Does David, pictured as a lamb, have any need?

Why not?

What type of pastures does the LORD give to His lamb?

What do green pastures provide?

Who is really providing the abundant, luxurious food supply?

Beside what type of waters does the LORD lead His lamb?

What do peaceful, quiet waters provide?

Who is really providing the life-giving drink and safety?

What does the LORD do for David's soul?

On what paths in life does the LORD lead David?

Why does the LORD perform such exemplary Shepherding?

Psalm 23:4-5

Where does the path lead David as he follows his Shepherd?

Is it the valley of *death*? Or is it the valley of the *shadow* of death?

Is there a difference?

What is the difference?

Who has led David into the valley of the shadow of death?

Will he die there?

How do you know?

Who will lead him *through* the valley of the shadow of death?

Is David fearful while he is in the valley of the shadow of death?

Why not?

If evil comes upon him, Who does he know will take care of him and protect him from the evil?

What comforts David?

1.

2.

What is the purpose of the Shepherd's rod?

What is the purpose of the Shepherd's staff?



The Hebrew word for “rod” is *shebet* and comes from an unused root meaning to branch off. It means a scion, scepter, or rod. It has the idea of a stick, for punishing, writing, fighting, ruling, walking, etc. Figuratively it refers to a clan or tribe.

The Hebrew word for “staff” is *meshteneth* and means support, sustenance, staff or walking stick.

Who prepares a table for David?

What is the purpose of the table? What is on the table?

Where does the LORD, his Shepherd, prepare this banquet table for David?

Why? Why does the LORD prepare David's table right in front of his enemies? What does it show or prove?

What has the LORD done to David's head?

Why? What is the purpose of anointing David's head?

What is true of David's cup (of life)?

Why? What makes David's cup overflow?

Who puts the abundance in his life?

Psalm 23:6

What does David say will follow him all the days of his life?

1.

2.

Why? Who will cause it to happen?



The Hebrew word for “dwell” is *yashab* and means to sit down, to dwell, or to remain.

The Hebrew word for “forever” is *orekh* and means length of days.

An alternate translation reads, “And I will *return* to the house of the LORD for *the length of my days*”.

This is very interesting because it absolutely remains true to the context of the Psalm and fits perfectly with the biblical record.

Let's reason it through.

Verses 1-3 speaks about the luxuriant provision of the Lord during the ordinary days of David's life (pre-Saul).

Verse 4 speaks about God's comforting protection provided during the days of David's exile when he was chased by Saul.

Verses 5-6 speak of the promise for David (post-Saul) to *return* to dwell in the house of the LORD for *the length of his days*.

God had anointed David as king so he would not wander the countryside forever.

Where will David dwell forever?

Why? Who will cause it to happen?

READ AND REASON

This **Psalm** is about LIFE!!!

The Good Shepherd brings provision, comfort, righteousness, calm, protection, abundance, goodness, lovingkindness, safety, and fulfilled promise for LIFE!!!

What has made this **Psalm** so familiar to the masses? Its popularity at funerals—which are all about death.

It is fascinating, but heartbreaking, to contemplate the countless millions who have used **Psalm 23** as a cliché default “liturgy” for their funeral services.

Mourners sit and hear only part of the **Psalm**, out of its context, and misapply it.

Most people most certainly want comfort,
but most people refuse the path of true comfort—repentance and belief in the Savior!

True comfort will bring them life, and bring it abundantly...

Both now...

And forevermore...

 Segment by Segment

**Try titling these segments yourself.
Ask God to help you.**

Verses 1-3

Verses 4-5

~ Purpose of Psalm 23

**Try to identify the purpose of Psalm 23.
The purpose simply states “why the Psalmist wrote the Psalm”.**

~ Theme of Psalm 23

**Try giving Psalm 23 a title by identifying its theme.
The theme simply states “what the Psalm is about”.**
