

# A Mourner's Look at Psalm 23 (Part 1)

by Evan Schaible

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*The sermon explores the significance of Psalm 23 and the Lord's role as our Shepherd, emphasizing His love, guidance, and pursuit of us.*

**Scripture:** Psalm 23:1-4, John 10:3

**Topics:** "Shepherd Leadership", "Trust In God"

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## Description

Evan Schaible preaches on the profound blessings and intimate relationship depicted in Psalm 23, emphasizing the deep connection between the Lord as our shepherd and our role as His beloved sheep. The psalm reveals the tender care, guidance, and protection God provides to those who fully trust in Him, leading them to peaceful rest and refreshing waters even in the midst of life's challenges. Through the imagery of a shepherd and his flock, the psalm highlights the importance of surrendering to God's loving guidance and experiencing His abundant provision and protection.

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## Transcript

" The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. 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. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. 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." (Psalm 23:1-6)

The blessing that this Psalm affords those that can enter into the spirit of what is herein said is of the utmost importance for the Christian life. This is not a Psalm for the common observer, nor is it a Psalm for those that casually read their Bible's as a novel, speeding through with a hardly a glance back at what they are missing. This is a Psalm for those with the heart of David; one that is after God's own heart, and one that is cut clean away from the things of this cruel world seeking that coming heavenly kingdom where Christ will rule and reign for eternal times.

The sojourner disposition is much needed to properly understand this, and any of the precious Psalms that can only touch the heart of one that has been intrinsically and totally separated from the world of woe and sorrow by time and time again being disappointed and trodden under the feet of a depression that causes one's eyes to look to the hills for help from the Lord of heaven. David wrote many, yea, possibly all of the Psalms in flight from certain death. How much must we entirely enter into this flight from ever pursuing

death with our eyes and hearts set on reaching out for help from the Most High God, our shepherd.

"The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want." - David, likely with his little flock of sheep bleating around him, nestled under a tree by the Jordan reflects on the Lord's goodness to His people. What a wonderful, and intimate illustration to show us the way in which God almighty sees those whom He has purchased with His own blood. The Lord as a shepherd is something to which many bright theologians never aspire to theologize simply because it fails to be systematic. I am convinced heartily that when one comes to this union and knowledge of the Father systematic theology begins to be more of a burden than a blessing. The affection must be set on things above, to properly understand this union, and this dear and precious relationship that comes with an intimate understanding and knowledge of God.

Shepherd's are not harsh taskmasters, but loving guides. When a wayward sheep leaves the flock to wander, never will a good shepherd jump up with axe in hand ready to chop to pieces the rebellious filthy animal. When a shepherd sees the sheep walking a wayward path he simply pursues that sheep and nudges it back into the fold, perhaps sometimes a leg might be broken, or hurt to keep the animal from straying again. How reminiscent this is of the Lord's dealing with his people, "the sheep of His pasture". The carnal, unconverted churchman will likely see this concept as a license to licentiousness, but the true believer will see this burning love God has toward us as the primary motive to love and please Him in return.

I once heard a story of a man who would walk with his young children in the wilderness to make outdoorsmen out of them. He would walk with his young boys and tell them to stay directly by his side. But one was always prone to wander from his dad's side. Finally a time came when a lesson was to be learnt by this young lad. His dad simply let him wander, as he was so prone to do, and followed close behind, yet out of sight. Finally the boy, sensing that something was wrong turned around to see if dad was right there behind him, only to find that he was no where to be found. With a trembling lip the young boy said sheepishly, "dad..." Then a tear trickled down his cheek and again he said, "dad". When the lesson had been learned his dad stepped out and said in a loving manner, "Son, have you learned you're lesson now?" The boy needed to know that there was a grave danger in wandering from his dad's side.

Now is that man a better father than God? Is God one to just let His precious sheep wander off and say, "Oh well, you made the choice, to bad for you"? God loves His people so dearly that never will He allow them to stray too far, and if He does allow it for a time, it is to teach us that ever-important lesson: We cannot live without God our Father. God will pursue us and correct us so that we come down from the high places we think we have to be, and walk humbly by His side, and follow after Him. God is love, and that love is best expressed in His passionate love for His people.

The Lord truly is my shepherd. What lovely and peaceful words these are. The great God that created and sustains the entire universe, who has commanded the oceans to tide, the birds to fly, the sun to shine, and gives life to mankind in His perfect will, this God is my beloved shepherd. What joy it is to know that "I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine".

Jesus says of Himself is the tenth of John, "But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out". Jesus has called you, beloved believer, by name. If you have heard the great shepherd voice as He calls you forth from sin and the world, He shall lead you out of those things. He shall, by His grace and love, by His kindness and mercy, gently lead you out and you shall not want for

anything ever again. What a loving God this is we serve. Let us let this God of love, this compassionate Father, cause us to see ourselves and the filthiness of our petty love for Him compared to His great love for us.

"He maketh me to lie down in green pastures, He leadeth me beside still waters"

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Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/evan-schaible/a-mourners-look-at-psalm-23-part-1/>

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