

Famous Chapters in the Bible, Part 2: Psalm 23, Page 1 of 2

Notes from the class taught by Pastor Doug Livingston, March 21 & 28, 2012

Psalm 23: Jesus, Our Shepherd

This Psalm was 1 of 73 believed to have been written by David. Other authors were: Asaph (12), the Sons of Korah (12), Solomon (2), Moses (1), Ethan (1), anonymous (49).

He was the youngest of the 8 sons of Jesse &, like his brothers, was a shepherd (I Samuel 16:11). He was first anointed by Samuel to succeed Saul as the king of Israel at the age of 20 (13). He was then anointed as the king of Judah at the age of 30 &, 7 years later, was anointed the king of all Israel & reigned another 33 years (II Samuel 5:4-5) & died at 70.

1. The Lord is my shepherd who supplies all my needs. See John 10:1-18.

Verse 1: The Pharisees proclaimed themselves “the true shepherds of Israel.”

Verse 2: Jesus proclaims Himself the true Messiah of Israel.

Verse 3: Some believe “the doorkeeper” to be the prophets; others John the Baptist; still others, the Holy Spirit (JVM).

Verse 4: The true shepherd does not force but leads the sheep who will follow him because they recognize his voice (5).

Verse 6: The Pharisees did not understand what Jesus was talking about.

Verse 7: Jesus is “the door of the sheep.”

Verse 8: These were imposters that came before Him.

Verse 9: Jesus is the only way of salvation & the supplier of all our needs.

Verse 10: The devil is a “murderer” (John 8:44). His focus is on destroying people, not saving them. Jesus came to give us new & abundant life.

Verse 11: Jesus came to give His life for our salvation (Isaiah 53).

Verse 12: False shepherds are in it for the \$ & not the care of sheep (13).

Verse 14: Jesus knows who belong to Him (Matthew 7:21-23).

Verse 15: Jesus describes His relationship with His sheep as similar to the relationship between Himself & His Father! WM: “The same union, communion, intimacy, & knowledge that there is between the Father & the Son exists between the Shepherd & the sheep.”

Verse 16: Here, Jesus is referring to the Gentiles & the Church which would be made up of Jew & Gentile (Galatians 3:28). All this would be possible through Christ’s death & resurrection (17-18).

2. Remember, we are dumb sheep who tend to wander off & get dirty. “Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing” (Verse 3). Jesus knows where the still waters & green pastures are. We are to follow His lead. Solomon: “Trust in the Lord with all your heart & do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, & He will make your paths straight” (Proverbs 3:5, 6).

3. Our souls need to be restored daily. The Hebrew word for “restore” (shuw) means “to turn back to God.” CR: “God’s leading is always in paths that are right in His eyes & that will honor His name.”

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4. See I Corinthians 15:51-57 (Isaiah 25:8; Hosea 13:14). Paul: “For to me, to live is Christ & to die is gain. But I am hard-pressed from both directions, having the desire to depart & be with Christ, for that is very much better” (Philippians 1:21, 23).

We need to walk through this life with courage & faith, not fear & doubt. Where there is a shadow, there is light! Jesus: “And lo, I am with you always, even to the end of this age” (Matthew 28:20).

WM: “The Shepherd’s rod & staff are sources of comfort, protection, & guidance.”

5. The Lord surrounds us with many blessings even with our enemies (the devil, his angels & followers) around us. John: “Greater is He who is in you (Holy Spirit) than he who is in the world” (I John 4:4).

Every believer in Jesus receives the anointing of the Holy Spirit at conversion. Jesus: “But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; & He will disclose to you what is to come” (John 16:13).

WM: “When we think of all the riches we have in Christ Jesus, we burst forth with grateful acknowledgement, ‘My cup runneth over!’” Question: “What riches?”

- The riches of God’s kindness, & tolerance & patience (Romans 2:4).
- The riches of His glory (9:23).
- The depth of the riches both of the wisdom & knowledge of God (11:33)!
- In Him (Christ) we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace (Ephesians 1:7).
- The riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints (18). WM: “God looks on us as a treasure of incomparable worth.” This inheritance also includes what we will inherit.
- The surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus (2:7).
- The unfathomable riches of Christ (3:8).
- And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus (Philippians 4:19).
- The riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles which is Christ in you the hope of glory (Colossians 1:27).
- See also Hebrews 11:24-26.

6. God’s goodness & mercy will follow us all of our days. We need to believe that & meditate upon that every day. See Psalm 136. David was assured of his salvation.

JVM: J. Vernon McGee

CR: Charles Ryrie

WM: William MacDonald