

Psalm

PRAYERS OF THE HEART

Week 2

Psalm: [Greek]

psalmoi – "instrumental music"

psalmos – "song for the harp"

[Hebrew] *tehillim* – "praises"

[Hebrew] *tephillot* – "prayers"

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Psalm 23 [A Psalm of David]

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

² *He makes me lie down in green pastures.
He leads me beside still waters.*

³ *He restores my soul.
He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake.*

⁴ *Even 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 overflows.*

⁶ *Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,
And I shall dwell in the house of the LORD forever. (ESV)*

OBSERVE
INTERPRET
APPLY

Psalm 23

Type: Hymn

Author: David

Purpose: Celebrating the ABIDING presence of Yahweh.

Shepherd = Leader (Verses 1-3)

*God leads us to rhythms of rest.

*God leads us on paths of righteousness.

:: True CONTENTMENT is found when we submit to God as our shepherd-leader.

Shepherd = Protector (Verse 4)

*Rod = Used to drive enemies away.

*Staff = Used to bring the flock close.

:: True comfort is found when we TRUST God as our shepherd-protector.

God as Warm Host (Verses 5-6)

*Table = Great feast; host will protect from enemies.

*Oil = Represents festivity, honor, health and blessing.

*House = Shelter, refuge, home.

:: God is FOR you!

So What?

:: Have CONFIDENCE in the heart of our shepherding God!

:: Do you need to accept the invitation to come home?

NOTES:

John 10:11-12,14-15

¹¹ "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd sacrifices his life for the sheep. ¹²A hired hand will run when he sees a wolf coming... ¹⁴"I am the good shepherd; I know my own sheep and they know me, ¹⁵just as my Father knows me and I know the Father.

So I sacrifice my life for the sheep.



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Now What? [For Further Reflection]:

- :: Share about a time in your past when Psalm 23 ministered to your heart.
 - :: What was the situation?
 - :: How did God use the words of Psalm 23 in that situation?
 - :: Pastor Josh spoke about some of the structure elements of Psalm 23, particularly around David's use of pronouns and God's name.
 - :: Did any of those 'structure observations' prove helpful to you? How?
 - :: Do you see any other poetic structure realities in Psalm 23, and how does it help us better understand the text?
 - :: Take a moment to reflect upon God as shepherd-leader.
 - :: Is there any place in your life where you need to submit to the authority of God?
 - :: Pastor Josh mentioned that contentment comes when we submit to God's authority. Why would this be true?
 - :: Meditate upon the shepherd-protector idea presented in Psalm 23.
 - :: Share a story of a time when God protected you.
 - :: What does it mean to "allow God to love us?" What makes this so hard? What are some habits and practices that would help position us to receive God's love?
 - :: Take a moment to pray and then reread Psalm 23.
 - :: What else stands out to you in this passage?
 - :: What is one change you can make in your life as a result of engaging with Psalm 23?
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How to become rooted in relationship with God:

- 1) Admitting that you, like everyone else, are in need of rescue.
- 2) Asking God to forgive your sins.
- 3) Saying YES to God by trusting Jesus as Savior & Lord.

You can do that right now by simply talking to God in a prayer like this:

Dear Lord Jesus, I know I am a sinner, and I ask for Your forgiveness. I believe You died for my sins and rose from the dead. Today, I recognize you as Savior; and I choose to respond to you as my Risen LORD. Help me to walk, stand and sit with you by faith in every area of my life. In Your name, Amen.

Unless otherwise noted, today's Scripture is from the English Standard Version [ESV].
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