

Series Psalm 23 "The Lord Is My Shepherd"
"I Shall Not Want For Safety"
Psalm 23:4
Part-5

Our passage reveals three truths about our Shepherd:

- 1. The Purpose of The Shepherd: (He Guides)**
Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
- 2. The Presence of The Shepherd: I fear no evil, for You are with me;**
- 3. The Power of The Shepherd: Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.**

The Author of Psalm 23 is David.

This Psalm is considered a "Psalm of David" and was written 3,000 years ago.

When the Lord is my shepherd, "I shall not want!" Verse 1

The Thought Of Our Passage: "The LORD Is My Shepherd, And Since The Lord Is My Shepherd, I Shall Not Want For Safety."

- 1. The Purpose of The Shepherd:**
- 2. The Presence of The Shepherd:**
- 3. The Power of The Shepherd:**

1. The Purpose of The Shepherd:

Psalm 23:4 Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, "*Indeed, even when I walk through the darkest valley*"

Note the Context – Verse 3 The "paths of righteousness" are not a pass from dark, difficult paths.

Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
When the shepherd leads through a **barren place,** it is with the purpose of guiding us to a **better place.**

Picture the growing dependence of a sheep on a shepherd as he leads during the summer and winter seasons (Safety).

1 Chronicles 29:15

the valley of the shadow of death, is translated as "*deep gloom, the glen of deep gloom.*" This is a Hebrew idiom for "*dark, difficult, bitter experiences of life.*" The word "**death**" is actually not in the Hebrew text. It is the "*Deepest darkest valley*" It speaks of those difficult, dangerous experiences that bring fear to our hearts.

"The Valley of the Shadow" is a real place located between Jerusalem and Bethlehem (about 2,700 feet above sea level) that has a fresh stream that travels down to the Dead Sea (1,300 feet below sea level). The stream

is created during the rainy season. Paths about 12 inches. During the winter months, the shepherds would lead the sheep down the path to Jericho, where the grass was green. In summer, the shepherds them back up the highlands to Bethlehem.

Why Does God Lead Us Through Deep Dark Valleys? (Three Reasons)

1. The Valley's Purify Us: (Correct Us)

the valley of the shadow of death, is as much God's right path for us as **green pastures; He leads me beside quiet waters.**

God Disciplines Us When We Have Disobeyed His Will – Psalm 119:67

1 Peter 1:6 if necessary

Trials Fulfill A Need: if necessary, indicates that there are special times when God knows that we need to go through trials.

1 Peter 1:7 so that the proof of your faith,

Trials Prove Our Faith: so that the proof of your faith, the word "proof" or trial – means "proving, testing, genuineness." A Greek word that means "to put someone to the test with the expectation of showing that he is worthy of being approved" or "your genuine faith, your faith when proved to be genuine."

so that the proof of your faith, "sterling quality of faith."

Trials Purify Our Faith: 1 Peter 1:7 even though tested by fire, (Fire does not destroy, gold it purifies it, removing the impurities) Job 23:10; Psalm 66:10

Eastern goldsmiths kept the metal in the furnace until he could see his face reflected in it. So, our Lord keeps us in the furnace of suffering until we reflect the glory and beauty of Jesus Christ.

2. The Valley's Perfect Us: (Bring To Maturity)

Trials Prepare Us For Spiritual Growth Or Even Help To Prevent Us From Sinning – (2 Corinthians 12:1-9)

Trials Force Us To See Our Helplessness, Making Us Dependent Upon God – 2 Corinthians 12:9 "My grace is sufficient for you,

3. The Valley's Prepare Us For Service:

David – anointed king of Israel, chased for the next 20 years

Moses – 40 years preparation in Egypt, next 40 years in the desert herding sheep. At age 80, Moses starts his ministry. **Psalm 30:5**

the valley

It's impossible to have a valley without a hill.

The shadow

**In order to have a shadow, there must be light. Isaiah 9:2;
Luke 1:78-79**

2. The Presence of The Shepherd:

I fear no evil, David does not say, "I feel no evil" it says **I fear no evil. How** can David say this? The answer **for You are with me;**

for You are with me; Verses 1-3 David has spoken of the Lord. "**He**" "**His**" Now, in **Verses 4-6**, David speaks to the Lord. "**You**"

Verse 4 I fear no evil, for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.

David is not speaking about the shepherd but speaking to the shepherd. In the dark valley, He is not before us but beside us, leading the way and calming our fears. *The "valley of deep darkness."*

I fear no evil,
evil - valleys have their own unique problems. The problem is fear.

You are with me; (Beside me) God's solution to fear is the shepherd's presence. He is the only one who can calm their anxieties. Joshua 1:5 Isaiah 26:3-4; 43:1-2; Hebrews 13:5-6

3. The Power of The Shepherd:

Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.

Shepherds get by with bare necessities.

(Picture Rod) Shepherds Protection: Your rod (Club) "*used to correct and to protect his sheep*" (**to protect us from the powers of evil**). It was made from a tree, the lower trunk, and the upper roots of a sapling, including the roundness of where the roots were connected to the trunk. Therefore, at the end of the rod, there was a gnarled ball that made the three-four-foot rod a powerful weapon.

Shepherd became skilled in throwing the rod with accuracy. It literally became an extension of his own hand. Protecting both the sheep and himself.

The term "**rod**" crept into slang language of the West. The slang word "**rod**" has been applied to handguns, such as pistols and revolvers, which is the same idea in the Psalm

Rod - Authority - Moses, who was a shepherd, stood before Pharaoh with his rod. **Exodus 4:2-4**. In Israelite culture, the rod was a natural symbol of "authority, the spoken word." *Today the Scriptures are His rod.*

Rod - Discipline – The shepherd observes a sheep about to eat poison or getting too close to a cliff, he could throw the staff, causing the sheep to return **Hebrews 12:6**

Rod - Examination – Ezekiel 20:37

The shepherd would inspect each sheep

No sheep "pulls the wool over God's eyes" Psalm 139:23-24

Wool – speaks of *self-life, self-will, self-assertion, and self-pride*. God must get below

Rod - Protection – Protection of both the sheep and shepherd.

1 Samuel 17:34-36; Hebrews 4:12-13

(Picture Staff) Shepherds Care: and Your staff, (Crook) Identifies The Shepherd As The Shepherd (No one in any other profession carries a staff) "used to lift and restore the sheep" (Draw you close to Him)

Staff – Drawing Sheep Together – If a newborn lamb gets separated from its mother, the shepherd uses his staff to gently lift it back to her mother's care. If the shepherd used his hands, the mother might reject her own offspring. The Comforter draws God's people together. **Revelation 22:17**

Staff – Guiding The Sheep – The shepherd will gently push on the side of the sheep to get them to move. **Isaiah 30:21**

they comfort me. "Used to lift and restore the sheep" (Draw you close to Him, symbolize the Holy Spirit) Romans 15:4 (Comfort)

Application:

1. God's People Are Going To Face Valleys In Our Lives. The Question Is Not How Many Valleys? Not How Dark Are The Valleys? But How Do I Respond To The Valleys? Knowing That God Will Lead Me:
2. Security Lies Not In My Environment, Whether Green Pastures And Still Waters Or Darkest Valley, But In My Shepherd In His Presence, There Is Neither Want Nor Fear:
3. **"Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me."** Your Rod The Comfort Of The Scriptures, Your Staff Comfort Of Guidance Through The Holy Spirit: