

## "The Lord is my shepherd"

[Psa 23:1-6](#)

The more the Lord is the shepherd of our soul, the less and less wanting we will become ([Joh 3:30](#)).

Psalm 23 is perhaps the most well-known Psalm which is sung in many various renditions which have been created throughout history. God's sovereignty can be seen throughout the scripture and is especially evident to us in these verses if God has opened up our eyes to see this. A shepherd has a fold, and our Lord reminds us that He is sovereign over every life, and scripture witnesses to this truth and how He is working in each specific fold of life. ([Joh 10:16](#) , [Act 17:28](#)).

In the world of the pagan Athenians as we read in [Act 17:28](#), God is sovereign, and those who God is working with and have anointed are further examples of how God is working all things after the council of His own will ([Eph 1:11](#)). I'm put in remembrance of what Mike Vinson said in regard to God having an anointed rejected which is typified by King Saul, and an anointed elect which is typified by King David. This truth is rejected by the world, who remind us how the Lord has led them and fed them, and brought them to green pastures, so how could they or we possibly not be His elect?

Let's look more closely at this iconic Psalm of King David to find the comfort and encouragement in these passages which speak of a Father whose good pleasure it is to give us His kingdom ([Luk 12:32](#)) and not just us, but all of humanity, each man in God's appointed time and order ([1Co 15:23](#)).

**Psa 23:1 A Psalm of David.** The LORD *is* my shepherd; I shall not want.

**Psa 23:2** He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.

**Psa 23:3** He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

**Psa 23:4** 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.

**Psa 23:5** Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

**Psa 23:6** 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.

[Psa 23:1](#) **A Psalm of David.** The LORD *is* my shepherd; I shall not want.

The Lord my shepherd; I shall not want, is the unattainable goal of all flesh until God begins to drag us unto His Son ([Joh 6:44](#)). We all initially want to define our lives as being complete and not lacking, and not wanting. For the first man Adam this definition may be more centered around the creature comforts which physically define to ourselves and others that we are blessed, and our souls are not wanting, and we lack nothing. However this can be both a physical and spiritual statement as we consider that we can be brought to think that we are rich and increased in spiritual riches. This causes us to feel that we have no need, yet God can see our true spiritually wanton state which He creates to His glory. The purification which comes about by way of fiery trials is what God uses to deal with any highmindedness or conceitedness within us ([Rom 11:20](#) , [Rom 11:25](#) , [Rev 3:17-18](#) , [Mar 4:8](#) , [1Pe 4:12](#)).

The Lord brings His elect to see that the true riches are to have peace that passes all understanding ([Php 4:7](#)), and to be able to lay up treasure in heaven as we pray God continues to grant us to seek the kingdom first and His righteousness ([Mat 6:20](#) , [Mat 6:33](#)). How we are shepherded by Christ is not the way our flesh would naturally want to go, so we are told to expect fiery trials as our Lord purifies us in this life ([Joh 21:18](#)).

The riches of this world are fine, as long as they don't cause the word within us to be choked ([Luk 8:14](#)). Each of us is called to examine ourselves to be sure that we are in the faith ([2Co 13:5](#)), and not neglecting so great a salvation ([1Ti 4:14](#)) by making our pursuit in life one which is of the flesh rather than one that is of the spirit ([Rom 8:1](#)).

God promises to take care of His sheep and is shepherding their souls away from the initial wantonness which we all start off with ([Luk 15:11-31](#)) in order to bring us to the place where we say unto God, "**The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.**"

What does it mean then to really no longer be wanting, and how is this connected to The Lord being the elect's shepherd today?

No matter what we look at in the flesh or whose flesh it is that we are looking at, that flesh is always wanting, and only by the grace of God do we become a people who are able to mortify the deeds of the flesh ([Rom 8:13](#), [Col 1:24](#)), the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh and the pride of life so that we can truly be led by the Shepherd of our soul ([Rom 8:14](#)) who is working in us both to will and to do of God's good pleasure ([3Jn 1:4](#), [Php 2:13](#), [Mat 25:21](#), [Mat 18:3](#)).

It is as mentioned above God's good pleasure to give us the kingdom, both in earnest today and in the fulness when the resurrection comes. The sheep that have the true Shepherd working in their lives are the sheep that are being given dominion over their flesh today so that they can recognize His perfect will. By being crucified with Christ we can recognize His perfect will by the faith and grace that are being given to us ([Rom 12:1-2](#), [1Jn 2:15-17](#), [Gal 2:20](#), [Eph 2:8](#))

The shepharding of our flesh by our Lord is like paper being written upon ([Psa 139:16](#)). Every story is written to the glory of God, and brings us to see that there is one event unto all men ([Ecc 9:2](#)). Very few are given to see in this age that the flesh/paper and its experience of evil by which we are humbled is all vanity ([Ecc 1:13-14](#), [Mal 4:2](#))!

[Ecc 1:14](#) I have seen **all the works that are done under the sun**; and, behold, all *is* vanity and vexation of spirit.

God's ways are surely not our ways ([Isa 55:8](#)), as He uses the weakness of this flesh to write the council of His will on all flesh of all time, to the end that He will be all in all ([1Co 15:28](#)) and we will come to see that we became part of that all in all by being brought to see that we are beasts who need to be directed all our lives ([1Co 15:31](#)) and then go unto perfection on the third day ([Ecc 3:18](#), [Luk 13:32](#)).

Our eyes and our ears are made to be subject unto vanity ([Ecc 1:8](#), [Rom 8:20](#)) as these scriptures below discuss, and that physical vanity is a shadow of the spiritual vanity ([1Co 2:9-16](#)) as the physical things reveal spiritual realities ([Rom 1:20](#)). All of this to say that God is the only one who can bring us to no longer be wanting both physically and spiritually ([1Co 4:7](#)), and truly shepherd us exactly where He has predetermined we all will go, even if our flesh does not like where it is going.

Other verses that speak to everything being vanity. ([Ecc 1:2](#), [Ecc 2:17](#), [Ecc 3:19](#), [Ecc 12:8](#)).

[Psa 23:2](#) **He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.**

[Psa 23:3](#) **He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.**

He maketh us to lie down ([Luk 12:32](#)), he leads us ([Rom 8:14](#)), and he restores us ([Isa 40:31](#)) and all for **"his name's sake."** This just sounds wonderful, and it is for the new man being formed in righteousness ([2Co 5:21](#)). However the restoration of our soul, these green pastures and still waters come by way of the destruction of the first man Adam, and God is working all of this for **"his name's sake."**

We know that we will be hated by all men for **"his name's sake."** ([Mat 24:9](#)) which is his words, and therefore by continuing in God's word, which is truth ([Joh 8:32-33](#), [Joh 17:17](#)) we will be both nourished by and restored by our Shepherd, alongside with persecutions which will work together for the good as do all things for those who love God ([Mar 10:30](#), [Rom 8:28](#)).

So let's consider that we are called by his name, and that he is giving us this rest and restoration which we are blessed to labour into today, by his grace and faith ([Heb 4:11](#), [Mat 11:28](#)).

Now we need to ask ourselves to what extent is God going to be with us through this process if we are His, and he is with us in this age ([Rom 8:9](#), [Heb 13:5](#)). The next verses address this question and present to us some of the most comforting verses ever inspired by the holy spirit.

[Psa 23:4](#) **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.**

We will fear no evil if God is with us, as we walk through the valley of the shadow of death which represents our flesh and this physical realm that we live in. Having Christ with you is not enough however, because we just read how the world lives and moves and has their being in Christ, and how Christ speaks to those Jew's who believed on him, and alongside with that belief in their hearts want to kill Christ ([Joh 8:31](#), [Joh 8:40](#)).

It will take **"thy rod and thy staff"** to comfort us. Peter was very brave faced when it came to declaring his loyalty to God in his flesh (us), but only the spirit of God within (thy rod and thy staff) Peter was going to make the difference. Until then we are assured that we will learn that we deny Christ three times ([Mat 26:34](#), [2Ti 2:13](#)), and that it is Christ alone who will not deny himself as this hope of glory is realized within us, as we go from glory to glory ([Col 1:27](#), [2Co 3:18](#)) and are given to experience perfect love which has no fear ([1Jn 4:18](#)).

We are his rod and staff which are used to comfort one another as well. The rod and staff are symbols of power and dominion over flesh which come by way of obedience which is learned as we suffer ([Heb 5:8](#)). We start off with the power of the devil whose rod and staff are found in the courts of Egypt which symbolizes our flesh being controlled by powers and principalities ([Exo 7:11-12](#), [Eph 6:12](#)).

We initially see the law for the lawless as our salvation ([1Ti 1:9](#)) seeing it has the power to swallow up these magicians' serpents at the hand of Aaron's rod, and in God's perfect time we come to understand that the law for the lawless and the staff which Aaron used to swallow up the evil of Egypt is for the preservation of our flesh ([Mat 9:17](#)).

It is only when we are raised in heavenly places with Christ in us that we will have dominion over the staff of Moses, and the law of the lawless. We find our third representation of serpents or seraphim around the throne of God ([Isa 6:2](#), [Rev 4:8](#)). These seraphim are ruling and reigning with Christ on the throne of our hearts (in other words we are the rod and staff with Christ), and in time will be used of God to bring the masses of humanity to look unto Christ and his Christ to be healed from the sting of death which sin brings upon us ([Oba 1:21](#), [1Co 6:3](#), [1Co 15:56](#)), just as the Israelites in the

wilderness experienced and then were healed when they looked to this symbol of a serpent raised on a brass pole ([Joh 3:14](#)).

It is with this power within us (thy rod and thy staff) that we are able to have no fear and do what we could not do previous to this. We need to possess our souls in patience as God creates, shapes and molds us into the likeness of His son ([Luk 21:19](#)). We are the workmanship of His hand, just like that serpent on the pole in the wilderness, which symbolizes the redeemed beast which is going to be used to save others.

**[Psa 23:5](#) Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.**

This verse like every verse in God's word has an inward and an outward application. That table is not prepared for us to lord it over those who have not, but rather is given to us as Joseph demonstrated to feed and clothe his brothers who were his enemy ([Mat 10:36](#) , [Mat 5:44](#) , [Luk 6:27](#) , [Luk 6:35](#)). At this time we are blessed if God has granted that our heads be anointed with His word which he freely gives to us, so that we can give it to others ([Heb 13:10](#) , [Mat 10:8](#)). Our cup running over speaks to the abundance of God's mercy and the unsearchableness of His ways past finding out ([1Pe 1:3](#) , [Rom 11:33](#)).

**[Psa 23:6](#) 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.**

In this last verse of Psalm 23 David simply declares his confidence in God's goodness and mercy to follow him all the days of his life. It is a process to come to this point of believing that the wonderful works that God is doing in your life are all working for the good. God's goodness and mercy being shown to King David foreshadows that goodness and mercy of God, which will be shown to those who are blessed and holy to be able to endure until the end of this age in order to become saviours ([Rom 8:28](#) , [Rom 5:5](#) , [Mat 24:13](#)).

Nothing can separate you from God's purpose which He has intended for His elect ([Mat 16:18](#) , [Eph 1:4](#)). King David's trial filled life is a type of the elect who cry out in this age for deliverance from our enemies within and without and though we walk through the valley of the shadow of death, we will fear no evil because God's mercy and goodness will follow us all the days of our lives ([Rom 8:38-39](#) , [Heb 13:5](#)).

All of these final praises of David are a declaration of what God is going to do for him and the house of the Lord which will one day be all of humanity ([1Jn 2:2](#)). It is the few whom it is given to in this age to have Christ dwell in their temple ([Mat 22:14](#) , [1Co 6:19](#)) so that they may inherit aeonian life in earnest today ([Eph 1:14](#)) and one day in the fulness of the inheritance be able to be used of God to shepherd the rest of the world under the wings of our Loving Father, which wings He has formed and fashioned in Jerusalem which is above and the mother of us all. As God's elect we are those wings that God is going to gather the rest of humanity under, in His perfect time ([Eph 1:11](#) , [Eph 1:18](#) , [Luk 13:34](#) , [Rev 4:8](#) , [Gal 4:26](#)).