

TITLE AND NUMBER: 36. The Great Shepherd

REFERENCE AND KEY VERSE(S): Psalm 23



The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing. He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he refreshes my soul. He guides me along the right paths for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

LOOKING FURTHER: John 10: 1-5; 11-12

What does this Bible passage tell us?

David, the writer of this Psalm, knows that God is at work in his life. He is now the king of Israel but was once a shepherd himself, and a very good one, too. He saved his sheep from the attack of wild animals like lions and bears (*1 Sam 17:34-35*) but, he knows that God is a much more effective Shepherd than he could ever be.

Firstly, God can provide everything necessary in life, so we will not lack. For instance, air is freely available. Imagine, if we could only breathe when we pay for air! As well as providing for us, God directs those under His guidance to the right places to get the best spiritual food and good rest for their soul. Secondly, God is with us, even in very dangerous situations. This sense of safety frees us from needless fears that can overwhelm.

However, the task of a shepherd is a two-way street. The sheep must hear, understand, and obey the instructions of the shepherd, otherwise no matter the intention of the shepherd, the sheep will miss all the good things they need (*John 10:9*). God speaks through the Bible, therefore we as His sheep must make a habit of reading the Scriptures to get the best out of life.

Reflections:

- What are the roles of the shepherd in this passage? (List as many as possible.)
- Are you aware that God is your Shepherd? Make time to ask Him to perform this role in your life.
- Take some time to thank God for His protection during difficult situations.
- Pray for God's protection for your loved ones (neighbours, friends, and family).
- How can you hear, understand and obey God's instructions?

Write or draw something you read in this Bible Study that stood out to you.



Do you have any questions about this week's Bible Study?



How does this week's message apply to your life?



What can we learn about God from this week's passage?



What would you like to ask God this week?



What have you seen God do in response to your prayers this week?

