

"The Lord is My Shepherd" Prayer - A Prayer from Psalm 23

By Debbie McDaniel

"The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. 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. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." Psalm 23:1-6

This well-known Psalm is so rich with peace and blessing for all our days. Yet often we can become so "familiar" with popular verses and chapters of God's word, that they can almost lose the important message that He is wanting to instill within our hearts. Praying God's words back to Him, and meditating on them verse by verse, can help us to remember his goodness, and be strengthened by his truths.

"The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not be in want." v.1 - He leads us, He guides us, He's always with us, and we can be assured and feel safe under His protective care.

"He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, He restores my soul..." v.2-3 - He knows where true rest and blessing are found, and leads us there, He restores, He refreshes, He brings peace and goodness.

"He guides me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake." v. 3 - He leads us to walk in His ways, He draws us to stay close to Him and follow Him.

*"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." v. 4 - Though life is uncertain and we may suffer with illness, loss, or pain, our God of comfort, our Lord who holds all power over death and disease walks with us. Always. He is the only One who can take us by the hand through life's darkest moments of suffering, bringing freedom and healing from the pain of this life, straight into glory and the hope of **heaven** that He has reserved for us. We never have to fear, in life or in death, for He is with us, our constant strength and Shepherd.*

"You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil, my cup overflows." v. 5 - We have a place at His table, He makes room for us, He wants us to stay close to Him. Through history, hosts were expected to protect their guests at all costs. God's protection is real, in the midst of the traps and attacks of enemy forces, we can find security and refuge in His great care. It doesn't mean that we won't ever face huge battles, but that He covers us with His Spirit of anointing and power, to live out our days with His strength and blessing.

"Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." v. 6 - That word for "follow" means "to chase, to pursue." We can be assured, He chases us today, and all our

days, with His goodness and love. And even at the end of all our days here on this earth, He still has more in store, and it's greater than we could ever imagine.

Dear God,

Thank you that you are our good Shepherd and we can trust you with our lives. Thank you for your leadership and Sovereignty. Thank you for your guidance and care in all our days. Thank you that you restore our souls, give us peace, and bring us hope in all of our tomorrows. Thank you for your protection and strength that surrounds us like a shield. Thank you that we never have to fear. Thank you for your goodness and love that follows after us, chases us, even when we're unaware. Thank you Lord, that you are trustworthy and able, that you are our Refuge and hope.

In You alone is rest and peace. We praise you for the assurance that we will dwell with you forever.

In Jesus' Name,

Amen.