

Psalm 23 ¹

"YAHWEH THE GREAT SHEPHERD"

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A1 THE CARE OF THE GREAT SHEPHERD 23:1-3

B1 The Guidance of the Shepherd 23:1. The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want.

C1 The greatness of the Shepherd: **Yahweh** is my shepherd

C2 The "personalness" of the Shepherd: The LORD is **my** shepherd

C3 The caring of the Shepherd: The Lord is my **shepherd**

C4 The sufficiency of the Shepherd: I shall not want.

B2 The Provisions of the Shepherd 23:2-3

C1 Abundant food: He makes me lie down in green pastures 23:2

C2 Accessible water: He leads me beside quiet waters ² 23:2

C3 Emotional and spiritual recharging: He restores my soul 23:3

C4 Right living: He guides me in the paths of righteousness 23:3

B3 The Motivation of the Shepherd: For His name's sake 23:3

A2 THE COMPANIONSHIP OF THE GREAT SHEPHERD 23:4

B1 Providing Freedom from Fear even in Death 23:4

C1 The human tragedy: Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,

C2 The freedom from fear: I fear no evil,

C3 The source of freedom: for You are with me;

¹ Psalm 23 – As New Testament believers, we know that Jesus Christ is the Great Shepherd. Yet from an Old Testament perspective, Yahweh is the Great Shepherd. Psalm 22, 23, and 24, prophetically speaking, constitute a trilogy. They typify Christ as the Good Shepherd who lays down His life for the sheep (Ps. 22; John 10:11, 14-15); as the Great Shepherd who leads His sheep (Ps. 23; Heb. 13:20-21); and as the Chief Shepherd who enters the gates of Jerusalem in all His glory, there to reign as King of Israel and King of the world (Ps. 24; 1 Peter 5:4).

² Ps. 23:2: “green pastures,” “quiet waters” – That Yahweh is the Shepherd in the person of Jesus Christ is borne out in Revelation 7:13-17, where Tribulation saints up in Heaven no longer hunger or thirst because the Lamb is their Shepherd and guides them “to springs of the water of life.”

B2 Providing Security through Control:³ Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me
23:4

A3 THE GENEROSITY OF THE GREAT HOST 23:5

B1 Providing Sustenance even in Hostile Conditions: You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;

B2 Providing Refreshing Hospitality: You have anointed my head with oil;

B3 Providing Fullness of Life: My cup overflows.

A4 THE CONFIDENCE OF THE SHEEP 23:6

B1 Expecting God's Good, Loyal Love throughout Life: Surely goodness and lovingkindness will follow me all the days of my life,

B2 Expecting Unbroken Fellowship: And I will dwell in the house of the Lord⁴ forever.

Expanded Analysis of Psalm 23
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³ Years ago we visited family in California. Our daughter was 18 months old and extremely restless at night on a mat on the floor. I finally determined that she missed the familiar confines of her crib. I stacked suitcases around her mat approximately the size of a crib. Almost immediately she drifted off to sleep. All human beings need the security of control or they become wild.

⁴ David referred to his returning continually to the tabernacle. Perhaps he was at this point prevented from attending (Allen Ross, Psalms, *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*, I, 812). The idea here is communion or fellowship. Certainly in the New Jerusalem there will be no need of a temple, "for the Lord God, the Almighty, and the Lamb, are its temple!" (Rev. 21:22)