



Psalm 23

How He Leads

Psalm 23

The LORD Is My Shepherd

A Psalm of David.

23 The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.

² He makes me lie down in green pastures.

He leads me beside still waters.

³ He restores my soul.

He leads me in paths of righteousness

for his name's sake.

⁴ 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.

⁵ You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies;

you anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.

⁶ Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me

all the days of my life,
and I shall dwell in the house of

the LORD

forever.

“Even Though...”

1. Sheep are now moving
2. Theological Surprise
3. Secular love of Psalm 23
4. Good shepherd's path of righteousness sometimes includes the valley of the shadow of death.
5. Shepherd is still leading in verse 4
6. Being in the valley does not mean we have left the right paths
7. The “even though” indicates David's understanding of how his shepherd leads.

Valley of the Shadow of Death

1. The word “Valley” is straight forward in interpretation
2. Shadow of Death
 - A. Deep darkness
 - B. A place of no return – death
 - C. Moving away from light, warmth of the sun
 - D. A perfect metaphor for death’s encroachment on life
3. Death sends its shadow ahead of time
4. We are always dying

God's prohibition in the garden

1. But they didn't die....
2. One way journey w/death
3. Calvin quote
4. Death was introduced by God
 - A. "The curse of death in the world is God's curse" - Gibson
 - B. Similar to Luther saying "the devil is God's devil"
 - C. God is sovereign over His creation and His creatures

Big God Theology

1. We will never experience death or its advance shadow outside of God's decree and His loving, fatherly care
2. Its God's valley and He led us there
3. God leads us to pain as purposely as he leads us to pleasure
4. Heidelberg Catechism # 27 & 28
5. Gibson quote

Jesus' valley path

1. Jesus walked the valley path to his sacrificial death on the cross
2. The shadow of death encompassed His life even before he was born
– Matt 1:21
3. His death displays a stunning truth
 - A. His death was the work of lawless men
 - B. At the same time, it was according to the “definite plan” of God
 - C. Acts 2:23
4. This is the supreme example of how God so often leads his children

Walking through the valley

1. Our valleys are not our destination

2. Jesus' life example

A. Incarnation, humiliation, death

B. Resurrection, crown, glory

3. We too experience suffering then glory

4. Jesus is not lost ahead of us as he leads

A. He knows the way through the valley and the way out

B. He has been through it before us

Conclusion

1. We all experience fear in life especially the fear of death
2. What kind of person simply walks through deep darkness?
3. Only a person who has no fear of it
4. Our joy comes from knowing that we are passing through the valley, it is not a final destination
5. Following Jesus' path gives us hope and confidence in the valleys
6. Our shepherd leads us on paths of righteousness that sometimes go through the valley of shadow of death. That is how he leads.
7. But we don't fear because He is with us and He knows where He's going.

Discussion/Questions

