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**The Lord Is My Shepherd**

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(Psalm 23:1 KJV)

*The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.*

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n the Psalms there are countless metaphors and descriptions for God and while each metaphor has something in particular it is emphasizing. The primary metaphor in Psalm 23 is perhaps the most personal and intimate throughout the entire bible. Throughout the entire bible you’ll discover the more distant image of king, or deliverer—or you’ll find the less personal metaphor of rock, or shield.

Now when we place our spiritual microscope upon the word Shepherd and take an instant microscopic snapshot of the biblical validity of its definite meaning—you’ll discover that a shepherd lives among the sheep, the shepherd knows sheep, the shepherd cares for the sheep, and the shepherd is everything to his sheep. In fact He is theirs, and they personally belong to him. And that’s the reason that Psalm 23 is one of the most beloved Psalms of all time because it shows us what life looks like when we know God as “my Shepherd.”

The 23rd Psalm is by far, one of the most familiar passages of scripture in the Bible. Most of us learned it as children in Sunday School, can say it by memory with a little help, have heard it at virtually every funeral service we’ve ever attended and often recite it to ourselves for comfort and reassurance in difficult times.

This is a Psalm of David and David was a shepherd. He understood the special relationship and the care a shepherd has for the sheep. So he calls the Lord his shepherd as a beautiful illustration of his own relationship with God. He does not just say that the Lord is a shepherd. But he said, “my” shepherd.

He could say that the Lord is a shepherd. He could say that the Lord is the Shepherd. He could say that the Lord is our Shepherd. In fact, that would be the most natural way to understand the shepherd imagery, because, no shepherd has just 1 sheep, but shepherds have flocks.

(John 10:27 KJV)

*My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.*

Sheep learn their master’s voice. And they learn to follow their own shepherd and not strangers. In fact traditionally sometimes two shepherds of two different flocks will cross paths for a while. The sheep intermingle behind them as they make conversation and walk along the pathways together. When the shepherds go their own way, their own flocks hear their voice and follow their own shepherd. Shockingly an observer would see the sheep separating and marvel as they follow their own shepherd. So again—the Shepherd belongs to the sheep and the sheep belongs to the Shepherd.

When it comes to our relationship with God, we should all feel this way. I would never question whether or not He’s yours, but I know for a fact that He’s mine. David knew personally the duty of a shepherd because he was a shepherd himself. David faced the lion and the bear to protect his father’s sheep. He reasoned that God was his protector, just like David had place his life between the beast and the sheep, Jesus Christ place His life between Satan and every one of us. David was journeying through the valley but he didn’t make the valley his permanent home—he kept on striving. I believe that from the beginning David’s trust in God told him that the valley was just a temporary place.

1. **The Character Of The Shepherd**

(Psalm 23:1 KJV)

*The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.*

It was by divine design that this Psalm so beautifully describes the Lord God as our great and compassionate Shepherd, for although it is often used as great comfort at a time of death or bereavement—it is equally a Psalm that points to the Lord Jesus Christ as our sustenance and support in every season of our lives. For the Lord is our Provider and Peace; the Lord is our Strength and Stay. The Lord is our Righteousness and our Reward. The Lord is our Sanctuary and our Shepherd.