

# COMMUNITY BIBLE CHURCH

## PSALMS

### LESSON 7

#### PSALM 23

WEEK OF OCTOBER 26–OCTOBER 31

### FAITHFUL PROVISION OF THE LORD

The 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm is possibly the best loved and best-known chapter of the Bible. Spurgeon described **Psalm 23** as the “*Pearl of the Psalms*”. Millions have been comforted by the words of this Psalm, and it has been memorized and recited by believers and unbelievers alike.

**Psalm 23** is an expressive poem using the image of God as the shepherd of His sheep, those whom He has saved from sin’s penalty by His grace through faith in Christ. David, the human author of **Psalm 23**, was an experienced and caring shepherd himself. David captured the parallel between his care for his sheep and the Lord’s care for His sheep. David understood that sheep are totally dependent upon the shepherd for food, water, leadership, guidance, direction and protection from a variety of dangers and predators. Just like David’s sheep, believers have the same need of the Lord, the Good Shepherd to care, protect, guide and provide for us. **Psalm 23** is a beautiful description of God’s faithful and unchanging care for His sheep.

This Psalm is a meditation on the Lord’s personal and intimate care for each one of the sheep of His flock, those who are His through faith. Take the time to thoughtfully and prayerfully meditate upon the Lord’s provision for His redeemed ones. Thank Him for His gracious provision, protection, guidance and loyal love that He so faithfully lavishes upon us. Ask God to grow our trust in Him to do exactly what He says in this Psalm that we might always find our rest and hope in His faithful care.

### Read Psalm 23:1-3. The Lord’s Provision of Spiritual Nourishment, Refreshment and Guidance.

1. In **verse 1a** David expresses a confident, close, intimate relationship with the Lord when he refers to the Lord as “*my*” shepherd. How do the following verses help to understand the depth and beauty of “The Lord is my shepherd”?
  - **John 10:11-16**
  - **1 Peter 2:25**
  - **Isaiah 40:11**
  - **Revelation 7:17**
2. From **verse 1b**, how does David describe the extent of the Lord’s provision and David’s contentment with the Lord’s provision? Read also **Psalm 34:10**, **Phil. 4:19**; **Luke 12:29-32** to shed light on the breadth of the Lord’s provision for His sheep.
3. In **verse 2**, David describes how the shepherd provides for sustenance and rest for his sheep. Read and comment on **John 6:35**; **John 14:27** and **Matt. 11:28** for the spiritual sustenance and rest the Lord provides the believer.

4. In **verse 3a**, what spiritual refreshment does the Good Shepherd provide? From **Psalm 19:7** how does the Lord provide that refreshment?
5. What does the Lord provide in **verse 3b**? How does **Psalm 119:105** help to understand how God directs our paths?

### **Read Psalm 23:4. The Lord's Provision in Dark, Threatening and Dangerous Times**

6. David describes dangerous, even life-threatening circumstances in **verse 4a**. How does David express a confident trust in the Lord as he “*walks*” through the valleys of darkness? Read **Deut. 31:8**, **Matthew 28:20** and **Hebrews 13:5** and comment on God's faithful and loyal care and provision.
7. The rod and staff in **verse 4b** were used by the shepherd to guide, direct, defend and protect his sheep. The rod symbolizes strength and protection. The staff guidance and lovingkindness. How does this verse provide comfort to you in a current situation?

### **Read Psalm 23:5-6. The Lord's Gracious Provision and Blessings**

8. In **verse 5**, David uses the picture of the banquet hall to describe the Lord's abundant provision and blessing even in the midst of difficult or trying circumstances. Read **John 10:11**, **Ephesians 3:20** and **Romans 8:31-32** and describe the blessing and abundant goodness and provision of the Lord.
9. David shifts from the present provision of the Lord in **verse 5** to God's future provision in **verse 6**. Describe the blessings provided by the *Good Shepherd* in **verse 6**.

In my father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself that where I am there you may be also. **John 14:2-3**

10. How has God used your study of and meditation upon this Psalm to increase your confidence and trust in the Lord's care for you? What particular verse or verses do you find most helpful or comforting?
11. How do the truths of God's shepherding care for you expressed in **Psalm 23** help you through a valley of darkness or uncertainty you are now experiencing?

**I am the Good Shepherd, and I know My own and My own know Me, even as the Father knows Me and I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep. John 10: 14-15**