



A PSALM OF CONFIDENCE

READ PSALM 23

In this Psalm, we find David, amidst unnerving and threatening circumstances, in a state of unshakeable serenity. In his prayer, David employs two metaphors to help us understand and rest in who the Lord is: God as Shepherd and God as Host. In a time of frenetic news cycles, the disruption of regularity, and the unveiled reality of our empty idols, we as believers are wise to seek respite in praying Psalm 23. For, it is here David helpfully reminds our hearts of the peace of God that can only be found in trusting the God of peace.

Provision (vv. 1-3)

David's opening words are rightfully some of the most known in Scripture: *The Lord is my shepherd*. Start your prayer today relishing in what Jesus makes clear in John 10—that the God of the universe, the Good Shepherd, is *my* Shepherd. It is He who cares for me, guides me, and protects me. David's next statement reveals the magnitude of this all-encompassing provision, "I lack nothing," (NIV) "I shall not want," (ESV) "I have all that I need" (NLT). My Shepherd leads me to nourishment, refreshment, and righteousness. He is a trustworthy guide, for His glory's sake.

Pray that God will help you to look to Him as your Shepherd and Provider.

Presence (v. 4)

Even when guided by the Good Shepherd, David makes it clear that our paths, our life journeys, are not void of tumult and strife. Spend some time praying that *even though* we may find

ourselves in the darkest valley, a ravine in which we see no way out, we need not fear. This is no empty courage or bootstrap boldness. We fear no evil, for our Shepherd is with us. Just as David shifts from talking *about* God (vv. 1-3) to talking *to* God, we too should pray to our Shepherd, whose presence eliminates the anxiety we experience when under threat. There is great comfort in knowing He will defend us from enemies with His rod, and discipline us with His staff to keep us on right paths.

Pray that you will feel and experience God's presence in the midst of all the turmoil.

Promise (vv. 5-6)

David now begins to pray to God as Host, one who has prepared a meal to be eaten with us. This is meant to insinuate a deep intimacy between us and God. Though enemies are present, as they consistently will be on this side of eternity, we are cleansed and made holy. Pray thanks to Christ who took the Cup of Judgment (Mark 14:32-42) so that we may drink from the Cup of Salvation and Blessing. Then, just as Jesus promised to leave the 99 to pursue the one (Matthew 18:10-14), so does He promise that His goodness, mercy, and steadfast love will *pursue* us all the days of our lives. No matter the situation, our confidence is becoming more unshakeable and unsinkable as we trust in the provision, presence, and promise of our Shepherd and Host. Thank you, Lord.

Thank God for being a keeper of promises and an ever-present source of hope.