

## **Psalms 23,24**

### **Psalms 23:1 The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want.**

Psalms 22-24 are a set. In them Christ is first Savior, Shepherd and then Sovereign. The three Psalms tell of grace, guidance and glory; cross, crook and crown. In them we find past, present, and future.

**Psalms 23:** The Shepherd motif is found throughout the Scriptures. The leaders of Israel were to think of themselves as the shepherds of the people. Many of Israel's leading figures were shepherds including all of the Patriarchs, all of the sons of Jacob, Moses, David and others. David's shepherd Psalm is the most beloved of all the Psalms and has depths of spiritual meaning waiting for any who are willing to give heart and mind to the contemplation of the Psalm.

The first challenge we face is to get past the familiarity we have with the psalm in order to be open to the work of the Spirit through the Word. Scroggie calls it a He-me psalm. In other words the psalm is a story of just two. For the author, the psalm describes the relationship between David and his Lord. As we read, the psalm becomes descriptive of Jesus and me. Others are not excluded by this but invited to enter the

same world. God has the capacity for simultaneous one on one relationships with everyone. Don't miss out! Learn to know the Lord as your shepherd.

Scroggie offers a fresh approach to the psalm. The first two verses are about provision and the subjects are the shepherd and His sheep. The next two verses are about direction and the subjects are the guide and the traveler. The final two verses are about communion and the subjects are the host and the guest.

I like to think of the psalm as a transference of David's experience as a shepherd to his experience of God's care for his soul. In the first three verses David has the shepherd meeting the everyday needs of the sheep. He sees God as his own shepherd who provides for his sustenance, his restoration and his righteous purpose for being. In the 4th verse the shepherd and sheep walk together through dangers and threats. The shepherd keeps His sheep safe from harm and even inspires confidence and peace in the midst of the trial. The last two verses could reflect David's experience of safe return from the fields and a welcome home meal prepared by his mother. His brothers may share the role of the enemy as they may have been jealous of a welcome home

that was not for them. But this does not distract from the sense of well being and blessing of family love and gratefulness. This very human experience is then magnified in the realm of the spiritual. How gladly will our Lord receive and celebrate those who have labored for Him? Who can imagine the blessings of such a scene?

Still another look at the psalm will see the Scriptural names of God repeated in this one psalm. They are: Jehovah-Rohi - the Lord my shepherd, Jehovah-Shalom - the Lord my peace, Jehova-Ropheka - the Lord my health, Jehovah-Tsidkenu - the Lord my righteousness, Jehovah-Shammah - the Lord my companion, Jehovah-Nissi - the Lord my victory, and Jehovah-Jireh - the Lord my provision.

**Psalms 24:** Where Psalms 23 invites us into a present experience of blessing, Psalms 24 describes a future experience of glory with the same Lord. The earth is God's possession. It reveals something of the glory of our Creator. But who will be able to actually be present with this God who has made all things? "He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who has not lifted up his soul to an idol nor sworn deceitfully. He shall receive blessing from the Lord." Celebrate the King of glory!

