

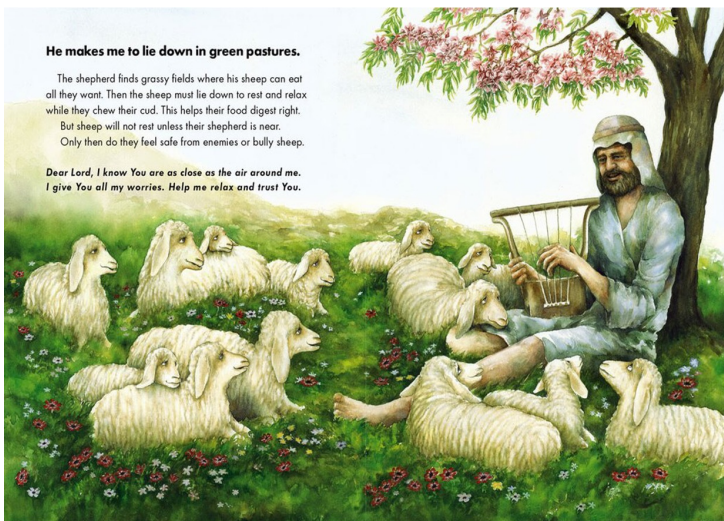
**Rhema Christian Center  
Journey Through the Bible  
October 26, 2021-Carolyn Johnson, Teacher  
The LORD Is My Shepherd - Psalm 23**

- Outline: I. The psalmist claims relationship to Yahweh, as his Shepherd v. 1  
II. He recounts his experiences Yahweh had done as his Shepherd vv. 2-5  
III. He infers that Yahweh will never leave nor forsake him. v. 6**

A shepherd, as described in the Bible, often meant a king, a civil, or spiritual leader. Joshua is an example of a civil leader, called a shepherd. (Num, 27:14) As we read Psalm 23, and compare it with Ezekiel 34, we will discover God's definitions of a good shepherd vs. an unfaithful shepherd.

**23 1 A Psalm of David. The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.**

**The Prophecy Against the Unfaithful Shepherds of Israel -**



**Ezekiel 34 Message Bible (MSG)  
34 1 And the word of the Lord came to me, saying, 2 "Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy and say to them, 'Thus says the Lord God to the shepherds: "Woe to the shepherds of Israel who feed themselves! Should not the shepherds feed the flocks?"**

**Psalm 23:2 NKJV**

He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters.

**Ezekiel 34:14 Message Bible  
14 I'll lead them into lush pasture so they can roam the mountain pastures of Israel, graze at leisure, feed in the rich pastures on the mountains of Israel.**

## What are the shepherds doing wrong?

Many of Israel's shepherds ruled with cruelty and force. In verses 3-4, God gives a list of accusation against the shepherds. In other words, the king, civil leader, or priests made a good life for themselves from the flock without feeding them and ruling them with cruelty and force.

### **Ezekiel 34:3-4**

- ***You eat the fat and clothe yourselves with the wool;***
- ***you slaughter the fatlings, but you do not feed the flock.***
- ***The weak you have not strengthened,***
- ***nor have you healed those who were sick,***
- ***nor bound up the broken,***
- ***nor brought back what was driven away,***
- ***nor sought what was lost; but with force and cruelty you have ruled***

### **Psalm 23:3 NKJV**

**3 He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness For His name's sake.**

### **How is the soul restored and from what does it need restoring?**

The original Hebrew words which are translated, "He restores my soul", are "**nafshi yeshobeb.**" **Nafshi** is from the word, "**nephesh**" (Strong's 5315) and means, "myself / soul / person / life." The second word, "**yeshobeb**" is a form of "**shub**" (Strong's 7725), the Hebrew word for repentance (to turn back, to return). From the translation of these two Hebrew words, Psalm 23:3 could easily be translated, "**He brings me back**", or "**He causes me to repent**".

**"He refreshes my soul"** When weary, in trouble, sickness, discouraged, or facing opposition by faith, I believe God by means of his Word refreshes us; He refreshes our soul. (Psalm 19:7)

## Psalm 23:4 NKJV

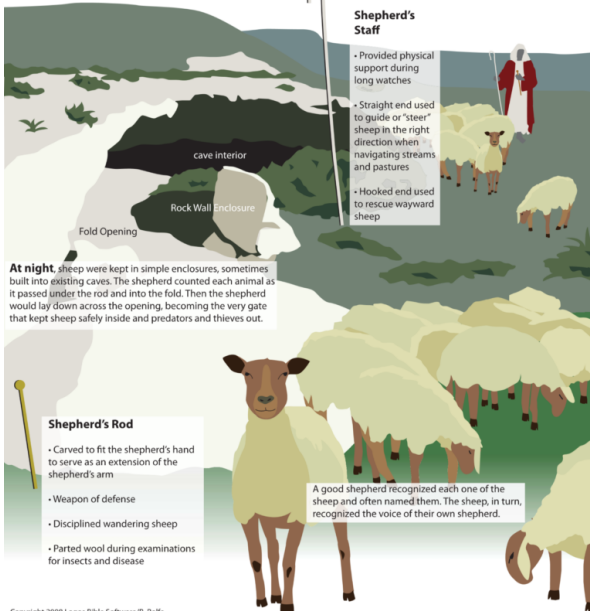
4a. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil;

4b. For You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.

### The Good Shepherd

In biblical times, a shepherd's main concern was the welfare of the flock. Providing the sheep with food and water as well as guarding them from predators and thieves were primary responsibilities. Highlighting this relationship, Jesus says in the scripture, "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep." John 10:11

#### HOW SHEPHERDS CARED FOR SHEEP



## Ezekiel 34:5-6 The Message (MSG)

5 So they were scattered because there was no shepherd, and when they were scattered they became food for all the wild animals.

6 My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and on every high hill; yes, My flock was scattered over the whole face of the earth, and no one was seeking or searching for them."

How does God then react to such negligence? He says that he's against those shepherds, and He demands His sheep from them. He calls those shepherds to account. He sets himself in opposition to them. He's not going to allow His sheep to endure that kind of treatment from negligent and domineering under-shepherds.

**Ezekiel 34:10 - The Message (MSG)**  
"Watch out! I'm coming down on the shepherds and taking my sheep back. They're fired as shepherds of my sheep. No more shepherds who just feed themselves! I'll rescue my sheep from their greed. They're not going to feed off my sheep any longer!"

## Psalm 23:5 NKJV

**5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; My cup runs over.**

“**You prepare**” comes from the Hebrew word תַּעַרְךָ **ta-‘ă-rōk**, (Strong’s 6186), which could also be translated ‘**you arrange**’. I love the idea of God arranging things for me.

During the summer, pesky “nasal flies” swarm the flock and lay eggs on the sheep’s noses. When tiny worms hatch from the eggs, they wiggle up inside the nose. Terrible itching drives the sheep crazy. They shake their heads and stamp their feet to escape the flies.

### **How is the soul restored and from what does it need restoring?**

At the first sign of flies, the shepherd pours a sticky mixture of oil on each sheep’s nose and head. Immediately, the sheep settle down. Holy Spirit has this affect upon us, when we get upset and troubled; we ask for His help and He calms us down.

## Psalm 23:6 NKJV

**Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me All the days of my life; And I will dwell in the house of the Lord Forever.**

Jesus spoke of Himself,  
*John 10:14-16* “**I am the good shepherd; and I know My sheep, and am known by My own. ... And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice; and there will be one flock and one shepherd.**”

## Ezekiel 34:20-22. (MSG)

**20-22 “Therefore, God, the Master, says: I myself am stepping in and making things right between the plump sheep and the skinny sheep. Because you forced your way with shoulder and rump and butted at all the weaker animals with your horns till you scattered them all over the hills, I’ll come in and save my dear flock, no longer let them be pushed around. I’ll step in and set things right between one sheep and**



## Ezekiel 34:23-24 Message (MSG)

**23 ‘I’ll appoint one shepherd over them all: my servant David. He’ll feed them. He’ll be their shepherd. And I, God, will be their God. My servant David will be their prince. I, God, have spoken.’”**



## **The Apostle John's Vision of Heaven:**

"Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth. . . . And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold [God's home] is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they will be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God."

"And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there will be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.'

"He who sat on the throne said, 'Behold, I make all things new.'

"And there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and of [Jesus} shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him. They shall see His face, and His name shall be on their foreheads.

"There shall be no night there. They need no lamp nor light of the sun, for the Lord God gives them light. And they shall reign forever and ever."  
Revelation 21:1, 3-7 & 22:3-5

### **Bible Study References:**

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The Message Bible

New Kings James Version

