



Desire Determination Discipline Diligence Delight Doer

Course: A Survey of the Bible: Genesis to Revelation

Lesson: 21_6k PSALMS

Passage: Psalms 23

USING DISCIPLE SKILLS

Meditating on Psalm 23

(v. 4) "Though I walk *through* the valley of the shadow of death"

(v.4) "I will fear no evil"

(v. 4) My Comfort: "Your rod and staff" - BOTH - NOT JUST ONE.

- The shepherd's ROD:

- ① The rod was an extension of the shepherd's RIGHT ARM. It was a symbol of his authority and power.

- ★ Moses' rod was a picture of his authority (spokesman of God) and his power.

- Exodus 4:1-4, 17, 20; 7:9-12; 7:15-20; etc.

- ★ (Isaiah 11:1-4; 30:1) The "rod" speaks of God's Word - His Authority. Each time Moses and Aaron approached Pharaoh's presence they would say, "Thus says the Lord"

- (Numbers 17:8-10) Blossoming of Aaron's Rod.

- ★ OUR SHEPHERD is the "the Word of God" to whom all power and authority has been given. (Matthew 28:18; John 17:2-3; John 5:22-27)

- ★ Christ will RULE "with a rod of iron" (Revelation 12:5; 19:15)

- ② An instrument of DISCIPLINE

- When a shepherd spotted one of his sheep wandering away from the flock he would skillfully throw his rod at that sheep to cause it to return to the flock. The same was done when a sheep was heading for a poisonous weed or any other danger.

- Consider the power of the ROD in Isaiah 10:5-6
- ③ Examining and counting the sheep
 - ➔ "under the rod" (Ezekiel 20:37)
 - ➔ Not only does the sheep come under the authority and power of the shepherd, but they come under his intimate, close care and examination.
- ★ Consider Psalm 139:23-24
- ④ An instrument of PROTECTION
 - ➔ The rod is for defense and deterrent.
 - ➔ Consider Christ's use of the Word of God when being tempted by Satan in Matthew 4:1-11.
- ★ In all FOUR uses, "the Rod" of our Shepherd comforts us! See Romans 15:4.
- The Shepherd's Staff
 - ➔ As the Rod of our Shepherd symbolizes the Word of God, his staff symbolizes the Holy Spirit.
 - ❶ Bringing the newborn to the mother.
 - ❷ Bringing his sheep to himself for examination.
 - ➔ It is the Spirit, the Comforter, that brings us to God.
 - ❸ Guiding his sheep.
 - ➔ See John 16:13; Isaiah 30:21
 - ➔ The Spirit of God takes the Word of God to lead us in the way we ought to go – See Joshua 1:7; 23:6; Psalm 32:8.
- BOTH God's Word (His authority and power) and His Spirit (His Comforter) are a great comfort for disciples in the midst of trouble.

(v. 5) "You Prepare A Table before Me . . ."

- The psalm describes a pilgrimage. See Genesis 17:1; 47:9; Exodus 6:4; Psalm 84:5; 119:54; Hebrews 11:13-16; 1 Peter 1:1; 2:11.
- BUT NOT ALONE! Our great Shepherd is with us!!! (Isaac - Genesis 26:3-5, 24; Jacob - Genesis 28:15; 31:3; Moses - Exodus 3:12; Joshua 1:5; 3:7; Deuteronomy 31:6, 8; 1 Chronicles 28:20; Isaiah - 41:10; 43:2-5; Jeremiah 1:8, 19; 15:20; Matthew 28:20)
- This is a journey that leads to "the house of the LORD" - See Hebrews 11:10, 13-16.
- AFTER going through the "valley of the shadow of death" the LORD (our Shepherd) prepares a table for His own! This is a picture of a festive table. One need not see the perfect peace. Usually, when a soldier is surrounded with his enemies he eats in haste! BUT here there is great peace. Who would not want this kind of peace!

- We live in the “wilderness” and though we are surrounded by many, many enemies (Satan, demons, the world and all that is in it, and even our own lusts and desires - Ephesians 2:1-3) we can have peace. SEE Isaiah 26:3-4; John 16:33; 14:27; Philippians 4:7; 2 Thessalonians 3:16; Psalm 119:165.
- Turn to Luke 12:35-37 and Revelation - consider Luke 21:34-36.

(v. 5) “You anoint my head with oil . . .”

- Shepherds would inspect each of his sheep and “anoint” them with oil to protect their skin and from insects.
- Kings, prophets, and priests were anointed with oil.
- During the days that Christ walked here on earth guests were anointed with oil. See
- ALL disciples of Christ are PRIESTS - ROYAL PRIESTS. And we say, “Priests have duties” - 1 Peter 2:5-9.
- The oil is a picture of the Holy Spirit. Each morning we pray that we might be filled with God’s Spirit so that we can accomplish the WORK that God has set before us for the day.
- Oil was also used in healing - see Mark 6:13.
- Oil was also used to prepare a body for death - see Luke 7:44-47; Mark 14:8; Mark 14:8; John 12:7.

(v. 5) “My cup runs over . . .”

- God back to verse 1 - “I shall not lack!”
- Here the disciple says, “I have more than I expected!”; “More than I have asked for”; “More than I desired”; “More than I am able to hold” - “MY CUP RUNS OVER!” (See John 10:10; Psalm 36:7-9)
- See John 21:4-6; Luke 5:4-8.
- See Paul’s prayer for the saints at Ephesians 3:14-21.



