

## Psalm 23 – Walk Through It

***For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. 17 For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, “The righteous shall live by faith.”***  
Romans 1:16-17 16

***“The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.”***  
John 10:10

### I. POV of a Sheep

***“The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name’s sake. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD forever.”***  
Psalm 23:1-6

Psalm 23 is for a lot of categories of people. It’s for those who read it through the lenses of being a sheep, who feel lost, who need to be reminded that God has them in His hands.

*Sheep are fearful, easily distracted, and can be very misled.*

Facts about sheep:

- Sheep are easy prey.
- Sheep can drink too much water where they’ll drown themselves.
- They can die by being stuck lying on their backs.
- Sheep can become easily lost.
- Sheep will walk off cliffs.
- Sheep need community.
- Sheep are easily distracted.
- Sheep have almost 320-degree eyesight.

- Sheep have no homing compass.  
Sheep don't necessarily follow the leader, but whoever is right in front of them.
- They have outstanding night vision.
- They are able to remember faces of humans and other sheep.
- Sheep need a shepherd.

## **II. In My Shepherd's Care**

Jesus calls Himself our Good Shepherd.

***The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice.***

**John 10:3-4**

***I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.***

**John 10:11**

***I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep.***

**John 10:14-15**

***My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand.***

**John 10:27-28**

***Know that the LORD, He is God; it is He who has made us, and not we ourselves; we are His people and the sheep of His pasture.***

**Psalm 100:3**

Sheep are calm and relaxed when they see their shepherd. In the same way, when we see evidence of God's presence in our lives we are at peace. But what happens in the valley?

## **III. The Valley**

***Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.***

**Psalm 23:4-5**

**God never says, “Get over it.” He tells us, “walk through it.”**

There’s a difference between *get over it* and *walk through it*. Get over it is an apathetic term that tells someone to brush it off and ignore the obstacle. Telling someone to *walk through it* tells them to acknowledge the adversity and trials and discover how to endure through it.

**It doesn’t take faith to ignore the valley. It takes faith to trust and follow Jesus in the valley.**

When we follow teachings/beliefs from false shepherds who are not Jesus, we’re walking deeper into the valley.

When we search for purpose outside of Christ, we’re taking a detour in the valley.

When we search AI for every answer/side effect/lifestyle change we’re walking deeper into the valley of unbelief and misplaced trust.

Staying out of church/community at church because of previous church hurt allows us to remain in the valley of bitterness.

Holding onto sin, pleasure, or selfish ambitions keep us in the valley of complacency.

Trusting in our own strength and efforts traps us in the valley of pride.

Letting our insecurities lead and dominate us immerses us in the valley of isolation and fear.

Valleys come in various sizes and names. They’re not necessarily sinful.

In the valley, thieves must go through the Shepherd to harm his sheep.

**We do not identify with the valley; we identify with our Shepherd.**

## **IV. David's Valleys**

David knew what it meant to be in the valley. He'd experienced it plenty of times.

**The valleys we have the most peace in are the ones where we've already witnessed God's faithfulness.**

David's most notorious valley was his adultery.

David went through other valleys of:

Saul trying to pursue and kill him.

The loss of he and Bathsheba's first son.

Their women and children being kidnapped by the Amalekites.

David's own followers wanting to stone him.

David's sons rising against him.

**Our toughest valleys are the ones we don't expect.**

*David had many opportunities to identify with the valleys.* Instead, he chose to identify with the real Giant Slayer, the Restorer of life, and with God's mercy and forgiveness.

**David learned to identify with a Personal God in the valley.**

**We discover just how close and personal God is when we're in the valley.**

David, at the end of his life, could have highlighted the valleys he experienced. Instead, he remembered God's faithfulness.

***As the LORD lives, who has redeemed my life from every distress,***  
**1 Kings 1:29**

**The valley you're currently in is not permanent; it's temporary.**

## V. God's Relentless Pursuit

Just because God allows us to go through the valley doesn't mean He's abandoned us.

I believe the valleys and storms of our lives are the greatest opportunities for us to witness God's grace and mercy.

***Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD forever.***

**Psalm 23:6**

**follow -> rāḡāp -> to pursue ardently (with intense emotion, passion, or deep enthusiasm), aim eagerly to secure, pursue**

**The valley is the breeding ground for grace and mercy to be found.**

**God is unintimidated by the size or depth of our valleys.**

***Now there is in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate a pool, which is called in Hebrew, Bethesda, having five porches. In these lay a great multitude of sick people, blind, lame, paralyzed, waiting for the moving of the water. For an angel went down at a certain time into the pool and stirred up the water; then whoever stepped in first, after the stirring of the water, was made well of whatever disease he had. Now a certain man was there who had an infirmity thirty-eight years.***

**John 5:2-5**

Bethesda means, "House of Mercy."

There were five colonnades surrounding the pool. The number 5 represents Grace.

Symbolically, we see this lame man was unknowingly surrounded by mercy and grace.

**God's grace and mercy finds those who know they need it the most.**