

Sunday – May 17, 2020

A Message From Your Pastor

Background - David has written a song which has been sung by countless believers worldwide and will continue to be sung and recited with great joy and satisfaction as long as the world stands. David, first and foremost, clearly expresses his personal relationship with his God. Psalm 23 (v.1) – “The LORD is my shepherd...” LORD = Yaweh, Jehovah = the self-existent one, the eternal God, the only true and living God, the Almighty, the Great I AM THAT I AM. There are other great names used for our God. Jehovah-Jireh (Gen.22:14) = “the LORD will see to it”. Jehovah-Nissi Ex.17:15) = “Jehovah is my banner”. Jehovah-Shalom (Judges 6:24) = “Jehovah is peace”. This is the God that David is talking about, and he boldly says: “The LORD (He) is MY shepherd...” Is He your shepherd? This is the God that we love and serve. The God of all creation – the God who sustains us – the God of peace – the God of comfort. David gives us seven divine provisions in this great 23rd Psalm which truly confirm his statement: “I shall not want...”

**FIRST** – I Shall Not Want For Divine Cereal (food)– “He maketh me to lie down in green pastures...” These are lush, green pastures. Just think of all the spiritual food and blessings that the Lord provides. There is food to **ENRICH** us. I Cor.1:5 tells us that in everything we are enriched by him in all knowledge and utterance. Then he gives us food to ENJOY. Job 23:12 says: “I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food.” How much do you enjoy the Word of God? God also provides this divine food to **EQUIP** us for service. Galatians 6:6 reads; “Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things”. We are all teachers in some way. Then we need to be **ENLIGHTENED**. When we receive the light offered by God’s Word we capture the exact image he wants us to have, just like a photo-copy. Psalm 119:130 – “The entrance of thy word giveth light.” Since we need the power of God to be effective in our service, He also gives us food to **EMPOWER** us. The Word of God is alive, “quick and powerful”, says Hebrews 4:12. It pierces deep into the heart of man. It is our authority and it is the final say! We ought

always to be **ENCOURAGED** by the word and through it we receive much learning. We are to be good students.

**SECOND** – You can say: I Shall Not Want For Divine Contentment. The Lord leads His sheep beside the “still waters”. Sheep are what we would call in old fashioned terms: “scaredy cats”. We get the term “sheepish” from this idea. Moving waters are frightening to these gentle animals. Beside the still waters there is **PEACE**. The sheep have a sense of **PROTECTION**. They are contented because their shepherd is watching over them. The shepherd **PROVIDES** for his sheep.

**THIRD** – I Shall Not Want For Divine Cleansing. Shearing the sheep allows them to grow a fresh, clean coat of wool. The next part of this verse in Psalm 23 says: “He restoreth my soul.” The Hebrew word for restore is “shoob”. It means to return to the starting point, to pull in again, to recover. The Lord has **RESCUED** us. He **REMOVED** the condemnation of our sins and **REMADE** us through His redemptive work! “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”

**FOURTH** – Another great blessing found in this Psalm is that I Shall Not Want For Divine Companionship. It says: “..for thou art with me.” He will never leave us nor forsake us. He is, by all means, a **FAITHFUL** companion. He is a **FRIENDLY** companion. Proverbs 18:24 informs us that “..there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother”. What a Friend we have in Jesus, beloved! He should be our **FAVORITE** companion. How much do YOU enjoy being with Him? What a companion!

**FIFTH** – I Shall Not Want For Divine Comfort “Thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me”. What? How do these instruments of correction find their way into comforting the sheep? Well, sheep are prone to wander off into a danger zone. The rod of correction is often hurtful, but at the same time, it is much needed. The shepherd sometimes had to break one of the legs of a stubborn, wandering sheep to protect him or her from predators. He would then carry that sheep upon his own shoulders. The hook on the shepherd’s staff was often to pull a sheep closer to the flock and prevent it from wandering off. God chastens us

for our own good. “For whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth...” Sometimes it hurts, but we learn from it. Chastening may come in the form of sickness, disappointment, financial breakdown, whatever is needed to get our attention and get us back in close relationship with the Lord. Remember that the devil is close by walking around like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. When something is devoured, it is gone, so beware. The devil has a voracious appetite, and he sees Christians as a real delicacy. So stay close to the Lord.

**SIXTH** – I Shall Not Want For Divine Care “Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies.” We see here that our Lord is a **SERVANT**. He is preparing a mansion for us in our heavenly home (John 14:2,3) He is preparing a reserved table for us at the heavenly banquet. What a “spread” that will be! The enemies of God are our enemies. They don’t stand a chance without Jesus as their Saviour. (I Corinthians 2:9) – “But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.” Hallelujah! Jesus cares for you, beloved. Peter said: “Casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you.” Here is how C.F. Weigle worded it like this: “I would love to tell you what I think of Jesus, Since I found in him a friend so strong and true. I would tell you how he changed my life completely. He did something that no other friend could do. No one ever cared for me like Jesus. There’s no other friend so kind as he. No one else could take the sin and darkness from me, O how much he cared for me.” The Lord is also our **SUSTAINER**. He came to give us life and to give it more abundantly. We can be glad that he is our **SIN-BEARER**. “Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness; by whose stripes we are healed.” He paid a debt he did not owe, and I owed a debt I could not pay.

**SEVENTH** – I Shall Not Want For Divine Calm – “Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the lord forever.” The Lord gives us a divine calm amidst the stormy torrents of life. He wraps his loving arms around us when fear gets a mighty grip on us. He reaches out his nail-scarred hands to lift us

up with hope when the feeling of uncertainty overwhelms us. He has provided a very bright future for his children. We will all get through this major crisis together. Stay safe, follow the guidelines given and make wise decisions to protect yourself and others. This whole pandemic may take awhile to get back to normal, so seek the Lord and trust Him. He knows best!

#### SOME VERY IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

Please pray for our church's finances. Your tithes and offerings are crucial in keeping us up to date with our expenses. Also, we are planning to hold church services on Sunday, May 24<sup>th</sup>. We are to only have 25 people in one gathering. Please inform us if you plan to attend, so we know if we will have to have two services. We will have to use social distancing and wear masks. There will be no hugging or shaking hands, please. We will put the offering plate at the back of the church for your tithes and offerings so you won't have to touch the plate. Depending on how many folks attend, whether we will hold two services in the morning. One at 10 am to 10:45, (to give 15 minutes to sanitize) then one at 11 am. God bless and looking forward to seeing you.