

8/4/19 - Psalm 23 - "The LORD Will Provide"

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 04 August 2019

Preacher: Brenton Beck

[0 : 00] Please join me in prayer. Father God, we pray at this time. Father, as you have united this church, you have organized this church, you've set this church apart.

We pray for your power at this time to come to life in your word. We pray for your life to come out of these pages and into our hearts.

We pray that it doesn't just stick in our heads, but it infiltrates our hearts. Father, let there be encouragement where encouragement is due. And let there be conviction where conviction is due. Only the Holy Spirit makes this possible and applies your word perfectly in our lives. So we trust in your word this morning. We pray that it comes to life in this church.

We pray in Jesus' precious name. Amen. Psalm 23. It reads, The Lord is my shepherd.

[1 : 07] 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 may comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil. You anoint my head with oil.

A 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.

However, we're beginning today, the 23rd Psalm of the Psalter. And this psalm is known as a psalm of great confidence and great comfort.

[2 : 06] It has two metaphors that are actually brought into discussion. That of a shepherd and a sheep. And that of a host and a guest.

And we see also that this is actually one of the most condensed sweet realities of God's close relationship with his creation.

One of the most condensed testimonies of God's sweet and close relationship with his creation.

There is no psalm that can instill so much confidence in life's trials.

I love Psalm 23. Spurgeon called this psalm in particular the pearl of psalms. There's a theologian and scholar in the late 1800s known as J.J. Stuart Perrone.

He says, There is no psalm in which the absence of all doubt, misgiving, fear, and anxiety is so remarkable. And also theologian Alexander McLaren calls this a sunny book.

[3 : 17] It has dried many tears and supplied the mold into which many hearts have poured their peaceful faith. Personally, when I was about 10 years old, when the Lord was really working in my life at a young age, when I was attending, you know, just regular kids' church and everything, I was living at my grandmother's house at that time.

And the only Bible I had at the time was the KJV. To some, that's the only version that matters these days. But we read from the KJV. And even to this day, I was like, Lord, help me stay on track and not recite the KJV version.

Because it's like, He leadeth me by still waters. He restoreth my soul. Things like that. So me at a young age, like 10 years old, you know, I'd recite this.

I'd repeat it. I'd memorize it because of the implications that it had in my trial at that time at a young age. It was my parents separating, some health issues, things like that.

I didn't know if I was going to be alive the following month. Things like that. And this psalm is literally that psalm that brings that sweetness in life's trials, that confidence and that comfort.

[4 : 34] But let's look at this psalm and observe the significance of these metaphors that David uses. He uses them for a specific purpose. And see how this text not only brought great confidence to David in his life back in this time, but also can do the same for us today.

Okay. The first verse says, The Lord is my shepherd. I shall not want. The Lord is my shepherd. I shall not want. Now, when I was a young kid, I was like, Why don't we want the shepherd? I'm like, the Lord is my shepherd. Why wouldn't I want him? It kind of read odd.

You know, being young, I'm just like, Well, I've memorized it anyways because it's God's Word. But it's saying that we have all we need in some translations. The NLT, kind of more of a paraphrase Bible, it says something along those lines, which kind of clarifies that.

This one verse, The Lord is my shepherd. I shall not want. Sets the pace and the tone and the theme going on in the rest of the verses.

[5 : 41] And we're going to look at that. Within this verse, we can identify the object of discussion. But also, not even that, but the adjective that describes the object, which the shepherd is an adjective given to the Lord.

So it can also dually, it doesn't say sheep, anything about sheep. But you can also understand that it's implied that David is referring to himself as a sheep as well. The Lord's sheep.

The shepherd's sheep. Within this relationship, there's kind of a two-way dynamic between the Lord and David and David and the Lord. God is the all-sufficient provider for his sheep.

So everything that sheep need, the Lord provides. But also, David, being the Lord's sheep, is in complete dependence upon God.

The Lord, the shepherd. This word Lord, this term Lord, is actually one of the most personal names that can be attributed to God.

[6 : 47] It's repeated thousands of times in the Old Testament. It's first ever revealed in the burning bush back in Exodus 3 with Moses. It literally means, I am who I am.

And for anybody who doesn't know about that, we're going to talk about that for a minute. This points us to the source of David's provision. That he has all that he needs because God is all he needs.

God is the all-encompassing, all-sufficient, timeless being. God needs nothing. He needs no wisdom. He needs no power. He needs no help. And he doesn't even need worship.

He does not answer to anybody except himself. He is all-sufficient. He is not dependent upon anyone. So no wonder David could confidently rest in the provision of the eternal, all-sufficient God, right?

No wonder. He had all he needed because God was all that he needed. But what exactly is the reason for his confidence in this provision?

[7 : 53] What was the reason? To truly understand this, we must look at one word, which is shepherd. Only then will we know the depth and the length of this provision. So let's talk a little bit about the profound meaning within these five words.

The Lord is my shepherd in Psalm 23. Have you guys ever heard of, I think it's on like TLC or something, called Dirty Jobs? Yeah.

Dirty Jobs. Now, I'm not endorsing the show. I don't know what, you know, I haven't watched that diligently, so I'm just referring to it. Everybody's going to be like, okay, family, let's watch some disgusting work.

Some of it is graphic, and I would never endorse that show. However, shepherding is a dirty job. Just like the host on Dirty Jobs would often get in very dirty situations, very tight situations. I think one situation, he cleaned like in the inside of a buoy, and you can barely fit your body in there, and so he's in there like scrubbing around inside of a buoy.

[9 : 03] That would freak me out being a person who is just utterly claustrophobic. I'm helplessly claustrophobic. And that is one of the dirty jobs that he goes through.

But shepherding was a dirty job. It's one of the oldest occupations known. No one ever really wanted to be a shepherd. It was a lowly position and a lowly task.

Usually the youngest of a family back in history was chosen. They were assigned to the task of a shepherd. Shepherding was a 24-7 task.

Think about it. Back in that day, not with all our luxuries today, think about that day. Shepherding was a 24-7 task. You were often exposed to extreme weather elements.

You'd be out there day and night with this herd. Rain or sun, you'd be out there with them.

[10 : 07] Summer, winter, all seasons, constantly laboring and nourishing and guiding and protecting your flock, your sheep. With such a dirty job, we can imagine that it really took a skillful person to fulfill this job and to carry it out without losing the flock that's been entrusted to them, that

they've been assigned to.

Shepherds were extremely skilled individuals, especially as warriors and hunters among people. In ancient days and even today, shepherds not only had a difficult job, but they were known as these guardians and protectors of their sheep.

They had like a dual kind of purpose. They were gentle and they were strong. They were tender, but yet they were courageous. And they were caring, but they were also fierce.

Isn't this odd? In this first verse in Psalm 23, the Lord is my shepherd. That such a high being, the great I am, the Lord, Yahweh, known as the great I am, has chosen the task of such a lowly role. As described as David's shepherd. Within this single verse, church, we see that the Lord, Yahweh, Jehovah, has assigned himself.

[11:41] No, remember, he doesn't answer to anybody. Nobody assigns the Lord a task. He assigned himself as David's shepherd. If he was David's shepherd, it's because he chose to be.

And this unique metaphor has been used throughout Scripture, even back to Genesis 48, back when Jacob blesses his sons.

To describe the miraculous relationship between a holy, divine God and sinful man, whose only ancestor, really, if you trace back far enough, is dust.

It's been used very commonly throughout Scripture. And this is good news. Because this miraculous relationship exists even still today as Jesus Christ has applied the same metaphor to himself.

It's prophecy fulfilled back in Ezekiel 34, that God would come to shepherd his people. And as revealed in John 10, verse 11, as Jesus identifies himself as the good shepherd, laying down his life for his sheep.

[12:50] Being described as a sheep is sometimes, I must say, it's offensive, you know. You get, you say, oh yeah, there's, you know, the church is often referred, like, degrading as, like, sheep.

You know, oh, these sheep just follow in those man-made things and, you know, these words that were written by man. And, you know, it's just all in-informed and ill-informed information and facts that they've been fed.

But being described as a sheep is sometimes offensive and degrading. After all, without a shepherd, sheep literally lack everything.

I mean, we used to have a sheep farmer that went to our church. She has, like, 300 sheep. And if she were here today, I'd probably bring her up and, like, testify that sheep literally lack everything. One commentator went so far, I just want to say, this is commentator's words, not my words, because, you know, I do appreciate, you know, animals. I don't just, you know, hate and despise them.

[13:54] But he said that sheep are the dumbest animals on earth, on the planet. I think my wife kind of seconded that. I don't know. I don't, I have never dealt personally with a sheep.

But this is what a commentator said. So I want to illustrate that because it has a point and a purpose. So if anything, if a sheep has anything, if it has provision, if it's been provided for, it has nothing to do with anything that they could do for themselves.

It is because the shepherd has provided to that helpless sheep, did all the work for it. The same is true in verse 1.

The Lord is my shepherd. I shall not want. And the same rings true between our finite lives on this earth being united with a divine God through faith in Christ.

So today I'm going to speak on five points in this passage using each verse and following this as a separate point. To examine the shepherd's provision in the following points.

[14:57] Through number one, rest and nourishment. Through life and direction. Through protection. The provision through vindication. And the provision through eternal rest.

So let's look at first point this morning. Which is the shepherd's provision of rest and nourishment. Verse 2 says, He makes me lie down in green pastures.

He leads me beside still waters. I'm going to be quite honest with you. In preparation for this study, I feel like I know way too much about sheep.

I have studied and commentator after commentator, resource after resource. It's just like they always bring something new. And I just know so, I feel as if I could probably do this. Honestly. But I have a question for you. If we actually were shepherds. If we had this opportunity. When is the last time that you tried to make a sheep lie down?

[16:04] From what little I knew before studying, you know, about sheeps and shepherds and things like that. I already knew that.

How do you make this thing sit? How do you make this thing stop moving? Because sheep are, quote, unique. Remember as the commentator said, the dumbest animals on earth.

They're helpless. And I loved reading and discovering the words of Philip Keller. He was a shepherd for eight years. I'm so glad that we came across this resource.

And he describes this Psalm 23 so vividly with such a description in his book. A shepherd looks at Psalm 23. Philip Keller says, The first requirement, owing it to their timidity, they refuse to lie down unless they are free from all fear.

They have to have confidence that they're at peace. They have no fear. Number three, if tormented by flies or parasites, sheep will not lie down unless they are free from pests.

[17:30] And lastly, four, sheep will not lie down as long as they feel a need of finding food. So they must be free of hunger to lie down and rest.

Coming from a man who is definitely more qualified of being a shepherd than myself. He did it for 18 years, Philip Keller. The shepherd provides the sheep rest by establishing a relationship where the sheep can have trust in their shepherd when they are afraid.

They can have peace when there is friction. They can have deliverance and protection from enemies when they are afraid. They can have food and water when they are famished.

Looking at David's life, if we are missing anything within our current century today, we really don't know what shepherding was like. David is referring to a culturally specific metaphor.

That his readers and his audience would know immediately what he is talking about in this. But it is the reality that the setting that David is called a shepherd.

[18:41] David himself was a shepherd. Imagine David in his first person. Imagine, if you want to close your eyes and just imagine for a moment, Imagine the rough terrain.

The hills. The valleys. The dust. Think about it. It is ancient Palestine. A majority of the duty back in this time was journeying from grazing land to grazing land.

Because if you could imagine, there wasn't an abundance out in these lands. There wasn't these green pastures that we are going to be speaking about. There wasn't a circle K around the corner to get a drink.

Grazing just simply wasn't in abundance. We often come in our minds with the end result of the journey of the grazing lands. The pictures of the green fields and everything.

We miss the treacherous steps that it took to get to that point. We get a glimpse of that in verse 4 as we continue, but not a vivid description. But with the help of my youngest children Bible, I hope to, you know, this is kind of what comes to our minds so quickly.

[19:58] Is, look at this. It's just the green everywhere. Look, the shepherd is even smiling. Isn't that funny? I think the sheep might be smiling. Everything's green.

Nice blue skies. Look at that weather. Pine trees. Could you imagine they have pine trees in Palestine? How accurate is this? Wow. Flowers.

Maybe tulips. We often get to this passage. And we take the journey too fast to this.

Even as inaccurate as this can be. And we forget about the steps that it took to get to this place. We can thank Levi for letting me borrow his children's Bible.

But we see green pastures in this verse. Verse 2. It says green pastures. In some translations, it's known as pastures of grass.

[21:02] If there's any wondering what the green was representing, some translations say pastures of grass. And this points to that very provision along the journey.

Specifically that being between the Lord and David. Once the journey ends, David finds an abundant nourishment from the Lord. Because notice, pastures is plural.

Pastures is plural. There's an S on that. And there's an abundance being communicated here of pastures. Green pastures. Pastures. And in his parallel statement with the second half of verse 2.

David provides us with another image of God's care for his people. It says, He leads me beside still waters. This literally reads in Hebrew, Still means rest.

Or more accurately read in Hebrew, Upon waters of rest, he guides me. And also a little neat observation is that rest in Hebrew is actually a now.

[22:01] So any advanced English students can understand that this brings great comfort in David's life. Because the Lord is literally the place of rest.

A noun is a person, place, or thing. It's not a verb. It is a place of great rest and nourishment. And as we move into verse 3, we see point 2.

The shepherd's provision of life and direction. Verse 3 reads, He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his namesake.

It seems kind of odd. It just seems like restores my soul. Where did that even come from? Like he's talking about pastures and grass and everything, but restores my soul? Hmm.

Is that a lapse of ADD for David? Because we just examined the image of the shepherd and his flock.

[23 : 07] Verse 2 seems kind of clear. We see the lush pastures besides still waters where the flock arrive after a tumultuous journey. And they rest under the careful watch of the eye of the shepherd. But he restores my soul.

It seems just odd, right? Just as there's a literal relationship between the sheep and their shepherd, being so dependent, we can also see that David attributes nothing of his own doing that counts for the restoration of his soul.

Remember, David is completely helpless, dependent upon his shepherd. And so we see here, it is he, the Lord, who restores his soul.

R.C. Sproul actually describes this idiom, he restores my soul, to being that of physical renewal that sheep experience only once they get the needed food, water, and rest mentioned in the previous verses.

However, Derek Kinder, an Old Testament scholar of our day, he passed away in 2008. He takes it even deeper. He mentioned that in this Hebrew idiom, he restores my soul, can literally mean, brings me to repentance or conversion.

[24 : 25] So can we understand that credit is given where credit is due, church? It is he, as verse 3 says, who restores you too.

It is he who seeks out the wandering sheep. It is he who binds the wounds of this life. It is also he who heals those bound wounds. It is he who establishes the flock together.

Hello, church, it's you. If today, Christ is your shepherd and you are his sheep, the credit goes to God for coming alive in you by the work of his spirit and the power of his word.

For pursuing you, church, every one of you. He has restored you and he is restoring you. But not only does he restore you, providing true life for you, but he also provides you with a direction of righteousness.

Or in other words, it's a map laid out for you, black and white, that's revealed in his written word for us today. We see the word leads in this.

[25 : 39] We must take a second and observe the motion of this verse as well. He leads me in paths of righteousness. When the shepherd is in motion, it's interesting because you think of a resting sheep, you think that maybe the shepherd could kick back a little bit with lemonade and just relax a bit while the sheep are resting and everything.

Remember, sheep, you know, even if they need rest, they probably don't even know they need to rest. So, obviously, as maybe a majority of the sheep, you've got those wandering sheep that decide that it's a good idea to head towards a cliff and, I don't know, we'll just go down there and, you know, see what's down there.

And, you know, facing their eventual possible death, the shepherd, when he needs to be resting, he runs over, leaves the flock and gets that sheep. And there's a parable about that in the New Testament about Jesus and how he treats that.

There is motion. Not only in their rest is he leading the sheep, but also, when they are on, in their travels from destination to destination, the sheep are following the shepherd.

The sheep know the shepherd's voice. Isn't it amazing how effortlessly that even I, I'll just pick on myself rather than picking on you guys, I'll pick on myself, how often I can observe in my life moments that are literally almost hilarious of how feeble-minded I can be.

[27 : 06] I can't be the only one here. And we can observe these points and I'm just like, what was I even thinking? How could I even not trust God in this? Yes. We, like sheep, we stumble, we kind of like wander around at times and we don't, we sometimes decide to look at things and go to various things on our own power and our own strength and we find ourselves in danger and as soon as we wander the Lord swoops us up and convicts us and we know the good shepherd and not only that, but we are known by this good shepherd, Jesus.

Isaiah 53, 6 says, all we like sheep have gone astray. We have turned everyone to our own way and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

It is the Lord who leads us in paths of righteousness. We can't even, on our own power and our own wisdom and our own logic, who would we be to actually think that we can make the right decision for our lives?

We're dealing with an eternal, all-sufficient, Lord, I am who I am. I am all-sufficient, all-encompassing. I am the Lord. Lord, I will lead you in paths of righteousness.

We need that. And as we continue in verse 4, the verse actually, this whole passage takes a dark turn. As we see in point 4, the shepherd's provision and protection.

[28 : 43] point 3, sorry, shepherd's provision and protection. Verse 4 says, 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. This verse speaks clearly of, to the shepherd's ability to protect the sheep in moments of danger.

It is known as the popular, quote, deathbed verse. It's often read at bedsides of people who are going to be home with the Lord. And actually, quite interestingly, we kind of pluck scripture out of context more often than we like to admit at times.

But this is actually using this verse in proper context. Using it as a deathbed verse. Assuming that you're reading it to a Christian.

But there's also motion of verses in here. We see the motion here. Some might say, okay, Brent, well, let's just wait a minute.

[29 : 54] You just told me, and David told me, so, you know, there's a little connection here. David just wrote, he leads me in paths of righteousness. righteousness. Well, why in the world are we in this dark place?

Why would, why would his paths of righteousness all of a sudden lead to this dark valley? This dark place? Dangerous place?

Well, guess what, church? This is precisely where righteousness is made most effective. It is where righteousness is effectively tested and refined in the midst of trial and tribulation.

The Christian life is not always like an Instagram, like kind of, like Instagram has turned into kind of like the highlight reel of life. You only see the good stuff on Instagram. You see the birthdays, the anniversaries, the weddings.

The Christian life is not like that. It's not always mountaintop, climatic mountaintop experiences. The reality is that God will lead us in treacherous valleys.

[31 : 10] And within these valleys, God refines us and shapes our character. Just as a literal shepherd like David, thinking back to David being a shepherd, he was concerned about getting his sheep through the destination.

through the valley of the shadow of death. He's not getting him to. The Lord is not leading you just to leave you there. There's a key word in this verse, even though I walk through, that there is a beginning and there is an end.

That is our hope as we're going through these treacherous valleys and these treacherous lands.

And so David knew this. He would never lead his sheep to a dark place where they're in danger.

He protected them. Within these valleys, God refines us. Within this, it's true for our lives as well. Like, think about a church.

You know, they call pastors and elders overseers to shepherd the church. This is the same reality of why I stand here today, why I have such great concern for each and every person of this church body, why I care so deeply for you guys.

[32 : 22] It is that very same care that David had with his sheep and which God has with us.

Church, we are never so conscious of the presence of God in our lives than the moments we recall passing through life's valleys.

We are never so conscious of the presence of God in our lives than in the moments that we can recall of passing through life's valleys. Suffering and trials are not always self-inflicted.

It's not always your fault, you know, going through these treacherous times and these scary times in life. But literally, as God leads us in paths of righteousness, he's going to lead us through dark times for our good.

But they're provided to us for usefulness, for our growth, for our maturing of our soul. people. And if you're sitting in here today and you are in a valley, I encourage you to take heart, church.

Take heart because the good shepherd, Jesus Christ, will see you through because of the confidence, the very same confidence that David had. And not only that, just considering all the countless testimonies throughout the ages of God's faithfulness, things, he will not abandon you and not forsake you.

[33 : 43] He will not abandon your marriage relationships. He will not abandon your families. He will not abandon your workplaces. He will not abandon your bank account if that's what you're worried about.

Verse 4 says, fear no evil. Not because of anything of our own power. It's not because we got the guns, you know. No.

It's not anymore of our own provision in our lives that we fear no evil. Not anymore than it's us who restores our own soul. It is he who restores our soul.

And so it is he who provides the peace when we fear. Due to the close proximity with the good shepherd, he extinguishes all fear and having faith to keep walking through in confidence, knowing that the means to the end is good for you no matter what the cost is, church.

Or even what the odds might look like in your life. The sheep know best that their shepherd will protect them. They have seen his rod and his staff as this verse talks about his rod and his staff.

[34 : 57] They comfort me. The sheep have seen this thing in action. Some of the men have got hit over the head with that staff. Now don't go by that, Cliff. What are you thinking? Lay down.

I don't know specifically, but I can imagine. We're all people. On the one end of the instrument, it was actually used to fend off predators that were coming by.

The predators would get a really good hefty whack as the predators come trying to endanger the sheep. But the other side, the hook side, was used to direct the sheep and to aid in that directing of guiding the sheep.

You know, yanking that sheep back, you know, into the flock, bringing them back in. And like David, we can rest assured with great bravery and courage that as we are walking in trying times, church, we can learn a thing or two from Dory and finding Nemo.

Just keep swimming. Just keep swimming through that valley because the Lord is with you. When hardship falls upon your life or it seems like the end is near, we rest solely upon the providence of our good shepherd who will protect us and direct us throughout our journey toward an even greater eternal, talking the end of our lives, when our tickers have stopped tick-tocking, our hearts have stopped, our final breaths.

[36 : 28] There's an even greater provision, even when these temporal challenges and dark valleys of life, there's something greater even waiting of quiet waters and green pastures, as Revelation 22 speaks about.

Our shepherd simply will not fail us. And as we continue, we see a shift in the fourth point this morning. In the shepherd's provision of vindication, verse 5 says, You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies.

You anoint my head with oil. My cup overflows. At this point, the metaphor takes a shift from that of a shepherd to his sheep to now of a host and his guest.

It is an image of a great king welcoming an honorary guest to his house. And not only that, he has prepared a feast at this table. David's life was nothing to brag about at all.

Remember this, because if anybody had a reason to complain about the woes of life's challenges in the valley or in a poor decision-making, it was David.

[37 : 49] David's enemies and his foes mocked him, they attacked him, and at times, David was powerless against his enemies. Remember Psalm 13, David cried out, How long shall my enemy be exalted over me?

Being a Christian today, we have a quite hostile audience watching full of enemies of the church, looking in. faith. However, we do have hope, because historically, as it seems the enemy has won, that the enemy is like, oh man, look at all this ground I'm taking, there's no way that they'll come back from that.

Well, I got news for you. The Lord works through reformations, historic reformations, of the revitalization of his word coming alive.

He comes with his spirit coming alive in revivals throughout history, testimony after testimony, right when the enemy thinks that he's had the last say, the Lord comes swooping in with one blow and says, not so fast the gates of hell shall now prevail against this church.

This verse speaks specifically to that very vindication in the presence of David's enemies. David was invited as an honorary guest to this party, however his enemies were not.

[39 : 15] his enemies were not to partake in this feast, but to merely watch this feast take place. And as this great celebration occurs, his enemies were just to sit idly by and watch.

Keeping in mind the culture of this time, looking back, we see some cultural items. Guests were often anointed with oil at feasts, as well to show hospitality and love for these people.

So you walk in, you have a feast, and you have a boop. You know, I don't know what it, maybe it was just a boop, maybe it was a Simba, I don't know what it was. But whatever it was, there was a cultural item that's being spoken and referred to here.

Maybe we should implement this for our church, you know, maybe our greeting team. Greeting team, what do you think? We don't even have a greeting team. We're all greeting, we're all part of the greeting team in this church. Maybe we'll all get our oil and start, hey, hey, hey!

That'll probably go in one of the most awkward ways to welcome newcomers to your church.

Nobody's going to fill out those connect cards with that. But we see here oil.

[40 : 30] But we also see wine. It's not specifically said here, but it says my cup overflows.

Because you know that that cup wasn't overflowing with chocolate milk, as great as that might be.

It was filled with wine at this feast. They wouldn't be serving water, they wouldn't be serving chocolate milk if that was a thing. They'd be serving the highest value of liquids to drink wine.

And so oil and wine also, in and of itself, within biblical imagery, were symbols of joy and also of prosperity. So there's a reason why this is mentioned here, because this is a party for David.

Psalms 133 also compares unity to a precious oil that is poured over the head of Aaron the priest. So looking back over this verse, we understand that the Lord is vindicating David through specific cultural means that would speak boldly to his enemies at this table.

people. And this too is how he receives his sheep, even for us today, who follow his lead. And who he vindicates our faithfulness through the valleys.

[41 : 43] When the world's walking and they're like, why do you even bother with this Christian stuff? Look where it's getting you. Your life was a lot better. It was a lot more fun taking part in the sinful behavior and everything.

Look at you. You're struggling. You've got to be crazy. He vindicates our faithfulness through the valleys. And it might not be in this life.

It might be in the next, at the great banquet of Christ and his bride. It's also mentioned in Revelation. And as we wind down to point five, the last point this morning, we see this metaphor continue in this eternal hope.

Point five says, is the shepherd's provision of eternal rest. Verse six reads, surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

It's interesting because this verse actually, I was having trouble, like, should I include this as a point or a conclusion? Because this verse serves as almost a conclusion to this, this Psalm 23.

[42 : 53] It has a little bit of both elements, both metaphors mixed in, that of a shepherd and a sheep and also that of a host and guest. And so we can understand that no matter where the journey led, no matter how deep the valley, no matter how dark the path, surely goodness and mercy will belong to the sheep who belong to the shepherd.

Goodness. This word in Hebrew is a Hebrew adjective that describes something being beautiful and pleasant.

Surely goodness and mercy will follow me all the days of my life. Beautiful and pleasant. It depicts the attractive way in which God shows his love for his sheep.

God is perfectly good in his character, church. I don't know if you need reminded. We need reminded of this almost minute by minute sometimes in life. God is perfectly good in his character and he is flawlessly good in his ways.

So the confidence rests in that he can only do good to his beloved flock. And the great reality of that is that he chooses to do this. We also see mercy in this passage.

[44 : 17] This is a distinguished unconditional love of the good shepherd toward those who the Father has chosen and entrusted to him. Even when the sheep don't deserve it, when they wander, even when they don't deserve it, church, he is faithful to you.

He's faithful to us. There's one thing that I failed to mention up to this point in this verse. And that is the position of which the shepherd assumes when he leads.

Many think of leadership the same meaning as my son thinks of line leader in preschool. Kind of like the person at the front. You know, like leading the pack.

You know, the general of the army, leading the troops. However, that's not always the case for a shepherd. A shepherd, as any worthy leader, in philosophy and leadership, in life, sometimes leaders will lead from behind.

Directing forward motion. Keeping a close eye from behind of what's coming up. Spurring the flock on.

[45 : 33] This verse takes a slight turn that not only the Lord is the shepherd we are following, he is also the shepherd who is spurring us on to watch over us.

To watch over us with goodness and mercy. It's following us. It's securing us.

He's not only leading from the front, he's also leading from behind. We are secure, we are watched, and we are protected. But there's also a time frame here. Look at verse 6.

How long does this last? It says, all the days of your life. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life.

And there is an end to this journey and wandering on earth. For those who belong to the Lord, who have placed their faith in Jesus Christ as their Lord and their Savior, this is a place known as heaven which remains forever.

[46 : 36] There is not a created hope on earth that will provide so much confidence and trust in our lives as the reality of this eternal promise of ultimate rest.

There's no amount of money in your bank account that can provide you that much rest. There's no title or position in this life that can provide you with that much confidence.

For those of you who have experienced personally or maybe witnessed another wedding day between a bride and a groom, even the created sensations of this life that are so intimate and passionate.

You can look upon a married couple that are getting married and that there's just an overwhelming joy coming. Well, church, even that doesn't even scratch the surface of the eternal joy and the rest that awaits us in the other side of this life.

That is hope. That is what drives us through the valley of the shadow of death. That is what we trust in when we read that he leads us in paths of righteousness.

[47 : 51] Those are the green pastures. As we close, Jesus Christ is the good shepherd. He took our place as his sheep to be led to the slaughter on the cross.

Prophecy in Isaiah 53. For his sheep he was smitten he was smitten as Zechariah 13 prophesied. For he gave everything for us to give everything to us physically all the days of our life and eternally dwelling in the house of the Lord forever.

And when I say giving everything to us, I'm not just speaking of money. This is a prosperity gospel plea because we know that money isn't a thing for God. He can draw a coin from a fish. We're talking about what we just talked about.

The acts of provision of the past five points that we spoke about in these verses. Number one, the rest and nourishment. He is the provider of rest and nourishment in this life and the next.

By his careful leading and through his word and by his spirit working in us. But also providing life and direction through his restoration by our faith in him and guidance of righteousness.

[49 : 09] By his provision of protection as he providentially leads us through treacherous times for our growth and our maturity's sake. He provides vindication that regardless of the valleys he brings into our lives, we trust that our enemies will see his glory shine through.

And finally, this eternal rest, church, the greatest of all hopes in this life. As Jesus said with his own words in John 14, I am going to prepare a place for you.

A dwelling place. This is where we dwell. If you are not in Christ today, if this is all just kind of like, eh, how do I do this? Because, you know, my life, I can totally, totally attest that something is missing.

Something that was mentioned today is drawing me to God and I need to get there quick. There is no greater rest to experience than the assurance of immediate and ultimate provision.

Immediate in this life, he'll take care of you, you will provide for his sheep, but ultimate that he has prepared a place for you. There is no truth that can combat off any fear, persecution, and hardship in this life than assurance of God's eternal goodness and mercy in our lives.

[50 : 31] If this is you this morning, if you could feel the weight of your sin, I pray that you come to Jesus this morning through repentance. And you're going to have a moment to do that shortly as we do communion.

If you are there this morning, come to him, trust in the Lord, plead with him to have mercy over your soul because the place that is separated from God is no place to brag about.

It is a dark place. For somebody who's claustrophobic, I could just imagine it is just being stuck in your own skin for eternity. That is you this morning. Confess your sin to Jesus Christ and place him as Lord over your life.

And don't do it alone. Come talk to us and we'll walk through that with you. But if you are in Christ, he was not spared but delivered up for us.

We can be assured that he will give us everything that we need, church. Everything that you need, he will give you in this life and the next. Christians are a part of that one flock of historic Jews and Gentiles.

[51 : 42] We're a part of that one flock. This is why those who put their trust and their faith in Jesus Christ are called the sheep of his flock. That's why I'm a pastor of his flock.

And we can say confidently at the mountaintop or the valley low that the Lord is my shepherd I shall not want. Let's pray. ■■sele.

And for how to make it it out of where we will see and Pedro is also producing the Schritt of the yerd of his flock and ■ and he can they're big and the Brooks will Zach get you may know how to make it together.