

A Study in Psalm 23

Lesson 6: My Future

I. Introduction

In ancient literature, sheep are known as “those of the golden caves.” They are highly beneficial to the land.

Literally, “goodness” followed them wherever they went!

The sheep can assure himself that no matter what the circumstances of life bring (joy or struggles), he is under sound, sympathetic, intelligent ownership.

II. What is my immediate future?

A. “Goodness will follow me...”

“Goodness”: it’s the steady support one can receive from family or close friends.

1. “Goodness”: It represents the very presence of God. Look at Moses in Ex. 33:12-23.

Vs. 19: “An He said, ‘I Myself will make My goodness pass before you, and will proclaim the name of the Lord before you, and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show compassion on whom I will show compassion.’”

2. “Goodness”: It represents the very nature of God.

Look at Ps. 25:8 “Good and upright is the Lord; therefore He instructs sinners in the way.”

See also Ps. 34:8 “O taste and see that the Lord is good; how blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him!”

3. “Goodness”: It represents the fruit of the spirit of God.

Look at Gal. 5:22: “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness”

4. “Goodness”: It also represents God as the stronghold in the day of trouble.

Look at Nahum 1:7 “The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day trouble, and He knows those who take refuge in Him.”

- a) Can we expect all sunshine and no rain?

Job 1:21 “The lord giveth / taketh away...”

Ps. 34:19 “Many are the afflictions of the righteous...”

2 Tim. 3:12 “All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.”

See also Rom. 8:17, Heb. 11:25

- b) Has God forgotten the "goodness and lovingkindness" part?
- 1) No, but it's all a part of the perfecting process. See 1 Peter 5:10-11, 2 Cor. 4:17-18, 2 Cor. 12:9
 - 2) And He has promised to go with us every step of the way. See Isa. 4:2, Matt. 28:20
- c) Why am I here anyway? What's the purpose of my life? What should it be? The chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever.
- See 2 Cor. 4:8-11, Rom. 8:29, 2 Cor. 3:18

B. "Mercy"

One scholar has defined grace and mercy: "grace" – receiving from Almighty God those things you do not deserve and "mercy" not receiving those things we do deserve.

1. "Mercy": It's eternal – never stops!

Look at Ps. 103:17 "but the lovingkindness of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear Him, and His righteousness to children's children."

Also Lam. 3:22 "The Lord's lovingkindnesses indeed never cease, for His compassions never fail."

2. "Mercy" – It makes salvation possible.

Look at Titus 3:5 "He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit."

3. "Mercy" – It's to be exercised by us too!

Look at Luke 6:36 "Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful." Also Matt. 5:7, Prov 11:17 and Micah 6:8

III. What is my ultimate future?

- A. In the fall, the wise shepherd brings the sheep "home."
- B. Jesus Himself, our great shepherd makes all the provisions for us.

Look at Rev. 7:15-17

1. There shall be no more sorrow, crying or pain.

Look at Rev. 21:4

2. Although we don't know exactly what's coming (1 John 3:2) we can never be separated from Him (Rom. 8:38-39).

IV. Connect Ps. 23 verse 1 with verse 6

- A. The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life and I shall dwell in the House of the Lord forever.