

Listening for the Promise

WEEKLY DEVOTIONAL

Fourth Sunday of Easter – May 8, 2022

“The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.”

–Psalm 23:1–

David, in this much-loved Psalm, paints such a beautiful picture of his walk with the Lord. The Lord is his loving companion and leader who remains with him throughout all the ups and downs of life. And, because of this, David proclaims that, with God at his side and leading him through life, all his needs are met. The Lord is his shepherd: He lacks nothing.

God, David’s devoted shepherd, not only continually remains with him, he relentlessly pursues him with oceans of goodness and mercy every single day of his life (see v. 6). Other translations of verse six use the words “kindness,” “faithfulness,” and “unfailing love” in place of “mercy and goodness.” In other words, God personally lavishes David with the beauty of His heart toward him. What an incredible awareness David had of God’s activity in his life. What an incredible awareness of his presence, pursuit, and intent toward him. What an incredible awareness of God’s character and his continual, personalized care of him. What an incredible awareness of God’s presence trumping and eclipsing even the deepest, darkest valley, and bringing peace even there (see v. 4).

Knowing all this about his shepherd, David obediently followed him, whether God led him to green pastures and still waters that brought nourishment, rest, and restoration (see vv. 2 and 3), or through dark and foreboding valleys where enemies conspired and crouched (see v. 5). He trusted that wherever God led, the path would be true, and God’s goodness, glory, and abundant provision could be found (see vv. 3 and 5). He knew that, ultimately, God’s paths led to eternal fellowship with him (see v. 6).

In the New Testament, Jesus refers to himself as the Good Shepherd and to his followers as sheep, who hear his voice and follow him (see Jn. 10:11, 27). So, we have the very same opportunity to experience what David did. We can experience God’s constant care, presence, and pursuit of us with his oceans of goodness, mercy, kindness, faithfulness, and unfailing love. We can experience his continual leadership, restoration, nourishment, protection, and provision as we follow and trust him no matter where he leads. We, like David, can follow him right into eternity and dwell with him forever.

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