

Psalm 23:1-6

(See attached pages for Psalm 23:1)

The Lord is MY shepherd.

Verse 1: Assurance

Verse 2, 3: Provision

Verse 4, 5, 6: Comfort

We are:

Well placed (physical rest)

Well guided, well led (mental peace; emotional security)

Well helped (spiritual strength)

Luke 15:3-7 (Jesus sees Himself as the seeking shepherd.)

Isaiah 53:6

Philippians 4:19

Psalm 24:1-10

Refers to the coming of the Chief Shepherd

Lord of the Earth (vs. 1, 2)

The Supreme Judge (vs. 3-6)

The Universal Ruler (vs. 7-10) (Revelation 19:11-16)

Psalm 23:1b

"...I shall not want."

WOW! That sounds like a promise to hold on to. Let's see----I want a new car (with no payments, of course), new clothes, enough money in savings to be able to retire just on the interest.....and the list goes on and on. Wait a minute, though! Is this really what God is promising us through this psalm? No, indeed. So, let's look at it to see.

"I"----a personal pronoun. Self. Me. So, I can put my name in place of "I". Try it. " _____ " shall not want. This is a personal statement that I am about to make.

"shall"----a couple of the meanings given to this word are: 'is determined to', or 'must', 'used to express a command or exhortation'. Remember when you were in English class and were listening (hopefully) to the teacher talk about imperative words? These were the ones that designated a mood used in commands. So, it sounds like this word is commanding me to be (or not to be) something. The next word reinforces that.

"not"----a word used to express refusal, or negation. Again, it seems to be almost a command. So, what is it that I am not supposed to do?

"want"----this seems to be the part of the verse where we get tangled in our thinking. The word 'want' means 'to be deficient in', 'to be lacking'. So, if I shall not want----then what am I NOT supposed to be deficient in, or lacking in. The Hebrew word for 'want' is *chacer* (pronounced khaw-sare') implying to fail, lessen, be abated, decrease, lack, fall. While many do not like any version of the Bible except the King James Version (and perhaps we can have a lesson on the versions, soon), I enjoy some of the other versions, too (although not all of them). But, the Amplified Bible states Psalm 23:1 in this way: The Lord is my shepherd [to feed, guide and shield me]; I shall not lack. Now, that is a statement that I can stand on!!

When we think of the verse with an attitude of gratitude instead of an attitude of "give-me-tude", we realize that God's blessing to us are too numerous to count. Many, many times in the Scripture we are told how God provided for His people. Let's look at a few.

Deuteronomy 2:7----to get the full meaning for God's blessings in this verse, we would need to look back at how God led His children and provided for them during their wilderness wanderings. We won't take the time to do that in this lesson. But, the verse ends with "...these forty years the Lord thy God hath been with thee; thou has lacked nothing."

I Kings 17:6, 16. In verse 6, we see that God sent ravens to bring bread and meat to Elijah. In verse 16, we see that when the widow thought that all hope was gone, she still obeyed God and

