

King David anticipated that his darkest days were ahead of him.
Yet, he trusted in God's presence to give him courage.
He trusted in God's power to give him comfort.

Psalm 23

The Good Shepherd Provides for His Sheep's emotional needs.

I. David anticipated that *Yahweh* would meet his emotional needs.

A. The LORD would provide him courage.

1. David foresaw that he could face potentially fearful situations.

a. Yea = moreover.

i. Just as David anticipated God providing his physical and spiritual needs, he knew God would provide for his emotional needs.

ii. David would provide for him, like a good shepherd provides for his sheep.

b. Literally, "Moreover, if I experience the darkest dangers, I will have courage."

2. Sheep can fear walking in the darkest valleys.

a. "Through" means "in" in this context.

b. Shadow of death: Lit *valley of deep darkness* (Job 34:22).

i. Darkest valleys were extremely dangerous for sheep.

a) Wolves and lions would hide in the darkness to ambush feeble sheep.

b) David anticipated living in an extremely dark time in his future journey.

ii. David knew God gave him courage in dangerous places (1 Sam 17:19).

c. David knew that when the next crisis comes, he would fear no danger.

i. Evil = emotional misery and distress, harm, adversity, threat of problems, death, and imprisonment (2 Sam 20:6).

ii. Why would he be fearless and courageous?

a) The reason for his courage was his trust in God's continued presence with him (Ps 25:1).

b) Shepherding is not a 9-5 job.

1) Sheep get nervous and afraid when they have no shepherd.

2) They have courage when he is near.

3) A shepherd rarely leaves his sheep.

(a) *In the eastern Alberta plains, a shepherd may only see another person every six months.*

(b) *Then a good shepherd makes sure that he has a helper*

to shepherd his sheep, so the sheep always have a good shepherd.

B. David knew his shepherd would provide for his needed comfort.

1. David's anxieties

a. His present dark danger was his son, Absalom, who deposed him of his rule and sought to take his life (2 Sam 17:11-12).

b. His future darkest hours would include the following.

i. Sheba's revolt (2 Sam 20:6).

ii. His elderly illness (1 Kings 1:1)

2. What did he know would comfort him in his coming darkest dangers?

3. He was comforted, knowing his shepherd's tools provided protection and rescue.
 - a. A rod is a club to drive off wolves or lions (1 Sam 17:34-36).
 - b. A staff has a hook to rescue straying sheep.
 - c. Sheep instinctively know that all is under control when they see their shepherd carrying a rod and a staff.
 - d. David was comforted to know that his good shepherd had the power to defeat his enemies and rescue him from danger.
 - e. As mothers console their children, so God consoled David by meeting his emotional needs (Isa 66:13).

II. Believers' can anticipate that Jesus will meet their emotional needs (John 10:11).

- A. He provides us courage to deal with fears.
 1. We anticipate dangers that we could be fearful of.
 - a. Death
 - b. Demons
 - c. Depression
 - d. Disease
 2. Jesus's presence gives us courage (Matt 28:20b).
 - a. He is in the courage business.
 - b. *Corrie Ten Boom told her father that she did not have the courage to face a Nazi concentration camp.*
 - i. *Her dad asked her, "When do I give you the ticket for the train ride?"*
 - ii. *Corrie replied, "When I am stepping into the train."*
- B. He provides us comfort to rest in His protection.
 1. He gives believers His comfort and Comforter for potential dangers (John 14:16).
 - a. He gives us comfort in financial straits (Heb 13:5).
 - b. He gives us comfort when we feel deserted (John 14:1-3)
 - c. He gives us comfort when we are anxious about tomorrow (Matt 6:34-35)
 2. Our Good Shepherd is all powerful and fully able to rescue us from dangers.
 - ^{NET} 1 Corinthians 10:13 "No trial has overtaken you that is not faced by others. And God is faithful: He will not let you be tried beyond what you are able to bear, but with the trial will also provide a way out so that you may be able to endure it."
 3. Jesus gives the ticket when we need it most (2 Cor 1:3)
 4. Paul was concerned for the churches but did not fret away over them (2 Cor 11:28).
 5. What are we to do when troubles come our way?
 - a. *Some people lean on alcohol, drugs, or their business.*
 - b. We are to cast our anxieties on Him, *like one put's their backpack on a friend's shoulders* (1 Peter 5:6-7).
 - c. *Take baby steps as He leads you along.*

^{NET} **Psalm 23:4** Even when I must walk through the darkest valley,
I fear no danger, for you are with me; your rod and your staff reassure me.