

Psalm 23:5

A Good Shepherd Prepares Plentiful Provisions and Protection.

- David used sheep terms figuratively to express how the LORD cared for him.
 - We want to better understand his shepherding comparisons.
 - 1. To do that we will seek to better grasp how Ps 23's metaphors related literally to how David once shepherded his family's sheep.
 - 2. Then we'll look how the LORD provided for and protected David figuratively using the shepherding terms metaphorically (Ps 23:5).
 - 3. This will help us lay hold of how Jesus shepherds His followers today. *That's us.*

I. David prepared plentiful provisions & protection for his sheep.

- A. David prepared for them with a plentiful pastureland (5a).
 - 1. "Prepareth"
 - a. A shepherd prepares a pasture, removing debris for his sheep to eat bountifully.
 - b. Poisonous plants and sharp rocks
 - 2. "Table"
 - a. A sheep's table did not have four legs.
 - b. A sheep's table is a feast on a green pasture (1 Sam 16:11).
 - i. Even today, "The high mountain country of the summer ranges .. are known as ... tablelands [to shepherds today]."¹
 - ii. ^{NET} "You prepare a feast before me in plain sight of my enemies."²
 - iii. God did provide a table of provisions for Israel in the desert (Ps 78:20-27).
 - a) He brought them water from a rock.
 - b) He sent them manna from heaven.
 - c) He rained quails upon them from the wind.
 - 3. "Presence"
 - a. Sheep were in plain sight of their enemies.
 - b. Who were David's sheep's enemies?
 - a. Hungry, salivating carnivores looked on from the rim of the meadow.
 - b. A rod/club drove off wolves, coyotes, bears, and lions (1 Sam 17:34-36).
 - c. Sheep know that all is under control when their shepherd carries his rod.
- B. "Anointest" = make fat with fat (Prov 15:30).
 - 1. Oil = olive oil, fat
 - 2. Coconut oil is 100% fat.²
 - 3. Shepherds used fatty oil to help heal ailing sheep (Isa 1:6).
 - a. "David's sheep could have gotten "scabs on their ... heads causing infection and spreading to the healthy flock."³
 - b. David could have applied "olive oil mixed with sulphur and spices."⁴
 - c. This anointing with oil helped bring healing and fatness.

¹ Philip Keller, *A Shepherd Looks at Psalm 23* (Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1970), 104.

² <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/food-features/coconut-oil>, accessed October 28, 2022.

³ Philip Keller, *A Shepherd Looks at Psalm 23* (Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1970), 119.

⁴ Philip Keller, *A Shepherd Looks at Psalm 23* (Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1970), 119.

- C. “My cup runneth over.”
1. This cup is a literal serving cup to drink from.
 - a. “In tending my sheep I carried a bottle in my pocket containing a mixture of brandy and water. Whenever a ewe or lamb was chilled from undue exposure to wet, cold weather I would pour a few spoonfuls down its throat. In a matter of minutes the chilled creature would be on its feet and full of renewed energy.”⁵
 - b. “I’m sure the Palestinian shepherds must have likewise shared their wine with their chilled and frozen sheep.”⁶
 2. Runneth over
 - a. The shepherd provides more than meets his sheep’s needs.
 - b. Running over indicates saturation (Ps 66:12).

II. The LORD prepared plentiful provisions and protection for David (Ps 23:5).

- A. David affirmed the LORD’S generous provisions 2 Sam 17:37; 19:32; 23:5) and protection (Ps 3:1, 5; 31:8).
- B. David affirmed the LORD’S healing (Ps 32:5).
- C. David affirmed the LORD’S plenty (2 Sam 7:12; Ps 16:5).

III. Jesus prepares plentiful provisions and protection for His sheep.

- *That’s us who follow Him.*
- A. He provides plentiful provisions and protection.
 1. Provisions (Matt 6:26)
 2. Protection
 - a. We have at least three enemies today.
 - i. Depravity (Rom 1:23-24)
 - ii. Demons (Eph 6:12)
 - iii. Devil (1 Pet 5:8)
 - iv. Deception (Acts 13:8)
 - B. He heals us with the oil of His Spirit (John 16:6-11).
 - C. He provides bountiful blessings (John 4:13; Eph 1:3-14)
 1. Holy and blameless standing and living
 2. Adoption into God’s family
 3. Forgiveness of all our sins
 4. Knowledge of God’s mystery (Jew and Gentile can be one body of believers.)
 5. Inheritance
 6. The presence of the Holy Spirit (He is a guarantee that we will go the heaven.)

Our Good Shepherd Prepares Plentiful Provisions and Protection (John 10:26-29).

⁵ Philip Keller, *A Shepherd Looks at Psalm 23* (Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1970), 125.

⁶ Philip Keller, *A Shepherd Looks at Psalm 23* (Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1970), 126.