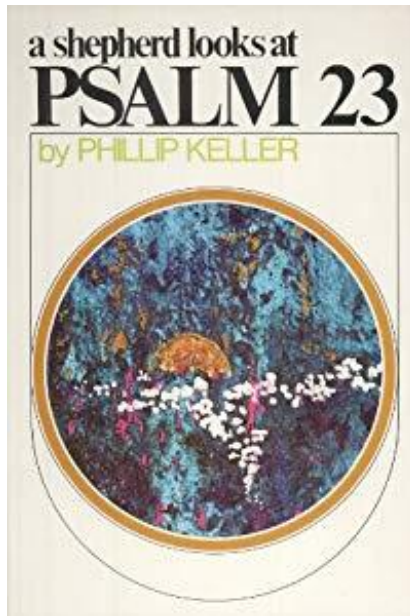


20200105 Psalm 23 Lesson Two - I shall not be in want



LESSON TWO  
I Shall Not be in Want

A proud bold statement to make. Since He is my shepherd, I shall not "want". This means that I am not lacking anything, but also that I am utterly contented in my Shepherd's care.

This goes far beyond my physical needs. We have all known privation and anguish of spirit. We have emotional, spiritual, and physical needs and the Lord takes care of them all. Jesus warned us, "In this world you will have trouble, but take heart, I have overcome the world." When we feel in desperate "need" we can be assured that He is still lovingly providing for us and looking after us.

A great misconception is that if someone is prospering financially that God is blessing them. Most of the billionaires in the world are godless people, yet they have great worldly riches. The Bible tells us to not mistake material abundance with God's blessing. Listen to Jesus speaking to the church of Laodicea. The danger of having great wealth is that a person will not recognize their great need for God, and they are in danger of self-worship ("I made it all!")

*<sup>7</sup>You say, 'I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing.' But you do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked. <sup>18</sup>I counsel you to buy from me gold refined in the fire, so you can become rich; and white clothes to wear, so you can cover your shameful nakedness; and salve to put on your eyes, so you can see. (Rev 3:17 NIV)*

*<sup>21</sup>Jesus said to him, "If you want to be perfect, go and sell all you have and give the money to the poor, and you will have riches in heaven; then come and follow me." (Matt 19:21 GNT)*

We as Christians have to take a long look at life. We may be called on to go without. But amid such hardship, we can still boast "I shall not want". We have to get our minds right about what it is we think we are missing. Who do you belong to? To the shepherd or to an imposter? It is impossible to serve two masters. The welfare of a sheep is totally dependent on the Shepherd.

If land goes neglected, the sheep will suffer. We've all seen horses being starved to death around us. They have polluted muddy water. They have no salt or minerals. They have old moldy hay. If livestock exist in a diseased condition, they go down drastically and quickly. An indifferent owner causes great misery on his flock. This is a precise picture of Satan and his minions and how they starve people to death. They are not caretakers. They are destroyers. You see, it is the master that makes a difference in the destiny of his sheep. As I have moved among men and women, I've seen those whose master is not the Lord. These people are in fact

starving to death in their abundance. They are malnourished. They are sick. Even if they look whole and well, they are not. Their spiritual need is enormous.

Who is your master? Is it Jesus? If it is, you WILL NOT LACK ANYTHING THAT YOU REALLY NEED. The key is that to be taken care of the sheep has to be owned by the right master.

I know many people who are near financial poverty, but they are rich. They have entrusted themselves to Jesus' control and they have found contentment. These people are beautiful to behold. It is wonderful to see those who radiate a serene confidence. They are under God's care and they know it. Those who have put their trust in and rely on Jesus are promised to lack nothing. There is an intense discontent in people who are desperate for security. These discontented people are bankrupt in spiritual values. They always want more and more and they're never really satisfied with what the Shepherd has provided. I am completely satisfied with God's management of my life. He loves me and takes personal pleasure in me. He is jealous of His name and His reputation. There is no greater satisfaction than seeing His sheep flourishing and content. He will go to great lengths to give us the clean water, shelter, and forage that we need. He takes care of our every need. Jesus said:

*<sup>9</sup> I am the gate. Those who come in by me will be saved; they will come in and go out and find pasture. <sup>10</sup> The thief comes only in order to steal, kill, and destroy. I have come in order that you might have life—life in all its fullness.*

*<sup>11</sup> "I am the good shepherd, who is willing to die for the sheep. <sup>12</sup> When the hired man, who is not a shepherd and does not own the sheep, sees a wolf coming, he leaves the sheep and runs away; so the wolf snatches the sheep and scatters them. <sup>13</sup> The hired man runs away because he is only a hired man and does not care about the sheep. <sup>14-15</sup> I am the good shepherd. As the Father knows me and I know the Father, in the same way I know my sheep and they know me. And I am willing to die for them. <sup>16</sup> There are other sheep which belong to me that are not in this sheep pen. I must bring them, too; they will listen to my voice, and they will become [@](#) one flock with one shepherd.(John 10)*

From early dawn to late at night, a Good Shepherd observes and takes care of His sheep. He examines his sheep to see if some might require special attention. When I put my life under Christ's control, I can have confidence that He is meeting my needs. Don't get into the trap of thinking the grass is greener on the other side of the fence. I once had a beautiful sheep that bore lambs, produced wool, etc. But she was a "fence-crawler". She would search the fences to find a loophole to feed on the other side. She had all the grass she needed on my side of the fence. But, she was NEVER CONTENTED with what I as her master had given her. Instead, she got out over and over and ended up with nothing to eat out there. The problem was that she taught her lambs and the other sheep how to go out of holes and how to put all of the others in danger. That type of livestock has "to go". They have to be gotten rid of.

I could not allow one obstinate ewe to ruin the flock. But I had to butcher her. It was the only solution to the dilemma. She always wanted "something else". This is a warning to the carnal Christian who wants the "best of both worlds." In short order, they will be cut down. Beware

to not long after those things the Lord has not given to you. Be content. Realize that God has supplied your every need. Rejoice in that. Rejoice in your master. He supplies your needs.