

# **The Lord God Will Always Shepherd Me**

[based on Psalm 23]

## **Introductory Notes**

The 23rd Psalm is probably the best known and best loved of all the Psalms. It is short, sweet, and full of vivid and comforting images. It assures us of God's watchful care. It speaks of our guaranteed safety and the meeting of our continuing needs. It calms our fears and dissuades our worries. Our lives are in God's hands.

But as sheep of his pasture, it also addresses our dependence and our need for God. We recognize/confess our weakness and our frailty. We admit our need for guidance and protection.

The image of the shepherd and his sheep is strongly present throughout all of Scripture. Abraham, Isaac, Moses, David and Amos were all shepherds. And the New Testament portrays Jesus as the Good Shepherd in several places. And so in this reading the six verses of Psalm 23 are complemented with thematically resonant verses from other books of the Bible: Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Isaiah, and Revelation.

This reading includes an intro and an extro that make it appropriate as a call to worship: it proclaims the character of this God who is calling us to worship [the Lord our maker], and it confesses who we are that are responding [the sheep of his pasture]. For the visitor, it signals that they are in a safe place.

Without the intro and extro it can serve as the reading of Scripture or in the service of confession.

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## **The Lord God Will Always Shepherd Me**

a choral reading in three voices based on Psalm 23

- A People of God  
Know that the Lord is God.
- B It is he who made us, and we are his;  
C we are his people, the sheep of his pasture. [Psalm 100.3]  
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- A Yes, the Lord is my good shepherd  
B The Lord God will always shepherd me  
A He holds back no good thing  
C There is nothing I lack  
There is nothing that I am without [Psalm 23.1]  
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- B Left to our own desires and longings  
C We are all sheep gone astray  
B Each of us turning to our own way [Isaiah 53.6]  
A We have wandered over mountain and hill  
and forgotten our resting place [Jeremiah 50.6]  
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- C The Lord is my good shepherd  
A The Lord God will always shepherd me [Psalm 23.1]  
B He searches for the lost  
and brings back the strays  
A He binds up the injured and strengthens the weak [Ezekiel 34.16]  
C He rescues us from all the places where we were scattered  
on days of cloud and darkness [Ezekiel 34.12]  
B He gathers the lambs in his arms  
and carries them close to his heart [Isaiah 40.11]  
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- A The Good Shepherd brought us out like a flock  
B He leads us through the wilderness [Psalm 78.52]  
C He watches over us  
He neither slumbers nor sleeps [Psalm 121.4]  
A The sun will not harm us by day, nor the moon by night  
C He leads us to feed and rest in rich pastures [Ezekiel 34.6]  
B He brings us to pools of refreshing water  
C springs of living water [Psalm 23.2b]

B Never again will we hunger  
 Never again will we thirst [Isaiah 49.10]  
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 B The Lord is my good shepherd  
 C The Lord God will always shepherd me  
 A He has compassion on me  
 B He refreshes  
 C he restores my soul  
 A He gives me strength  
 He renews my life [Psalm 23.3a]  
 C He leads me with knowledge and understanding [Jeremiah 3.15]  
 A He leads me on the path to righteousness  
 He keeps me true to his ways of making right [Psalm 23.3b]  
 B He gives me an undivided heart [Psalm 86.11]  
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 C The Lord is my good shepherd  
 A The Lord God will always shepherd me  
 B When my path leads through deep darkness  
 C When I find myself in the darkest valley  
 A I fear no harm  
 B No danger  
 C For you are with me  
 A I am not afraid  
 C Though I walk in the midst of trouble  
 you preserve my life  
 B Your rod and your staff comfort and direct me  
 Your trusty shepherd's crook makes me feel secure [Psalm 23.4]  
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 A The Lord is my good shepherd  
 C The Lord God will always shepherd me  
 B You stretch out your hand against the anger of my foes  
 C You prepare a sumptuous meal for me in plain sight of my enemies  
 A You moisten my head with fragrant oil  
 the oil of anointing that makes the heart glad  
 C flowing down  
 A flowing down like soothing waters  
 B My drink is abundant  
 C The cup of my life overflows with blessing [Psalm 23.5]  
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 B The Lord is my good shepherd  
 A Surely your goodness and mercy

B your beauty and steadfast love  
 C will follow me  
 B will pursue me  
 A will chase after me  
 every day of my life [Psalm 23.6a]  
 C And I will serve my God day and night in his temple [Revelation 7.15]  
 B I will live in God's house forever  
 C my whole life long [Psalm 23.6b]  
 A The Lord will keep me from all harm  
 He will watch over my coming and going  
 both now and forevermore [Psalm 121.7,8]  
 B The Lord God will always shepherd me  
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 C People of God  
 A Come, let us bow down in worship,  
 C let us kneel before the Lord our Maker  
 B For he is our God  
 and we are the people of his pasture  
 A the flock under his care [Psalm 95.6,7]  
 C We will praise you forever  
 A From generation to generation  
 ABC we will proclaim your praise [Psalm 79.13]

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**Suggested benediction:**

Now may the God of peace  
 who through the blood of the eternal covenant  
 brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus  
 that great Shepherd of the sheep  
 equip you with everything good for doing his will  
 and may he work in us what is pleasing to him  
 through Jesus Christ,  
 to whom be glory for ever and ever  
 Amen [Hebrews 13.20]

Presentation time: 04:00 minutes

The square bracket “[” indicates a pause. Two square brackets indicate a longer pause.