

"Jehovah Raah"

Psalm 23

Introduction: Tonight, as we return to our study of the names of God we are going to look at a name which we are already familiar with. The name we are going to study tonight is "Jehovah Raah". The name means "The Lord our Shepherd" and it is found in one of the most well-known Psalms, Psalm 23. There is so much comfort and encouragement to be seen in this Psalm and under this name. This Psalm is all about our Lord Jesus Christ and before we get into the Psalm itself we need to look at a point outside of the Psalm's contents.

I. The Placement of the Psalm

Now before we consider the placement of the Psalm let me remind you of what we will find in Psalm 23. There are green pastures, still waters, paths of righteousness, comfort, fulfillment, and peace.

Now we need to see the placement of this Psalm. This Psalm follows Psalm 22.

Notice Psalm 22:1-16

Psalm 22 is the Psalm of the Cross and before the Psalm of the Cross you can find no green pastures, no still waters, no fulfillment and peace. It is only because of the cross that we can experience the blessings of Psalm 23 and it is only by coming to the cross and understanding what happened there that enables us to call Jesus Christ our Shepherd.

Notice the words of Spurgeon on the placement of the Psalm:

"We must by experience know the value of blood-shedding, and see the sword awakened against the Shepherd, before we shall be able truly to know the Sweetness of the good Shepherd's care."

II. He is our Personal Shepherd

Notice Psalm 23:1a

It is very important that David does not say, "The Lord is OUR Shepherd". He certainly is our Shepherd but our relationship with Him is personal and therefore we can all say, "The Lord is MY Shepherd". He cares about each and everyone of us personally.

John 10:11-15

¹¹ *I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.*

¹² But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep.

¹³ The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep.

¹⁴ I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine.

¹⁵ As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep.

III. As our Shepherd He meets our needs.

Notice Psalm 23:1b

The phrase, "**I shall not want**" needs to be understood from two different perspectives.

1. My Shepherd will meet all my needs.

David knew this from experience. He knew the responsibilities of a shepherd for he himself was a shepherd. He knew what it was to watch over his sheep and make sure all their needs were met. David experienced the very same kind of care from his Shepherd in his own life. From his experiences David wrote words of encouragement.

Psalm 37:23-26

²³ The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way.

²⁴ Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the LORD upholdeth him with his hand.

²⁵ I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.

²⁶ He is ever merciful, and lendeth; and his seed is blessed.

I am also reminded of what Paul wrote in Romans.

Romans 8:31-32

³¹ What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?

³² He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

2. I must learn to be content with what my Shepherd gives me.

Philippians 4:11-13

¹¹ Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.

¹² I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.

¹³ I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

Contentment does not come easy. The flesh lusts after the "stuff" of the world. So, in order to be content, we must gain victory over the flesh and learn to be satisfied with what our Shepherd has given to us.

Proverbs 15:16

¹⁶ Better is little with the fear of the LORD than great treasure and trouble therewith.

IV. As our Shepherd He Provides the Comfort we Need

Notice Psalm 23:2

Both green "pastures" and "still waters" speak of rest and comfort. This verse tells us that our Shepherd **MAKES ME** to lie down in green pastures. I am reminded here that my Shepherd knows better than I do what I need in my life.

Matthew 6:31-32

³¹ Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?

³² (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.

Because He knows my needs better than I do there are times when my Shepherd makes me to lie down/gives to me the rest I could not get on my own.

Let me show you the insight of the Psalmist.

Psalm 127:1-2

Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.

² It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows: for so he giveth his beloved sleep.

The verse also tells us that he leads us beside still waters. The "still waters" speak of peace and comfort.

2 Corinthians 1:3-5

³ *Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort;*

⁴ *Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.*

⁵ *For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ.*

V. As our Shepherd He Heals our Broken Spirits.

Notice Psalm 23:3a

We all stumble and fall in our walk with our Lord. It is in those times that we become broken in spirit. As our Shepherd our Lord provides the healing that we need.

Psalm 34:17-19

¹⁷ *The righteous cry, and the LORD heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles.*

¹⁸ *The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.*

¹⁹ *Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the LORD delivereth him out of them all.*

There are several ways in which God restores our souls:

1. **He forgives us of our sin.**

1 John 1:9

⁹ *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

Proverbs 28:13

¹³ *He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.*

2. **He clears our conscience.**

Hebrews 9:14

14 How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

Hebrews 10:22

22 Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.

Let me use the Bible to show you a picture of the loving care of our Shepherd. In the Gospels we read of Peter's denial of the Lord. It was after his denial that he was overwhelmed with guilt.

Luke 22:56-62

56 But a certain maid beheld him as he sat by the fire, and earnestly looked upon him, and said, This man was also with him.

57 And he denied him, saying, Woman, I know him not.

58 And after a little while another saw him, and said, Thou art also of them. And Peter said, Man, I am not.

59 And about the space of one hour after another confidently affirmed, saying, Of a truth this fellow also was with him: for he is a Galilaean.

60 And Peter said, Man, I know not what thou sayest. And immediately, while he yet spake, the cock crew.

61 And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice.

62 And Peter went out, and wept bitterly.

Now let us look at a testimony given by the Emmaus disciples after they walk with the resurrected Savior.

Luke 24:33-34

33 And they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them,

34 Saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon.

The end of verse 34 is so very important. It tells of a private meeting between Jesus and Peter after the resurrection. We are not given the details of the meeting, but we can be

sure it was a meeting of restoration. Peter was broken and when the Lord met with him He restored his soul.

VI. As our Shepherd He Guides our Steps

Psalm 23:3 again.

There is much comfort in this thought. We do not know what is ahead on the path we are walking but our Shepherd does. He knows the traps and the temptations which the enemy has set for us. So, there are times when our plans are changed and there are times when our direction is turned completely around. The reason is because our Shepherd has chosen to lead us down a path of righteousness for the purpose of glorifying His name.

Psalm 121:8

⁸ The LORD shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore.

Psalm 37:23

²³ The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way.

Proverbs 16:9

⁹ A man's heart deviseth his way: but the LORD directeth his steps.

VII. As our Shepherd He Never Leaves Us

Notice Psalm 23:4

No matter what we face, even if it is death and it will be one day, we do not need to fear for our Shepherd is always present with us. Not only is He present with us when we pass through the valley of the shadow of death, but He has also gone through the valley before us to make a way safely to the other side. Death is not the end, but it is the doorway which we pass through into the presence of our God. Jesus Christ has taken away the power of death.

1 Corinthians 15:55-57

⁵⁵ O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?

⁵⁶ The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law.

⁵⁷ But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

In the book of Hebrews, we also read of the Lord's presence with us.

Hebrews 13:5

⁵ *Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.*

Whatever it is that we face we are never alone. From the minor illness to the shadows of death our Shepherd is forever present with us.

Isaiah 41:10

¹⁰ *Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.*

VIII. As our Shepherd He Provides in Abundance

Notice Psalm 23:5

The table here speaks of sustenance. Even when the enemy has launched a full-frontal assault it is impossible for the enemy to hinder God's provisions for our lives. He provides to the point that our cup runneth over.

David also tells us that He anoints our head with oil. This speaks of joy and gladness.

Hebrews 1:9

⁹ *Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.*

Even in the face of our enemies and in the face of danger there is a joy and a gladness that comes from our Shepherd.

John 15:11

¹¹ *These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.*

IX. As our Shepherd He Provides Assurance

Notice Psalm 23:6

Because our Shepherd lives forever we are then forever secure.

Romans 5:10

¹⁰ *For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.*

Conclusion: Our Lord is our Great Shepherd. We can rest assured that He care for each one of His sheep.