

# THE LORD OUR LIGHT AND SALVATION

BIBLE TEXT : Psalm 23:1-6; 27:1-14

LESSON 245 Senior Course

**MEMORY VERSE:** "The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me In the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever" (Psalm 23:1-6)

## BIBLE TEXT in King James Version

### **Psalm 23:1-6 (KJV)**

<sup>1</sup> The LORD *is* my shepherd; I shall not want.

<sup>2</sup> He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.

<sup>3</sup> He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

<sup>4</sup> Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou *art* with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

<sup>5</sup> Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

<sup>6</sup> Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

### **Psalm 27:1-14 (KJV)**

<sup>1</sup> The LORD *is* my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the LORD *is* the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?

<sup>2</sup> When the wicked, *even* mine enemies and my foes, came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell.

<sup>3</sup> Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear: though war should rise against me, in this *will* I be confident.

<sup>4</sup> One *thing* have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the

## BIBLE REFERENCES:

### NOTES:

#### **A Beautiful Hymn**

The Psalms were written as hymns to be sung in praise unto God. Never has there been a more beautiful hymn written than the Twenty- third Psalm. People who never read the Bible have read it in poetry books, and may even quote from it. There is beauty in the simplicity of the words, comfort and strength in the promises God has given to provide for His own, and hope in the picture of eternal life with Him.

The Spirit of God has spoken through those words to hearts that might otherwise never have turned to the Lord for help. They are often among the first words taught to little children, and the last ones whispered into the ears of dying loved ones.

#### **The Good Shepherd**

Think how the heart of David must have swelled as he thought: "The LORD is my shepherd"! He used the greatest name given to God: **Jehovah**, the great I AM, the eternal God, the Ruler of the universe. Could it be possible that He was the Shepherd of a man?

Jesus said, "I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine" (John 10:14); so David was right in calling the Lord his Shepherd. The Apostle Paul called Him "That great shepherd of the sheep" (Hebrews 13:20); and Peter spoke of Him as the "Chief Shepherd" (I Peter 5:4).

#### **David's Joy**

David's joy was to feel that His Lord was near. He was Israel's greatest king, but his happiness did not come from the beautiful palace in which he lived, the many attendants who lovingly waited on him, nor his great armies who obeyed his every command. In one of his songs unto the Lord, he said, "In thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore" (Psalm 16:11).

It may be that David wrote the Twenty-third Psalm while he was yet a shepherd boy; or it may be that amidst all the pomp and responsibility of his court, he took time out to be alone with God and meditate on His love and care for him as his Shepherd.

#### **My Shepherd**

To David, the Lord was nearer than the Shepherd of **all** Israel. He said, "The LORD is my shepherd." All we who have been born again can say with David that the Lord is "my shepherd." When we come to Him in repentance and faith, His Blood washes away our sins, and we belong to Him. We have a

LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to enquire in his temple.

<sup>5</sup> For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me; he shall set me up upon a rock.

<sup>6</sup> And now shall mine head be lifted up above mine enemies round about me: therefore will I offer in his tabernacle sacrifices of joy; I will sing, yea, I will sing praises unto the LORD.

<sup>7</sup> Hear, O LORD, *when* I cry with my voice: have mercy also upon me, and answer me.

<sup>8</sup> *When thou saidst*, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, LORD, will I seek.

<sup>9</sup> Hide not thy face *far* from me; put not thy servant away in anger: thou hast been my help; leave me not, neither forsake me, O God of my salvation.

<sup>10</sup> When my father and my mother forsake me, then the LORD will take me up.

<sup>11</sup> Teach me thy way, O LORD, and lead me in a plain path, because of mine enemies.

<sup>12</sup> Deliver me not over unto the will of mine enemies: for false witnesses are risen up against me, and such as breathe out cruelty.

<sup>13</sup> *I had fainted*, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living.

<sup>14</sup> Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD.

part in Him.

David remembered his love for his sheep while he had watched over them on the mountainside. He had been willing to fight the lion and the bear to save his little lambs from their hungry grasp. He knew that a good shepherd would never go away and leave his sheep unprotected. As he thought of God's care for him, he was reminded of, a faithful shepherd who would give his life for his sheep. And that was what Jesus did when He came to earth. He told His disciples, "I lay down my life for the sheep" (John 10:15).

### No Want

David could say with confidence, "I shall not want." He had proved that God would supply all his needs. If we live to please the Lord, we have that same assurance that we shall not want for any good thing. The Apostle Paul wrote, "My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:19).

Jesus wants His people to trust Him and to believe His promises. If we do not always get what we pray for, it may be that we want something that is not good for us. The Word tells us, "Having food and raiment let us be therewith content" (I Timothy 6:8).

### Beside Still Waters

Let us picture in our minds a flock of sheep lying in the cool shade of some great trees beside a pool of water. They have eaten of the crisp, green grass until they are satisfied, for a hungry sheep will never lie down. This inviting spot has been carefully sought by the shepherd; for the summers were hot where David lived, and sheep out on the desert might famish of thirst or die of heat exhaustion. A good shepherd led his sheep beside the still waters, where they could eat and be satisfied, and lie down to rest.

It was this quietness that David felt as He thought about his Shepherd. Isaiah said, "The work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever" (Isaiah 32:17). "Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them" (Psalm 119:165). "The LORD will give strength unto his people; the LORD will bless his people with peace" (Psalm 29:11). "He giveth his beloved sleep" (Psalm 127:2).

### Stony Trails

When the sheep have eaten all the grass in one feeding place, they must move on to another, perhaps over stony trails and narrow passages through the mountain. But their shepherd goes before them to blaze the trail; and if some are too weak to keep up, he will carry them. The Prophet Isaiah, too, could see the picture of the Savior as Shepherd, and he wrote: "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young" (Isaiah 40:11).

The Christian will have trials to go through which will be as stony trails to him. But if his trust is in the Lord, he will come through victorious. David said, "He restoreth my soul." If we become weary with the trials, or a little discouraged with our illness, He will restore our souls if we look to Him.

### A Closer Relationship

In the first verses of this Psalm, David speaks about the

Shepherd who leads him; but when he speaks of going through the valley of the shadow of death, he speaks right to the Lord, "Thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." The Lord has promised, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee" (Hebrews 13:5).

To the Christian there is a bright light beyond the shadow. Jesus died for us and took the sting out of death. In that hour when no human friend can go with us, the Lord will be right beside us. Death is but a narrow passage into the Glory Land. The one who has made his peace with God can say with David, "I will fear no evil."

"There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear" (I John 4:18). You may try to be brave, and laugh at your fears; but they will still be there unless your trust is in God. If we love Him with all our heart, He takes fear away.

### **Friends**

As we have considered these verses we have thought of ourselves, as David did, as sheep led by the great Shepherd. In the following verses we find a different picture: a man dining with his friend. We are the guests of the Lord, eating at His table. "Thou preparest a table before me."

The greatest sign of friendship in the East is for men to eat together. Jesus said: "Behold, I stand at the door, **and** knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me" (Revelation 3:20). He will eat with us and we with Him! We have little to offer Him, but He has everything to give us. When He pours out His blessings, our cup overflows. He wants to walk with us, and talk with us, and shower us with good things. "No good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly" (Psalm 84:11).

How does the Lord prepare a table for us in the presence of our enemies? We may be alone among sinners, and feel grieved with their conversation and actions. They may not be our enemies, but if they are not saved they are enemies of God. Right in those surroundings, the Lord can bless us, and feed us on His Word until we feel that He has spread His table before us. The Christian young men who served their country during the war proved that many times. In the midst of sin and battle, the Lord would come near and feed them on His Word.

Out on the China Sea, on the flight deck of an aircraft carrier, a group of Christian sailors were observing New Year's Eve with a watch- night service. God blessed their souls there in the midst of battle with those immortal words of the Psalmist, "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies."

### **Anointed with Oil**

It was a sign of courtesy in the Holy Land to anoint the head of a guest with oil. We remember the incident when Jesus was a guest of Simon, the Pharisee, and no such courtesy was showed to Him. When the woman came with the alabaster box of ointment and anointed the feet of Jesus, He rebuked the Pharisee by saying, "My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment" (Luke 7:46). Because of her love for Him, Jesus forgave her sins; but the discourteous Simon, who felt no repentance, remained a sinner. David could say that the Lord treated him with courtesy: "Thou anointest my head with oil."

There is yet a deeper meaning in the anointing. We, as sanctified Christians, have the opportunity to be anointed with

the Holy Ghost. This was typified in the Tabernacle worship by anointing the priests with oil. The Israelites were warned that the oil was holy. "Upon man's flesh shall it not be poured, neither shall ye make any other like it, .. it is holy, and it shall be holy unto you" (Exodus 30:32).

As we sit at His table, the Lord anoints us with the Holy Spirit to be kings and priests unto the Most High God.

### **One Purpose**

As David looked back over his life, he could see that the Lord had led him, and he was confident that the Lord would continue to lead to the end. There was but one purpose in his heart — to dwell in the House of the Lord forever. All the days of his life he wanted to be close to his Friend and Savior, and worship in His Tabernacle. Then, when this life was over, he would be sure of a home in Heaven.

### **QUESTIONS**

- 1 With whom does David compare the Lord?
- 2 What made David happy?
- 3 Where did the good shepherd lead His sheep?
- 4 What great sacrifice would a shepherd make for his sheep?
- 5 Who supplies all our needs if we trust Him?
- 6 What does the shepherd do for his sheep when the trails are rough?
- 7 What other relationship does David speak of between the Lord and  
himself?
- 8 What was he talking about when he said, "Thou anointest my head  
with oil"?
- 9 What was David's greatest ambition in life?