

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION
Psalm: Living By Faith In God
XXIII. Our All-Sufficient God For Our Every Need
(Psalm 23:1-6)

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

We face a variety of great needs in today's world:

(1) We face financial needs due to errant actions by government officials: Chris Powell's column, "A misleading, cynical budget," Republican-American, May 3, 2022, p. 8A, claimed: ". . . (T)he federal government creates vast new amounts of money to enable spending far beyond anything the national economy and even the world economy produce. This devalues the dollar . . . as record inflation."

(2) We face needs for protection: (a) Regarding "the unprecedented leak of a draft decision overturning *Roe v. Wade* . . . (i)n Los Angeles, about 24 hours after the leak, irate pro-abortion protesters swarmed and shouted threats at police officers who were attempting to keep the peace . . . Control of the presidency, most major news-media outlets, Hollywood studios, social-media companies, and academia sometimes is not enough for the left to get everything it wants. In those instances, political violence ensues, institutional cover-ups are near-inevitable, and norms are contemptuously discarded." ("Scant hope for accountability" editorial, *Ibid.*, May 6, 2022, p. 8A)

(b) Then, "(p)rotesters outside Brett M. Kavanaugh's house warned the U. S. Supreme Court justice . . . 'If you take away our choices, we will riot.' They marched on Justice Samuel A. Alito's home chanting 'Abort the court!' and stood outside the home of Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr. (who apparently did not vote to overturn *Roe v. Wade*) yelling, 'The whole world is watching!' This . . . is illegal. Federal law – Section 1507 of Title 18 of the U. S. Code – clearly states it is unlawful to . . . tamper with Supreme Court justices by coming to their homes to threaten, harass or coerce them to influence their vote in a case before the court . . . This is a federal statute, so it's Attorney General Merrick B. Garland's responsibility to enforce it . . . Garland's failure to act is an appalling dereliction of duty. So is Biden's failure to condemn the protests." (Marc Thiessen, "Put a stop to illegal protests," *Ibid.*, May 12, 2022, p. 8A)

(c) On top of this, last Sunday, demonstrators marched in front of several pro-life churches in the nation.

(3) We face the need for moral leadership: "Pope Francis . . . has found himself in the unusual position of having to explain his refusal to call out Russia or President Vladimir Putin by name" over Russian atrocities against civilians in Ukraine "and to defend his 'very good' relations with the head of the Russian Orthodox Church, who has justified the war." (Nicole Winfield, "Pope's appeals for truce in Ukraine have gone unheeded," *Ibid.*, p. 3B)

(4) We face a great need for spiritual truth: in a letter to the Republican-American, Richard Irwin of Prospect supported the pro-life position, but then added, "Humans have free will but can only adhere to or violate the Ten Commandments. We can't choose another source of life . . . God has an eternal paradise waiting for those who adhere to His commandments." (*Ibid.*, p. 8A) However, Romans 3:20 asserts, "Therefore, by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in (God's) sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin." No one can be saved by the Law!

Need: *So, we ask, "In view of the great and varied needs we face in today's world, what is God's solution?!"*

- I. In Psalm 23:1, king David, himself a former shepherd boy, claimed that the Lord was His Shepherd so that he would not "be lacking" (*haser*, B. D. B., A Heb. and Eng. Lex. of the N. T., p. 341).**
- II. To explain this claim, the rest of Psalm 23 details the Lord's all-sufficiency for David, Psalm 23:2-6:**
- A. The Lord provided for David's livelihood needs, Psalm 23:2: He testified that the Lord caused him figuratively like a sheep to lie down in "pastures, meadows" (*nawah*, *Ibid.*, p. 627) of "fresh, tender, spring grass" (*deshe'*, *Ibid.*, p. 206), nutritious food for a grazing animal, and God "leads [him] to a watering place" (*nahal*, Piel intensive stem, *Ibid.*, p. 624-625) to drink.
- B. The Lord provided for the needs of David's inner man, Psalm 23:2-3a:
1. Sheep are timid, and even slightly running little streams frighten them from drinking from them.
 2. Thus, David testified that the Lord caused him to relax without fear as God "made [him] to lie stretched out" (*raba'*, Hiphil causative stem, *Ibid.*, p. 918) on the richly grassed, spring meadow and guided him to drink from waters "of quietness, still" (*menuhah*, *Ibid.*, p. 629-630) that did not frighten him. (Psalm 23:2)
 3. In addition, God "restores; refreshes" (*shuv*, Po'el intensive stem, *Ibid.*, p. 996-1000) David's *nephesh*, his physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual life from the wear of life's trials, Psalm 23:3a. (Kittel, Biblia Hebraica, p. 993; Robert B. Girdlestone, Synonyms of the Old Testament, 1973, p. 56-60)
- C. The Lord provided for David's need for adequate guidance in life, Psalm 23:3b:

1. The word "paths" (KJV) translates *ma'ggal*, what properly means "wagon-tracks" (Ibid., B. D. B., p. 722-723), that is, very obvious, conservative, safe paths for a sheep to use.
 2. David thus testified that God led him in very obvious, conservative, safe routes in his life, backing up this great guidance with His reputation as God so that David never needed to doubt his direction in life.
- D. The Lord provided for David's need for protection, Psalm 23:4-5a:
1. Even when walking through the valley of the "death-shadow" (*salmawet*, Ibid., p. 853), a figure for extreme danger (Ibid.), David feared no "calamity, evil" (*ra*, Ibid., p. 948-949), for **the Lord** ("You" is an emphatic pronoun, *'attah*, Ibid., Kittel) was with him, and God's "club" (*shebet*, Ibid., B. D. B., p. 986-987) used to kill attacking predators and His "staff" (*mish'enet*, "staff," Ibid., p. 1044) the rod with a hooked end used for pulling a sheep out of harmful places where wanders – **they** (the emphatic pronoun *hemmah*, Ibid., Kittel; Ibid., B. D. B., p. 241) comforted David, Psalm 23:4.
 2. The Lord even spread a table before David in the full presence of his adversaries, and according to Ancient Near Eastern custom where the host of a meal indebted himself to protect his guest from harm following the meal, David announced that even in front of his foes, God protected him from them! (Psalm 23:5a)
- E. The Lord provided for David's need for respect and honor, Psalm 23:5b: At the table God had spread for David in front of his enemies, God anointed him as God's honored guest, exalting him before his adversaries!
- F. The Lord provided for David's need for happiness, Psalm 23:5c:
1. The word rendered "runneth over" (KJV) is *rewayah*, literally meaning "saturation" (Ibid., p. 924).
 2. One's cup figuratively referred to happiness, joy, so David expressed that even in the presence of his enemies, God had caused him to experience abundant joy and happiness.
- G. The Lord provided for David's future needs, Psalm 23:6:
1. The "wholesome goodness" (*tob*, Ibid., Kittel, p. 994; H. A. W., *Theol. Wrdbk. of the O. T.*, 1980, vol. I, p. 345-346) and "loyal love" (*hesed*, Ibid., Kittel; Ibid., H. A. W., p. 305-307) of God would "pursue; attend closely upon" (*radaph*, Ibid., B. D. B., p. 922-923) David all the days of his life, and he would "return" (same verb used in v. 3a above for "refresh, restore," *Bible Know. Com., O. T.*, p. 812) from being [temporarily] away from God's sanctuary to fellowship with the Lord all his days, Ibid.; Psalm 23:6.

Lesson: *In following the Lord as his Shepherd, David found the Lord comprehensively meeting his every need for his livelihood, inner man, guidance, protection, honor, happiness and future blessings in life.*

Application: *(1) May we gain God as our Shepherd by trusting in Christ Who died as our Atoning Sacrifice for sin that we might receive God's gift of eternal life, John 3:16; 1 Corinthians 15:1-11. (2) Then, may we FOLLOW Him in His shepherding ministry to us through Scripture for comprehensive blessings in life.*

Conclusion: (To illustrate the message . . .)

God our Shepherd in His Word gives us insight and direction for blessing on the issues in our introduction:

(1) On financial needs caused by errant acts by the government, God told Israel's people who put material wealth ahead of God's calling that He was causing them to feel the effects of inflation as they figuratively put money into bags with holes in them, Haggai 1:3-6. (Ibid., p. 1539) We must be content with what we possess and heed God's calling for Him to meet our needs even amid government-caused inflation, Haggai 1:12-15; 2:18-19; Hebrews 13:5-6.

(2) On our need for protection from "woke" demonstrators, (a) Psalm 23:4-5a (see "II, D" in the notes above) directs us to trust the Lord for what protection **He** decides to give us in His callings for us. We in the Church era may be called of God to face persecution as in the Early Church, but until then, we should trust the Lord for His protection and focus on our callings. (b) On the government's failure to enforce the law to protect U. S. Supreme Court justices from protesters who try to coerce them on a case before the court, Romans 13:1-4 teaches that governments are to punish such evildoers. We thus recognize the failure of governments in our "mini-Great Tribulation" era as predicted in Revelation 3:21 with 7:17 with its oppressive rulers and intrigue, and so disciple upset people who come our way!

(3) On the pope's failure to condemn Russian atrocities in Ukraine or to critique the Russian Orthodox Church's failure to oppose the war, God condemned worldwide atrocities in Genesis 6:13 and 9:5-6 to where He sent the Noachic Flood to destroy that violent world! We thus condemn the war of Russia on Ukraine and its atrocities.

(4) On the need for spiritual truth regarding eternal life, since no man can keep God's Law as the Law only exposes sin (Romans 3:20), Romans 3:21-28 teaches justification is by faith in Christ due to His atonement for sin!

May we trust in Christ Who died as our Atoning Sacrifice for sin that we might receive God's gift of eternal life. May we then follow our Shepherd in His guidance through Scripture for comprehensive blessing.