

## PSALM 23

### **INTENTION:**

In any language, the words we use carry a depth of meaning that cannot always be conveyed just from the word alone—whether from its history (etymology), misunderstandings, misinterpretations, mistranslations, doctrines, unintentional ignorance, and/or from one’s own personal perceptions.

The term “Lost in Translation” portrays how the intended meaning (or depth) of something gets changed / altered in a way that either diminishes or misrepresents entirely what the intended meaning was.

The Bible is not immune to this, and we will delve into how “*not-so-simple*” Psalm 23 actually is.

# PSALM 23

## A NOT-SO-SIMPLE SOUL-CRY & HEART-RESPONSE

### BREAKDOWN:

- **Part 1:**  
A simple read of [Psalm 23](#) ( [www.BibleGateway.com](http://www.BibleGateway.com) ).
- **Part 2:**  
A read-through of what each verse encapsulates (says / shares / means) from the Lexicon of each Hebrew word ( [www.BlueLetterBible.org](http://www.BlueLetterBible.org) ).
- **Part 3:**  
Grouping [Psalm 23](#) as an impassioned Soul-Cry by David, and the Lord's Heart-Response to him.

### I. **READING:** [Psalm 23:1-6](#) (NKJV)

- 1 The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.
- 2 He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters.
- 3 He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake.
- 4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.
- 5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; my cup runs over.
- 6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

### II. **ENCAPSULATED:**

When we look at the detailed meanings in the Hebrew words, we draw such a deeper meaning in what David is trying to convey.

No longer does it become a *simple* Psalm we can memorise, but one that reflects how David thinks and feels of the Lord and of himself.

David is both a shepherd himself, as well as a strategic and tactical fighter (highly knowledgeable and experienced) and leader in battle. This is reflected in the words and terms he uses.

Let's read through [Psalm 23](#) in detail, denoting the Hebrew words which are underlined for reference. Of note: *italicised* words are mine given for clarifications.

1. **The Lord [[H3068](#)] is my shepherd [[H7462](#)]; I shall not want [[H2637](#)].**

The Lord [the existing One] shepherds and pastors me [tending to and feeding me] as my special friend and companion when lack and failure come to me.

2. **He makes me to lie down [[H7257](#)] in green [[H1877](#)] pastures [[H4999](#)]; He leads [[H5095](#)] me beside the still [[H4496](#)] waters [[H4325](#)].**

I am gently guided [me running with a sparkle] to the goal of rest and refresh at the dwelling place of the shepherd—a pasturing meadow that is home to me [pleasant, beautiful, comfortable, suitable, and befitting to my needs].

This is His and my habitation—with the permanence of food and drink [of tranquil water, tender and green sprouting grass and herbs] that cause me to recline, lay down, and stretch myself out for utter rest.

3. He **restores** [H7725] my **soul** [H5315]; He **leads** [H5148] me in the **paths** [H4570] of **righteousness** [H6664] for His **name's** [H8034] **sake**.

Which turns back, replenishes, and restores my soul [my life, self, mind, will, and emotions]; He surrounds (encircles) me in protection, transporting me in His covenant of justice, righteousness, vindication, salvation, and victory [upholding His reputation; confirming His true character and nature].

4. **Yea, though I walk** [H3212] **through the valley** [H1516] **of the shadow of death** [H6757], **I will fear** [H3372] **no evil** [H7451]: **for You are with me; Your rod** [H7626] **and Your staff** [H4938], **they comfort** [H5162] **me**.

You [Lord] cause (lead) me to come away (out) from the narrow gorge that is overcast in deep shadows *{the sun blocked by the steepness of gorge}* which is a place of extreme danger *{ill defense and vulnerable in battle}*.

I am afraid! Afflicted by the worst evil, pain, unhappiness, hurt, misery, distress, injury, calamity, adversity, and wrongs (of persons, thoughts, deeds, and actions). I am sorrowful, regretful, grieved, and need consoling.

But I am comforted and consoled by Your shepherds' staff—a knowing of Your support and sustenance to me.

5. **You prepare** [H6186] **a table** [H7979] **before** [H6440] **me in the presence of my enemies** [H6887]; **You anoint** [H1878] **my head** [H7218] **with oil** [H8081]; **my cup** [H3563] **runs over** [H7310].

In outright contempt of that which is afflicting me [bringing me distress, trouble, vexation, hostility, enmity, and harassment], You honour, esteem, and ordain me (show value to me) with an arranged, private, and sacred meal equal to that which is set for a king's table.

You, Lord, define me as the choicest (best). As in an acceptable offering, you draw out and hold together the abundant oil that medicates, satisfies, saturates, and runs over me.

6. **Surely goodness** [H2896] **and mercy** [H2617] **shall follow** [H7291] **me all the days** [H3117] **of my life** [H2416]; **and I will dwell** [H3427] **in the house** [H1004] **of the Lord** [H3068] **forever** [H753 + H3117].

Intentionally and with great pleasure, You eagerly secure (pursue) me in goodness and mercy! Your desire is beautiful, bountiful, cheerful, fair, favour, fine, glad, gracious, joyful, kind, best, loving, merry, most pleasant, pleasing, pleasurable, precious, prosperous, ready, sweet, appropriate, beneficial, agreeable, valuable, and faithful (to and for me).

Lord, You do this constantly and continually—yesterday, today, tomorrow—always and forever. My entire life and existence.

I am established in Your home as being Your family; and I am at ease, abiding with You as part of Your family. Forever.

### **PSALM 23 (ENCAPSULATED):**

1 The Lord [the existing One] shepherds and pastors me [tending to and feeding me] as my special friend and companion when lack and failure come to me.

2 I am gently guided [me running with a sparkle] to the goal of rest and refresh at the dwelling place of the shepherd—a pasturing meadow that is home to me [pleasant, beautiful, comfortable, suitable, and befitting to my needs].

This is His and my habitation—with the permanence of food and drink [of tranquil water, tender and green sprouting grass and herbs] that cause me to recline, lay down, and stretch myself out for utter rest.

3 Which turns back, replenishes, and restores my soul [my life, self, mind, will, and emotions]; He surrounds (encircles) me in protection, transporting me in His covenant of justice, righteousness, vindication, salvation, and victory [upholding His reputation; confirming His true character and nature].

4 You [Lord] cause (lead) me to come away (out) from the narrow gorge that is overcast in deep shadows {*the sun blocked by the steepness of gorge*} which is a place of extreme danger {*ill defense and vulnerable in battle*}.

I am afraid! Afflicted by the worst evil, pain, unhappiness, hurt, misery, distress, injury, calamity, adversity, and wrongs (of persons, thoughts, deeds, and actions). I am sorrowful, regretful, grieved, and need consoling.

But I am comforted and consoled by Your shepherds' staff—a knowing of Your support and sustenance to me.

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Lord, You do this constantly and continually—yesterday, today, tomorrow—always and forever. My entire life and existence.

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### III. EMPASSIONED GROUPING:

For myself, I can see [Psalm 23](#) almost as a journal-entry by David—one that is perhaps (as I like to do) raw and spontaneous.

But in that spontaneity, we can still experience all the passion, pain, and emotions within it.

And as I like to feel where David was coming from, I can experience it as an agonising Soul-Cry from David in a tremendous (tumultuous) moment in his life (just one of several he faced).

For David (and for me), he wrote-out his then-current, agonising, reality in front of the Lord—done as a back-and-forth with the Lord (who responded in all Their Heart to show David who They are).

This back-and-forth dialog David did, is very similar to the style of journaling I do with the Lord in those raw moments.

Yet, if we separate out the back-and-forth, grouping David's Soul-Cry together and the Lord's Heart-Response together, we get...

#### Psalm 23:

- David's (My / Your) Reality-Soul-Cry to the Lord:

Father, I am afraid! Lack and failure are upon me.

It's like I have been travelling through a dark narrow gorge *where I am defenseless (helpless), an easy target to an enemy* that is afflicting me with the worst kinds of evil, pain, unhappiness, hurt, misery, distress, injury, calamity, adversity, and wrongs.

*And on top of that*, even my own thoughts and actions are against me.

Oh, how I am sorrowful, regretful, grieved, and need consoling. *Help me, Father!*

