

# Palm 23

## March 22, 2020

### God's Word: Psalm 23

A *psalm* is like a song and a poem squished together. For centuries Jews and Christians have sung psalms in worship. Psalms often tell feelings: joy, anger, sadness, disappointment, or fear. Psalms can also be like "word pictures", they paint a picture in your mind with words.

There are 150 psalms. Each one has a number. Today we will read Psalm 23.

#### Psalm 23: A Psalm of David

The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not  
be in want.  
He makes me lie down in green  
pastures;  
he leads me beside still waters;  
he restores my soul.  
He leads me in right paths  
for his name's sake.

Even though I walk through the darkest  
valley,  
I fear no evil;  
for **you are with me;**  
your rod and your staff—  
they comfort me.



You prepare a table before me  
in the presence of my enemies;  
you anoint my head with oil;  
my cup overflows.  
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow  
me  
all the days of my life,  
and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD  
my whole life long.

How do the photographs match the *word pictures* in the boxes?



Psalm 23 gives us a picture of our relationship with God.

- If God is like a shepherd, we are like sheep. What do shepherds do to take care of sheep?
- If God is like a host, we are like guests. What do hosts do to take care of guests?
- How does God care for us?
- Psalm 23 was first written in Hebrew. If you counted the Hebrew words, there would be 26 words before the yellow highlighted words and 26 words after them. Who is the "you" in the yellow words? Why are the yellow words so important?
- If you are happy, what difference does it make to know you are not alone? What if you are scared? What difference does it make to know you are not alone?

## Dark Valleys

*Dark valley* is another word picture. It represents times and experiences when life is uncertain, hard, or scary.

Psalm 23 reminds us that even in *dark valleys* there is no reason to fear. God is with us. God offers comfort.

- Talk about *dark valleys* in your lives.
- One way God is with us and offers comfort is through other people. Who shows you God's comfort? How can you be God's comfort to someone else?



## Letters and Numbers

Our ancestors in faith thought God's name was too important to speak, so they wrote four letters to represent God's name. This is called the "tetragrammaton." The tetragrammaton does not have vowels so no one can pronounce it.

This is the tetragrammaton in Hebrew:      This is how we write the tetragrammaton:

יהוה

YHWH

Ancient Hebrew letters were also used for numbers. Find the number for each Hebrew letter and add them together. *Note! Hebrew is read from right to left, so start with the letter Yod.*

$$10 + \underline{\hspace{1cm}} + \underline{\hspace{1cm}} + \underline{\hspace{1cm}} = \underline{\hspace{1cm}}$$

What do you notice about this number and the highlighted yellow letters? Imagine why this might be.

THE 22 HEBREW LETTERS AND THE NUMERICAL VALUES										
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
א	ב	ג	ד	ה	ו	ז	ח	ט	י	כ
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	20
(a) Alef	B, V Bet	G Gimel	D Dalet	H He	W, V Vav	Z Zayin	H, X Chet	T Tet	J, I, Y Yod	K Kaph
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
ל	מ	נ	ס	ע	פ	צ	ק	ר	ש	ת
30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100	200	300	400
L Lamed	M Mem	N Nun	S Samekh	(o) Ayin	P, F Pe	Ts Tsade	K, Q Qoph	R Resh	S, Sh Shin	T Tav