



**PSALM 23:
THE PROTECTION AND PROVISION
OF THE SHEPHERD – PART 1
(Psalm 23:4)**

Dr. Nicolas Ellen

I. The Valley of the Shadow of Death

- A. The valley of the shadow of death describes dangerous places where life is threatened, life-threatening experiences, or difficult places.¹
- B. The valley of the shadow of death describes dangerous, difficult, distressful, discouraging, devastating, or deadly experiences through which one passes on the path to a higher and more exalted life of intimate contact with Christ.²
- C. The valley of the shadow of death describes real life problems that impact all aspects of our lives.³

II. Even Though I Walk Through, I Will Fear No Evil, For You Are With Me

- A. In our course of life, God is with us and will bring us through dangerous places where life is threatened, life-threatening experiences, or difficult places. **Therefore, I will not be scared by them.**
- B. In our course of life, God is with us and will bring us through dangerous, difficult, distressful, discouraging, devastating, or deadly experiences through which one passes on the path to a higher and more exalted life of intimate contact with Christ. **Therefore, I will not be scared by them.**
- C. In our course of life, God is with us and will bring us through real life problems that impact all aspects of our lives. **Therefore, I will not be scared by them.**

¹ Allen P. Ross, *A Commentary on the Psalms: 1-41* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Academic & Professional, 2011), 564-565.

² W. Phillip Keller, *The Shepherd Trilogy: A Shepherd Looks at the 23rd Psalm / A Shepherd Looks at the Good Shepherd / A Shepherd Looks at the Lamb of God* (London: Marshall Pickering, 1996), 75.

³ Robert J. Morgan, *The Lord Is My Shepherd: Resting in the Peace and Power of Psalm 23* (New York: Howard Books, 2013), 116.

III. Your Rod and Staff, They Comfort Me

- A. The rod and staff represent the care and defense of the Lord who will alleviate sorrow or distress and give emotional support as He brings us through dangerous places where life is threatened, life-threatening experiences, or difficult places.
- B. The rod and staff represent the care and defense of the Lord who will alleviate sorrow or distress and give emotional support as He brings us through dangerous, difficult, distressful, discouraging, devastating, or deadly experiences through which one passes on the path to a higher and more exalted life of intimate contact with Christ.
- C. The rod and staff represent the care and defense of the Lord who will alleviate sorrow or distress and give emotional support as He brings us through real life problems that impact all aspects of our lives.

Key Point: As Christians, we will sooner or later discover that it is in the valley of our lives that we find refreshment from God Himself. It is not until we have walked with Him through some very deep troubles that we discover He can lead us to find our refreshment in Him right there in the midst of our difficulty. We are thrilled beyond words when there comes restoration to our souls and spirits from His own gracious Spirit.⁴

There will be certain problems, pains, and persecution that will exist in our lives because God is using those circumstances to

1. Guide us (to lead us to trust and fellowship with Him)
2. Protect us (to keep us from destruction through our flesh, the word, and the devil)
3. Cultivate us (to transform us into the perfect image of Jesus Christ)

while leading us to experience the fullness of this abundant life He has granted us.

⁴ W. Phillip Keller, *The Shepherd Trilogy: A Shepherd Looks at the 23rd Psalm / A Shepherd Looks at the Good Shepherd / A Shepherd Looks at the Lamb of God* (London: Marshall Pickering, 1996), 77.