

Tehillim / Psalms 23

"Thy Rod and Thy staff, a sign of Your great Covenant" ①

Psalms 23:1 "A Psalm of David, The Lord is my shepherd
I shall not want." (NAB)

לֹא־חָסַר־לִי־כֵּן = Not lacking or missing anything
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Questions

1. How does the Lord who shepherds (יָדָבֵר) David cause him not to have want or need?
2. When we think of salvation, do we only think in terms of salvation's eschatological conclusion?
3. What is the response we should have after the Lord God has miraculously worked in our lives?

• when reading and thinking about the psalms of David, it is good to try and reason where in his life he composed the psalm.

- 2 Samuel 17, David fled from Absalom to the Jordan River at the ford known as Jabbok and entered the land of Gilead.
- He met a man named Barzillai who was loyal to David and his followers
- 1 Kings 2:7, David remembered Barzillai and his kindness
- Barzillai was a shepherd, thus, it may be that David was being provided for by Barzillai and he composed this psalm recognizing God's hand at work.

* Any comments on this? ↗

Aramaic Targum

(2)

Psalms 23:1 A psalm of David. It is the Lord who fed his people in the wilderness; they did not lack anything. (EMC)

Questions

1. What were the rabbis thinking when they translated this verse?
2. What kinds of needs were met for the children of Israel in the wilderness according to the Torah?
 - what the people wanted vs. what God provided?
3. How does this translate to what David says that God is his shepherd?

Exodus 14:13 But Moses said to the people, Do not fear! Stand by and see the salvation of the Lord which He will accomplish for you today; for the Egyptians whom you have seen today, you will never see them again, forever. (NASB)

Thinking on salvation again ...

- The Lord God Almighty delivered Israel, was in the process of delivering Israel, and will deliver Israel!

Question

1. Who are we in Christ? What happens when Christ comes into our lives and we are part of the family of God?

→ Grafted into Israel

2. If we are grafted into the vine, or into the tree (like Paul spoke of in Romans 11:24) is this grafting into Israel? 3

Deuteronomy 29:4-6 (read page 3)

Questions

→ were the children of Israel $\text{לֹא יָסַר} \text{ (lo echsar)}$ like David; the Lord God Almighty was their shepherd and they ^{were} not "lacking, missing, deficient, or deprived of" anything?

→ we know God's word applies to us, if we are grafted into Israel, can we with confidence believe the Lord has a salvation plan for each of us just like He does for Israel?
(see list, page 3).

→ what is the key to Israel being free, and for us?

Deuteronomy 7:14-16 (7:16)

- having a pure heart & clean hands
- not serving other gods.

↳ this is a broad topic
what could serve as a god in our lives?
Apostle Paul

→ 1 Corinthians 10:1-12 (read page 4)

→ 1 Corinthians 11:29-31 eating and drinking judgment upon ourselves if one does not judge ourselves properly?
- unrepentance?

④
1 Corinthians 11:31 "But if we judged ourselves rightly, we would not be judged." (NASB)

- Eating and Drinking judgment.
- Many are sick, weak, and dead.

Questions

1. What does it mean to judge ourselves?

- If we judge ourselves and find ourselves guilty, what are we going to do about it?

2. What does eating and drinking unworthily mean?

3. Is Paul referring to those who crave, covet, or lust for carnal things?

* David did not need, want, or desire for anything; he was not lacking, missing, or deficient; he has not been deprived of anything because he kept the way of the Lord.

→ Psalm 19, the Law of the Lord is perfect, restores the soul, the Torah is the testimony of the Lord, full of the promises of God, is given to make one wise, the ordinances of the Lord are right, and the commandment enlightens the eyes.

As a result of being obedient to God's ways, David says:

Psalm 23:2 "He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me besides quiet waters." (NASB)

Question

1. What is the significance of lying down in green pastures and beside still waters?

Psalms 23:3 "He restores my soul; He guides me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake." (NASB)

(Hebrew)

Aramaic Targum (Pseudo Jonathan)

Psalms 23:3 "He will restore my soul with manna; He led me in the paths of righteousness for the sake of His name."

Septuagint (LXX) - Literal Trans.

(Greek) "My life returned; He guided me upon roads of righteousness because of His name."

Questions

1. Why do the rabbis say God restored David's soul with manna?
- what is the significance of manna?

(Read a section of pages)

- The Rabbis made the connection between manna and the
- Jesus said in John 6:31-32, man does not live by bread alone but by the word of God.
 - He restores our souls
 - He guides us in righteousness

Psalms 23:4 "Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil, for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff they comfort me." (NASB)

Question

1. How does the rod and staff comfort us?
2. What is the difference between the rod and staff?

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 שֵׁטֶל (Shevet) "Rod, stick, tribe, clan"

 מִזְרָה (Mizrah) verb. "to lean"

 noun. "to support, rest, prop."

Researching the use of these words according to the Massoretic text (Hebrew Bible).

Torah (five books of Moses)

• Two words are used: מִזְרָה (mizrah) for rod & staff. שֵׁטֶל (shevet)

- in the Torah, the word mizrah is used to refer to the word "staff" and the word shevet is used to refer to a tribe of Israel.

Question

1. What is the significance of David's choice of words here in Psalms 23:4?

→ I felt this wasn't so much illustrative of "rod & staff" as it is placing emphasis upon the covenant of God and leaning upon Him.

2. Any thoughts on "Rod & Staff" and covenant of God? (Page 6)

⑦

Psalms 23:4 "Indeed when I go into exile by the plain of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for your word is my help, your straight staff and your Torah, they will comfort me."

(Aramaic)

(Pages 6-7)

Questions

1. David says "for you are with me." The rabbis translate "for your word is my help." why do you think they chose to translate it that way?
2. They also translate "your straight staff and your Torah, they comfort me." How does the Law provide comfort?
3. Ever heard of "the Joy of Torah (Law)"? (Simcha Torah)

Psalms 23:5 "You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You have anointed my head with oil; my cup overflows." (NASB)

Questions

1. Why does David say the Lord prepares a table before me in the presence of my enemies?

- is there any significance to that statement?
 - what is the table?
 - who are our enemies?
 - How is it prepared?
- } what does all this mean for us?

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2. What is the significance of having one's head anointed with oil?
- where does this come from in the Tanach?

