



## HG221: God's Promise Of: **Provision**

Psalm 23:1-6

Home Group Study Notes

9 May 2021 - Revd Canon Hugh Dibbens



PLEASE COMPLETE AS MUCH AS YOU CAN  
ON THIS WORKSHEET IN PREPARATION  
**BEFORE THE MEETING!**

*Don't forget to take your Bible to Home Group  
with you, along with any previous notes and other  
resources which might be helpful for your discussions.*



**Welcome** (10 mins)  
*Ice Breaker*

What is your favourite Psalm? Where would Psalm 23 rank in your list of favourites?



**Looking Upwards** (10 mins)  
*Worship*

In your time of worship, you may want to sing Songs of Praise; listen to a Worship CD, as well as using Meditations; Bible Readings; Prayers ...



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### **'Shepherd' as an image for 'Leader'.**

People in the Middle East were very familiar with shepherds leading a flock of sheep. The sheep followed their shepherd, so it became an image for a leader. Shepherds in the UK drive their sheep from behind using dogs. There were no doubt good shepherds and not so good. Cf. Ezekiel 34:1-6.

**Jesus** uses this image to describe his own ministry and so gives us an idea of what really good shepherding is like. John 10:1-30; Luke 15:1-7; Matt 18:10-14.

Some commentators see a change of image in vs5 – from shepherding to domestic hospitality. This is, I think, a mistake. **'Table'** is a new area of pasture made safe by the Shepherd who will have cleared it of snakes and resident predators. **'The overflowing cup'** is a spring of fresh water.

**'Anointing'** was done by shepherds who carried a horn of oil to rub into cuts and bruises at the end of the day.

**Significant Words in Psalm 23:3 – 'righteousness'** – Hebrew 'tsediq' – Greek 'dikaiosune'.

Core meaning – 'faithful justice' or 'being Godlike in caring for the poor and needy' – overtones of 'salvation'.

Vs6 - **'goodness'** - Hebrew 'tob' - Greek 'agathosune' – 'gracious generosity'. Named as a fruit of the Holy Spirit in Galatians 5:2

**'loving kindness'** – Hebrew 'chesed' – Greek – 'eleos'-'merciful compassion'.

## Questions

Psalm 23 is loved for its promises of God leading and providing for his people, both individually and corporately. Is this not a passage of the Bible we should all learn by heart and use frequently as we go about our day to day lives?

Can anyone in the group recite Psalm 23?

What is the advantage of learning Scriptures by heart as against just having them on our phones?

## **THE LORD'S ABUNDANT PROVISION vs1 – 3.**

Three areas of provision are mentioned – Material vs2; Spiritual vs3; Guidance vs3.

## Questions

Taking each of these 'provisions' in turn, perhaps members of the Group will be willing to share their personal experiences.

What do you think '**for His Name's sake**' means in vs3 ?

## **DISCOVERING THE HEART OF GOD'S PROVISION IN THE FACE OF LIFE'S CHALLENGES**

At vs 4 the Psalm changes mood, from secure tranquillity to a context of danger and threat – **darkness, death, evil, enemies**. Along with this there is a significant change of pronouns used.

Vs 1 – 3 'He' and 'me' become in v s4 – 6 'You' and 'me'.

Could it be that vs 4 – 6 envisage God's People engaging in Mission? In such circumstances there is the opportunity to develop a much greater intimacy and dependence in our relationship with God.

**Emmanuel Church Text for 2021**

*“We have this hope as an anchor for the soul,  
firm and secure.”*

Hebrews 6:19



## **Looking Upwards** (40 mins)

### *Bible Study*

Read the text for this study, and any references given, then answer the following questions. You may find it helpful to listen to the sermon and/or read through the sermon notes as you do so. Discuss some, or all, your answers with your Home Group and, remember, these questions are only a guide to start your discussions.

**1.** What is the heart of God's Provision for His People vs 4? How do we sustain our awareness when the pressure is on?

**2.** The sheep are vulnerable and death is not far away. How important is it that, as Christians, we have come to terms with our own mortality? What difference does this make to our lives and ministry ?

**3.** Jesus' birth happened in the valley of the shadow of death, and from the beginning of his ministry the shadow was never far away. John the Baptist calls Him the 'Lamb of God' John 1:29. After His very first sermon there is a mob attempt to kill Him Luke 4:28–29, cf Mark 3:6. Is there anything we can learn from how Jesus faced these threats? NB. When Jesus predicts His death He concludes with reference to the Resurrection eg. Matt 16:21. Psalm 23 ends with a similar statement vs6.

**4.** For many of us Covid 19 has been a dark valley to pass through. How have we managed? Have we been aware that the Lord has walked with us?

**5.** Jesus is the 'Good Shepherd'. John 10:11, 14. All of us have Shepherding responsibilities and influence. How does Psalm 23 encourage us to be good shepherds?

**6.** You may want to raise a question of your own here.



Is there anything you most want to put into practice as a result of this study?



## **Looking Inwards** (15 mins) *Caring For Each Other*

*Reflecting on your life at the moment, is there anything you would like to share with other members of your home group which you feel is appropriate (this is an opportunity to share, not something you have to do, however, 'It's the sharing that enables the caring!')* for:

Thanksgiving?

Prayer?

Encouragement?

Support in any way?



## **Looking Outwards** (15 mins) *Concern For Others*

*Is there anything concerning someone in your: family; circle of friends; neighbours or church, which you would like to share (please be sure not pass on anything that is confidential or which you think the person concerned would not wish to be shared) for:*

Thanksgiving?

Prayer?

Encouragement?

Support in any way?

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