

The Message and Structure Psalm 23

Psalm 23 is a psalm which has brought comfort and hope to many people over many years. Many psalms have distinctive structures and a symmetry which aids memorisation and gives focus to some of the important words and themes of the overall psalm. One of these structures is called chiastic (cross over) which is derived from the arrangement of the verses in a particular way.*

The following slides use this structure to bring out some of the impact of Psalm 23, to underline that the Good Shepherd is always there to guide us, whatever we are going through.

The gospel reading for today (John 10 v 11 -1 8) echoes the message of Psalm 23 and challenges us to go out to 'bring in other sheep who are not of this flock' so that they too can experience the love and care of The Good Shepherd.

*For Hebrew scholars and experts in the psalms it should be noted that some would suggest that to fit Psalm 23 into a chiastic structure requires a liberal interpretation of this particular form.

Psalm 23

The LORD is my shepherd,
I shall lack nothing.

He makes me lie down in green pastures,
He leads me beside quiet waters,

He restores my soul.

He guides me in paths of righteousness
For His name's sake.

Even 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.

You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies.
You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

Psalm 23

The LORD is my shepherd,
I shall lack nothing.

The LORD's oversight,
care & limitless provision

He makes me lie down in green pastures,
He leads me beside quiet waters,
He restores my soul.
He guides me in paths of righteousness
For His name's sake.
Even 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.
You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies.
You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.
Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

Psalm 23

The LORD is my shepherd,
I shall lack nothing.



The LORD's oversight,
care & limitless provision

He makes me lie down in green pastures,
He leads me beside quiet waters,
He restores my soul.
He guides me in paths of righteousness
For His name's sake.

Even 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.
You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies.
You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.



The LORD's oversight,
care & limitless provision

Psalm 23

The LORD is my shepherd,
I shall lack nothing.

He makes me lie down in green pastures,

He leads me beside quiet waters,

He restores my soul.

He guides me in paths of righteousness

For His name's sake.

Even 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.

You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies.

You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life,

and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

The LORD's oversight,
care & limitless provision

Psalm 23

The LORD is my shepherd,
I shall lack nothing.

**He makes me lie down in green pastures,
He leads me beside quiet waters,**

He restores my soul.

He guides me in paths of righteousness
For His name's sake.

Even 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.

You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies.
You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

**Abundant physical &
spiritual refreshment**

Psalm 23

The LORD is my shepherd,
I shall lack nothing.

**He makes me lie down in green pastures,
He leads me beside quiet waters,**

He restores my soul.

He guides me in paths of righteousness
For His name's sake.

Even 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.

**You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies.
You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.**

Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

**Abundant physical &
spiritual refreshment**

**Abundant physical &
spiritual refreshment**

Psalm 23

The LORD is my shepherd,
I shall lack nothing.

He makes me lie down in green pastures,

He leads me beside quiet waters,

He restores my soul.

He guides me

in paths of righteousness

For His name's sake.

Even 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.

You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies.

You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

The LORD's oversight,
care & limitless provision

Abundant physical &
spiritual refreshment

Psalm 23

The LORD is my shepherd,
I shall lack nothing.

He makes me lie down in green pastures,
He leads me beside quiet waters,

He restores my soul.
He guides me in paths of righteousness
For His name's sake.

Comfort,
protection
& guidance

Even 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.
You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies.
You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.
Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

Psalm 23

The LORD is my shepherd,
I shall lack nothing.

He makes me lie down in green pastures,
He leads me beside quiet waters,

He restores my soul.

He guides me in paths of righteousness
For His name's sake.

Even 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.

You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies.

You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

Comfort,
protection
and guidance

Comfort,
protection
& guidance

Psalm 23

The LORD is my shepherd,
I shall lack nothing.

He makes me lie down in green pastures,

He leads me beside quiet waters,

He restores my soul.

He guides me
in paths of righteousness

For His name's sake.

Even 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.

You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies.

You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

The LORD's oversight,
care & limitless provision

Abundant physical &
spiritual refreshment

Comfort,
protection
& guidance

Psalm 23

The LORD is my shepherd,
I shall lack nothing.

He makes me lie down in green pastures,
He leads me beside quiet waters,
He restores my soul.

in paths of righteousness
For His name's sake.

Even though (whatever) 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.

You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies.
You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

The LORD's oversight,
care & limitless provision

Abundant physical &
spiritual refreshment

Comfort,
protection
& guidance

Psalm 23

The LORD is my shepherd,
I shall lack nothing.

He makes me lie down in green pastures,
He leads me beside quiet waters,
He restores my soul.

He guides me
in paths of righteousness
For His name's sake.
Even 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.

You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies.
You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

Psalm 23

But there's more...

Psalm 23

The LORD is my shepherd,
I shall lack nothing.

He makes me lie down in green pastures,
He leads me beside quiet waters,
He restores my soul.

Water (Old)
covenant

in paths of righteousness
For His name's sake.

Even though (whatever) 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.

You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies.

You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

Wine (New)

Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

covenant

Psalm 23

The LORD is my shepherd,
I shall lack nothing.

He makes me lie down in green pastures,
He leads me beside quiet waters,
He restores my soul.

Old
impersonal
relationship

He guides me
in paths of righteousness

For His name's sake.

~~Even though (whatever) 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.

You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies.

You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

New

Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

personal
relationship

John 10 v 11 - 18

Jesus, our **LORD**, says 'I am the good **shepherd**'

I **lay down** my life for the sheep,

Beware the false shepherd

The hired hand runs from the sheep

I lay down my life for the sheep

I bring in sheep from other flocks

Listen to the voice of the good shepherd

I **lay down** my life for the sheep

The good shepherd's authority is from our **LORD** and Father

Old
impersonal
relationship



New
personal
relationship



The Lord is my Shepherd

The good shepherd gives

The LORD's oversight, care & limitless provision

Abundant physical & spiritual refreshment

Comfort, protection & guidance

The opportunity to exchange

An old impersonal relationship for a new personal relationship

The challenge to

Reach out to others so that they can be brought to know
the good shepherd too

To guide, whatever we go through, and to know He is with us always

Psalm 23