

# Provision and Protection

Introduction – **A CHALLENGE IN THE FORM OF 2 QUESTIONS**

*- coffee mugs, fridge stickers, framed prints*

- “The Lord is my shepherd”
- Many people attribute this Psalm to themselves, but let’s consider that before we start ~~two questions~~ = *let’s ask 2 questions*
- LORD = covenant God of Israel – this assumes a prior relationship of a very specific kind: **Are you in a relationship with God whereby you can say these words?** *Is God your covenant God? ⇒ GOSPEL*
- Shepherd = leader whom I obey: **Is he your Shepherd?**

*↳ Before you appropriate this psalm, ask whether you have a relationship with God on His terms, and if you obey Him as sheep obey a shepherd.*

Psalm 23 ESV

A Psalm of David.

<sup>1</sup> The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

<sup>2</sup> He makes me lie down in green pastures.

He leads me beside still waters.

<sup>3</sup> He restores my soul.

He leads me in paths of righteousness

for his name’s sake.

<sup>4</sup> 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.

<sup>5</sup> You prepare a table before me

in the presence of my enemies;

you anoint my head with oil;

my cup overflows.

<sup>6</sup> Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me

all the days of my life,

and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord

forever.

## The Provision and Protection of the LORD <sup>our</sup>

This psalm puts forward a beautiful and powerful picture of God who provides for and protects those who trust and follow him.

### Verse 1

- Shepherd metaphor dominates first 4 verses
- **Psalm 95:7 ESV** For he is our God, and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand.
- Primarily a spiritual metaphor – God is our spiritual leader, providing and protecting us
- His provision and protection is abundant both qualitatively and quantitatively
- “I lack nothing,” “I will not lack” – there is no deficiency in the quantity of his provision and protection

### Verse 2

- The provision and protection is of significant quality: the grass to which he leads us is the rich, abundant grass of Israel’s springtime which provided sustenance that would get the herds through the sparse, dry, arid summers
- Common and critical – funerals and trials...he regularly leads me...day in, day out *not just in critical times, but also in common times*
- The daily sustenance of grass for the sheep speaks primarily to the spiritual food that God provides
- The pastures and still waters denote provision and protection: “Beside secure waters he leads me” – a picture of rest and refreshment, free from danger and chaos *→ picture your dream location, an idyllic place*  
*“water of resting places”*

### Verse 3

- A place where restoration (spiritual refreshment) takes place
- Restoration is the restoring of a withered hand, the restoration of captives, the repairing of walls, rebuilding of cities – the Lord brings David to a place of spiritual wholeness and wellness

MAIN  
IDEA

- Paths of righteousness are the “wagon tracks” of both right living and right standing before God; they get you to the right place in right standing with God *heading in the right direction*
- Lest, we get too into ourselves about how we are loved and cared for, and how good we have it, we are reminded that it is for God’s name, His reputation that all this is happening
- Our provision and protection is for, ultimately, making known His greatness

#### Verse 4

- Sometimes the path of righteousness leads through the valley of the shadow of death
- Verse 1-3 emphasize provision, verse 4 emphasizes protection as well as any verse in the Bible
- The Lord protects in even the most dangerous situations
- In those oppressive, threatening places of difficulty, God is protecting you
- This “valley of death darkness” does not elicit fear because God’s presence protects
- “Your club and your staff” – a picture of care and defense

*→ What are you facing?*

#### Verse 5

- Moved from the pasture to the banquet hall, shepherd to host
- These verse point more towards physical protection and provision
- The food has been spread before the guests – buffet – *NAS 1977 - 1 Cor 9:27 I buffet my body!*
- “in the face of my enemies” – the host is obliged to protect the guests
- Scented, perfumed oil is provided so guests can freshen up – oil is symbolic of prosperity, happiness, and honour (steaming hot towel on the train, ice towel in a game)
- A glorious picture of God lavishly and extravagantly providing for and protecting his people
- The cup is clearly overflowing: cup = one’s lot in life
- A life filled with good things, spiritual and physical

Verse 6

- Summary: the psalmist meditates on the provision and protection of God in the metaphors of shepherd and sheep and host and guest and he also makes a conclusion about these things - *he applies them*
- Conclusion concerning his meditation of the metaphors: "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life" - *the provision + protection point to this*
- Goodness and mercy = loyal love of the covenant God
- Follow = pursue – this is reassuring because we are not easy to love *and his love is indefatigable*
- Conclusion in regards to his response: "I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever." ⇒ **NOT A STATEMENT BUT A DECLARATION OF INTENT**
- In light of who God is and how he treats David, this seems like the appropriate response

***We need to bring that home for us today. We need to contemplate the protection and provision of God and our response to it.***

***We meditate on his protection and provision by considering Christ and we make decisions on our actions by considering the church***

## The Provision and Protection of Christ

**John 10:11 ESV** I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.

Jesus Christ, through his work on the cross, provides for and protects his sheep.

**Hebrews 13:20-21 ESV** <sup>20</sup> Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, <sup>21</sup> equip you with everything good that you may do his will, working in us that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

*this is provision*

### Provision

A list of what Christ has provided. Remember one and meditate on it even as David meditated on God's provision in Psalm 23. *But also feel the weight of this...*

50 Reasons Why Jesus Came to Die = 50 things Jesus provides for us in laying down his life for the sheep:

- 1 To Absorb the Wrath of God
- 2 To Please His Heavenly Father
- 3 To Learn Obedience and Be Perfected
- 4 To Achieve His Own Resurrection from the Dead
- 5 To Show the Wealth of God's Love and Grace for Sinners
- 6 To Show His Own Love for Us
- 7 To Cancel the Legal Demands of the Law Against Us
- 8 To Become a Ransom for Many
- 9 For the Forgiveness of Our Sins
- 10 To Provide the Basis for Our Justification
- 11 To Complete the Obedience That Becomes Our Righteousness
- 12 To Take Away Our Condemnation
- 13 To Abolish Circumcision and All Rituals as the Basis of Salvation
- 14 To Bring Us to Faith and Keep Us Faithful
- 15 To Make Us Holy, Blameless, and Perfect
- 16 To Give Us a Clear Conscience
- 17 To Obtain for Us All Things That Are Good for Us
- 18 To Heal Us from Moral and Physical Sickness
- 19 To Give Eternal Life to All Who Believe on Him
- 20 To Deliver Us from the Present Evil Age
- 21 To Reconcile Us to God
- 22 To Bring Us to God
- 23 So That We Might Belong to Him
- 24 To Give Us Confident Access to the Holiest Place
- 25 To Become for Us the Place Where We Meet God
- 26 To Bring the Old Testament Priesthood to an End and Become the Eternal High Priest
- 27 To Become a Sympathetic and Helpful Priest
- 28 To Free Us from the Futility of Our Ancestry
- 29 To Free Us from the Slavery of Sin

*...picture a host bringing out 50 dishes*

- 30 That We Might Die to Sin and Live to Righteousness
- 31 So That We Would Die to the Law and Bear Fruit for God
- 32 To Enable Us to Live for Christ and Not Ourselves
- 33 To Make His Cross the Ground of All Our Boasting
- 34 To Enable Us to Live by Faith in Him
- 35 To Give Marriage Its Deepest Meaning
- 36 To Create a People Passionate for Good Works
- 37 To Call Us to Follow His Example of Lowliness and Costly Love
- 38 To Create a Band of Crucified Followers
- 39 To Free Us from Bondage to the Fear of Death
- 40 So That We Would Be with Him Immediately After Death
- 41 To Secure Our Resurrection from the Dead
- 42 To Disarm the Rulers and Authorities
- 43 To Unleash the Power of God in the Gospel
- 44 To Destroy the Hostility Between Races
- 45 To Ransom People from Every Tribe and Language and People and Nation
- 46 To Gather All His Sheep from Around the World
- 47 To Rescue Us from Final Judgment
- 48 To Gain His Joy and Ours
- 49 So That He Would Be Crowned with Glory and Honor
- 50 To Show That the Worst Evil Is Meant by God for Good

→ The provision of the Great Shepherd through the laying down of his life

#### Protection

**John 10:1-18 ESV** <sup>1</sup> “Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door but climbs in by another way, that man is a thief and a robber.<sup>2</sup> But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. <sup>3</sup>To him the gatekeeper opens. The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. <sup>4</sup>When he has brought out all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. <sup>5</sup>A stranger they will not follow, but they will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers.” <sup>6</sup>This figure of speech Jesus used with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.

<sup>7</sup>So Jesus again said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. <sup>8</sup>All who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not

listen to them. <sup>9</sup> I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture. <sup>10</sup> The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly. <sup>11</sup> I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. <sup>12</sup> He who is a hired hand and not a shepherd, who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. <sup>13</sup> He flees because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep. <sup>14</sup> I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, <sup>15</sup> just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep. <sup>16</sup> And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. <sup>17</sup> For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it up again. <sup>18</sup> No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This charge I have received from my Father.”

**Jesus makes it clear that he, the Shepherd and Door of the sheepfold, is source of protection against the thieves, robbers, and wolves who come to steal, kill, and destroy. And the proof of this protection is decidedly the laying down of his life.**

*We need to meditate on Christ's shepherdly provision + protection which is found in his death and resurrection.*

## The Provision and Protection of the Church

Provision and protection for the sheep are found in the church.

### Provision

The church provides for godly living and walking in a manner worthy of the gospel.

From the provision of Christ: **Hebrews 13:20-21 ESV** <sup>20</sup> Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, <sup>21</sup> **equip** you with everything good that you may do his will, working in us that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

PROVISION THROUGH CHURCH LEADERS

**Ephesians 4:11-16 ESV** <sup>11</sup> And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, <sup>12</sup> to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, <sup>13</sup> until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, <sup>14</sup> so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. <sup>15</sup> Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, <sup>16</sup> from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

PROVISION THROUGH CHURCH MEMBERS - *God also provides for our following Christ through other followers of Christ*

**Colossians 3:15-16 ESV** <sup>15</sup> And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. <sup>16</sup> Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

*↳ every person who calls this church "HOME" is a teacher of God's Word*

Provision for our life lived to the glory of God comes from God through Christ, but the means God uses is the church; the leadership and the members of the church provide the bounty of God to each other.

*↳ Application ⇒ Be a provider!  
Be a conduit of God's provision*



Protection

The church protects the sheep in many ways, two of which are church membership and church discipline.

CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

⇒ Oct 15, 2017

*Our current practice of church membership is a reasonable accommodation of the biblical church practice that defines the relationship between the NT church and Jesus's disciples*

**Hebrews 3:12-14 ESV** Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God. But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called “today,” that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. For we have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original confidence firm to the end.

**Hebrews 13:17 ESV** Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you.

CHURCH DISCIPLINE

**1 Corinthians 5:1-6 ESV** <sup>1</sup>It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that is not tolerated even among pagans, for a man has his father's wife. <sup>2</sup>And you are arrogant! Ought you not rather to mourn? Let him who has done this be removed from among you. <sup>3</sup>For though absent in body, I am present in spirit; and as if present, I have already pronounced judgment on the one who did such a thing. <sup>4</sup>When you are assembled in the name of the Lord Jesus and my spirit is present, with the power of our Lord Jesus, <sup>5</sup>you are to deliver this man to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord. <sup>6</sup>Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump?

**Discipline aims to warn.** A church does not enact God's retribution through discipline. Rather, it stages a small play that pictures the great judgment to come (v. 5). Discipline is a compassionate warning.

**Discipline aims to save.** Churches pursue discipline when they see a member taking the path toward death, and none of their pleading and arm-waving causes

the person to turn around. It's the device of last resort for bringing an individual to repentance (v. 5).

**4. Discipline aims to *protect*.** Just as cancer spreads from one cell to another, so sin quickly spreads from one person to another (v. 6).

**God has, through the body of the Chief Shepherd Jesus Christ, given us a means of protection that we ought to avail ourselves of; church membership this fall.**

*Application: Join our fellowship - come Sundays  
Commit to being part of us  
Join a small group  
Participate in one-on-one discipleship  
\* Formalize all of this by becoming a member \**

## *Provision + Protection*

- ↳ In Psalm 23 as David meditates on God's goodness + mercy*
- ↳ In Christ through his death*
- ↳ In the church*