

Psalms 22-23

Three Psalms about Messiah

22	The Servant Suffering
24	The Sovereign Crowned

23

The Shepherd and the sheep

This Psalm relates to **this life** rather than the next – v6 “to length of days”.

Background. The **Patriarchs** and **Moses and David** were shepherds.

This was their “**training ground**” for leadership. Their relationship with their sheep mirrored God’s relationship to them - **sheep (disciples)** before they became **leaders (shepherds)**.

The Shepherd King is a description of the God of Israel, “The sheep of His pasture”, Psalm 100: 3, cf Ezekiel 34.

The Shepherd rules (leads and guides) and is **responsible** (provides, protects).

The sheep respond (listen and follow, trust and obey).

Before he leads a shepherd must learn to follow.

Before he speaks a shepherd must learn to listen.

Psalm 23 is about us, but in the first instance it is about the Messiah (Jesus).

Through the voice of David, the prototype of the Shepherd Messiah, He is saying, “The LORD is My Shepherd”. If we understand how it worked for Him we shall better understand how it works for us.

Jesus is **the Good Shepherd** John 10: 11, **the Great Shepherd** Hebrews 13: 20, and **the Chief Shepherd** 1Peter 5: 4, but **first of all** He was **the ideal sheep**.

In chapter 53:7 Isaiah describes **His trust and submission and obedience, as a sacrificial sheep**.

This was also the way He lived – Hebrews 10: 5-7, Luke 2: 49, Matt. 15: 24, John 4: 32-34, 5: 17, 19-20a, 30, 6: 38, 8: 42, 10: 17-18, 15: 10, 17: 4.

The Father communicated with Jesus by the Holy Spirit – anointed Luke 3: 21-22, **guided** Luke 4: 1, **strengthened** Luke 4: 14, **present within Him** John 3: 34, 14: 16-17.

Isaiah spoke of the Servant of the LORD (the Messiah) as **the LORD’s disciple** – listening and then speaking, willing to respond in any way and at whatever cost, 51: 4-9. He went into complete darkness trusting in the faithfulness of God, Hebrews 5: 7-9, and calls **his disciples** to do the same, Isaiah 51: 9. **Jesus’ trusting obedience qualified Him to be the “Leader of our salvation”** Hebrews 2: 10 **and the “Great Shepherd of the sheep”** Hebrews 13:20.

Were we not supposed to be looking at the text of Psalm 23?

Let’s read it again keeping in mind what we have just considered – Scripture is the best commentary on Scripture.

What about us?

Jesus is our model as sheep, John 14: 16-17, 17: 18, 20: 21-22.

He is also our Shepherd, John 10: 11-18, 27-29, the LORD Himself 10: 30.

Psalm 23 is ours but only because it was His first.