

He Maketh Me Lie Down

Chapter 6

Audio Lesson: Old Testament #51



Objective: To introduce the book of Psalms and learn how it can help us worship.



*The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not be in want.
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 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 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 forever.*

—Psalm 23

The book of Psalms is a worship book of songs, poetry, and prayers. There are 150 psalms written by various people, including David, Asaph, priests, temple musicians, one by Solomon, one by Moses, and others. In some of the psalms, the writer is talking to God about God; these are psalms of praise. In others, the writer is talking to God about man; these are psalms of prayer. And in the third kind of psalm, the writer is talking to man about God; these are psalms of preaching. When reading psalms, it is important to understand who the writer is addressing and who he is writing about.

Four major themes are found in the psalms. One kind of psalm tells us about those who are blessed—how and why God blesses those who love Him and serve Him faithfully. Another kind expresses the emotions we feel—from fear and despair to joy and celebration. Another clear theme in the psalms is worship—praising God and giving Him honor. The fourth theme is prophecy—psalms that told something about the coming of the Messiah.

The best-known psalm is Psalm 23, a “blessed man” psalm that portrays God as a wise and gentle shepherd who cares greatly for His sheep. It is one of the most beautiful descriptions in the Bible of the relationship between God and human beings.

1. **True** or false? The book of Psalms was the hymnbook of God’s people.
2. True or **false**? The psalms have much truth in them, but they are not very good poetry.
3. True or **false**? Our blessings are accidental; there is no reason for them.



Unless otherwise noted, choose one answer for each question.

4. Which of the following are purposes of psalms? (*choose three*)
 - a. **Praise**
 - b. Entertainment
 - c. **Prayer**
 - d. **Preaching**
 - e. Judgment
 - f. Storytelling

5. Which of the following seems to be the most common theme in the book of Psalms?
 - a. **The “blessed man” theme**
 - b. The “end of time” theme
 - c. The “obey the law” theme
 - d. The “angry God” theme

6. Which of the following are key elements in the psalms? (*choose all that apply*)
 - a. Adventures
 - b. **Emotions**
 - c. Science
 - d. Bitterness
 - e. **Experiences**
 - f. **Worship**

7. Why do some of the psalms contain curses on enemies?
 - a. Because God wants us to curse our enemies
 - b. **Because they were written long before the Sermon on the Mount, when Jesus said to love our enemies**
 - c. Because God wants people to know how angry He is
 - d. Because the book of Psalms is not inspired like the rest of Scripture

8. What is a messianic psalm?
- a. **A prophecy about Jesus**
 - b. A story about Israel's history
 - c. A prayer for help
 - d. A teaching on the law
9. Who wrote most of the psalms?
- a. Paul
 - b. Moses
 - c. Elijah
 - d. **David**
10. How does Psalm 23 portray God?
- a. As a king
 - b. As a priest
 - c. **As a shepherd**
 - d. As a musician
11. What is the key to receiving all the blessings of Psalm 23?
- a. Being a shepherd for other people
 - b. **Submitting to the Lord as your personal shepherd**
 - c. Becoming mature enough not to need a shepherd
 - d. Spending a lot of time with sheep



Is there a time in your life when you asked the Lord to be your shepherd? How has He guided you and cared for you since then?



If you know the Lord as your shepherd, thank Him for His love and tell Him you trust Him to take care of all your needs. If you do not know Him as your shepherd, will you consider asking Him now? Talk to God and tell Him that you need Him to be your shepherd. Ask Him to come into your life and help you follow Him each day. If you have asked the Lord Jesus to be your shepherd, tell someone, perhaps the leader of this Bible study group so that they can help you grow in your faith.



Going Deeper

1. Relate the green pastures, the quiet or still waters, the paths of righteousness, the table of provision, the full cup and all the other blessings of this blessed man to the opening statement of the psalm. _____

2. How does the author establish his relationship with his Shepherd? _____

3. How does this psalm profile the believer's philosophy of life? _____

4. How does this psalm profile the believer's philosophy of death? _____

5. How does this psalm profile the believer's prescription for failure? _____

6. In what ways does this psalm present the greatest description in writing of the relationship a human being can have with God? _____

7. Since the word "mercy" in the last verse means "unconditional love" and the word "follow" can mean "pursue," in what way is the last verse of this psalm one of the greatest expressions of the love of God in the Bible? _____
