



# STORM SHELTER

## A STUDY IN PSALMS

### THE SHELTER OF GOD'S PRESENCE

**BIG IDEA:** God is with me no matter what I'm facing.

**DATE:** August 17, 2025

**SCRIPTURE:** Psalm 23:1-6

### OPENING QUESTION

Think about bad weather you have experienced—thunderstorms, tornadoes, snow, hurricanes. *What's the worst storm you've ever been in? Are you the kind of person who likes to watch the storm out the window or go straight to the inside bathroom and seek shelter?*

### THE SETTING

David apparently composed this psalm in the midst of or reflecting back on a time when his enemies were close at hand and the outcome of the conflict was far from certain. The situation was severe enough that David could have feared for his life; instead, God's presence and goodness allowed him to say, "I fear no danger" (v. 4). This former shepherd could plainly see how the Great Shepherd guided, cared, and provided for him.

### SCRIPTURE READING

PSALM 23:1-6 (NIV)

The LORD is my shepherd, I lack nothing. <sup>2</sup> He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, <sup>3</sup> he refreshes my soul. He guides me along the right paths for his name's sake.

<sup>4</sup> Even though I walk through the darkest valley, 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 your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

## DISCUSSION

*Psalm 23 has been a Christian favorite for centuries seen on bookmarks, tumblers, pillows and wall art. It is often read at funerals, but it is really a psalm about life and how to stay on the right path during the storms in our lives. Don't let your familiarity with these verses allow you to miss the vital truths they communicate.*

### OUR SHEPHERD GUIDES, PROVIDES AND RENEWS

**READ: Psalm 23:1-3**

- What's your initial reaction to these verses?
- How have these verses encouraged you in the past?
- Which one of the shepherd's actions means the most to you right now? Why?

### OUR SHEPHERD PROTECTS, COMFORTS AND ENCOURAGES

**READ: Psalm 23:4-5**

- What sometimes keeps us from recognizing God's presence?
- What helps you recognize God's presence in your life?
- How has God's presence in your life made you braver than you would be otherwise?
- Verse 4 is about facing the darkest times in our lives. Verse 5 is about a celebration. How do these two fit together? Why are they right next to each other in this Psalm?

### OUR SHEPHERD PURSUES

**READ: Psalm 23:6**

- The Hebrew word for "follow" is even stronger as it holds the connotation of pursuit. How does that change the way you understand this verse?
- What does this communicate to you about God and his character?
- When have you felt God pursuing you with His love and goodness?

## SUMMARIZE & CHALLENGE

We've all experienced the pain of an unexpected crisis. But no matter what we face, God is present. He is our shelter. Spend some time this week thinking back over times in your life when you have known this to be true. Consider journaling about those experiences so you can be easily reminded of them in times of doubt. In the unexpected moments of life, God's loving presence has been and always will be available to us.

**Live it Out:** Consider the following suggestions for living in the reality of God's presence and care.

- **Evaluate**—Identify circumstances in your life where you need protection, comfort, or care. Pray that God will help you be more sensitive to His presence in those situations.
- **Memorize**—Commit Psalm 23 to memory as an internal reminder of God's presence in your life.
- **Share**—Who do you know that is facing a storm right now? Share the 23rd Psalm with them in a card, text, or email.