

## Psalms 22-24 • Christ the Shepherd

### Introduction

These three Psalms present different aspects of Christ as the Shepherd, each emphasizing a different aspect of His Person and work. In Psalm 22 we are presented with the Good Shepherd dying for the sheep.

*"I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep.  
John 10:11*

In Psalm 23 we are presented with Great Shepherd caring for the sheep.

*Now the God of peace, who brought up from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the eternal covenant, even Jesus our Lord, equip you in every good thing to do His will, working in us that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen.  
Hebrews 13:20-21*

In Psalm 24 we are presented with the Chief Shepherd coming for the sheep.

*And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.  
1 Peter 5:4*

Combined together they present the character and work of Christ as a whole who died for us (past), lives for us (present), and will come for us (future).

<sup>1</sup>My God, my God, why have You forsaken me?  
Far from my deliverance are the words of my groaning.  
<sup>2</sup>O my God, I cry by day, but You do not answer;  
And by night, but I have no rest.  
<sup>3</sup>Yet You are holy,  
O You who are enthroned upon the praises of Israel.  
<sup>4</sup>In You our fathers trusted;  
They trusted and You delivered them.  
<sup>5</sup>To You they cried out and were delivered;  
In You they trusted and were not disappointed.  
  
<sup>6</sup>But I am a worm and not a man,  
A reproach of men and despised by the people.  
<sup>7</sup>All who see me sneer at me;  
They separate with the lip, they wag the head, saying,  
<sup>8</sup>“Commit yourself to the LORD; let Him deliver him;  
Let Him rescue him, because He delights in him.”  
  
<sup>9</sup>Yet You are He who brought me forth from the womb;  
You made me trust when upon my mother’s breasts.  
<sup>10</sup>Upon You I was cast from birth;

### [Read Psalm 22: Christ the Good Shepherd]

**Q: This Psalm can be divided into two major sections from v.1-21 and v.22-31. What is the main theme of each section?**

A: In the first section we are presented with the crucifixion of Christ whereas in the second section reveals His resurrection.

**Q: Is it possible that David knowingly and consciously wrote this Psalm about crucifixion specifically?**

A: No. During David’s time, nearly 1,000 years before Christ, there was no such thing known among the Jews as crucifixion. Therefore the only way David could have written such a detailed account is by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

**Q: In general, how do the two sections contrast with each other?**

1. In v.1-21 is provided Christ’s suffering and crucifixion while v.22-32 reveal His glory and resurrection.
2. More specifically, the first section depicts Christ’s pain and prayer, the second His praise and promise.
3. In the first section Christ is found in the midst of His enemies, in the second He is in the midst of believers.
4. Others?

**Q: What are some of the things listed in the first section which we find fulfilled in the New Testament?**

1. Verse 1 – Christ spoke these words. (Mt. 27:46); Mk. 15:34)
2. Verse 2 – Alternate light and darkness. (Mt. 27:45)
3. Verses 6-8 – The reproach of the people. (Mt. 27:39-44)
4. Verses 11-12 – No help was offered Him. (Mt. 26:56)
5. Verse 16 – His hands and feet were pierced. (Mt. 27:35)
6. Verse 17 – People staring at Him. (Lk. 23:35)
7. Verse 18 – Casting lots for His garments. (Jn. 19:23-24)
8. Others?

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You have been my God from my mother's womb.

<sup>11</sup>Be not far from me, for trouble is near;  
For there is none to help.

<sup>12</sup>Many bulls have surrounded me;  
Strong bulls of Bashan have encircled me.

<sup>13</sup>They open wide their mouth at me,  
As a ravening and a roaring lion.

<sup>14</sup>I am poured out like water,  
And all my bones are out of joint;  
My heart is like wax;  
It is melted within me.

<sup>15</sup>My strength is dried up like a potsherd,  
And my tongue cleaves to my jaws;  
And You lay me in the dust of death.

<sup>16</sup>For dogs have surrounded me;  
A band of evildoers has encompassed me;  
They pierced my hands and my feet.

<sup>17</sup>I can count all my bones.  
They look, they stare at me;

<sup>18</sup>They divide my garments among them,  
And for my clothing they cast lots.

<sup>19</sup>But You, O LORD, be not far off;  
O You my help, hasten to my assistance.

<sup>20</sup>Deliver my soul from the sword,  
My only life from the power of the dog.

<sup>21</sup>Save me from the lion's mouth;  
From the horns of the wild oxen You  
answer me.

<sup>22</sup>I will tell of Your name to my brethren;  
In the midst of the assembly I will praise  
You.

<sup>23</sup>You who fear the LORD, praise Him;  
All you descendants of Jacob, glorify  
Him,  
And stand in awe of Him, all you  
descendants of Israel.

<sup>24</sup>For He has not despised nor abhorred  
the affliction of the afflicted;  
Nor has He hidden His face from him;  
But when he cried to Him for help, He  
heard.

<sup>25</sup>From You comes my praise in the great  
assembly;  
I shall pay my vows before those who  
fear Him.

<sup>26</sup>The afflicted will eat and be satisfied;  
Those who seek Him will praise the  
LORD.

Let your heart live forever!

<sup>27</sup>All the ends of the earth will remember  
and turn to the LORD,  
And all the families of the nations will  
worship before You.

**Q: How does the scene change dramatically beginning with v.22?**

A: It moves from the crucifixion to the resurrection. Compare this with what it states in Hebrews:

*For both He who sanctifies and those who are sanctified are all from one Father; for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying, "I will proclaim Your name to My brethren, In the midst of the congregation I will sing Your praise."  
Hebrews 2:11-12*

**Point:** Christ is no longer on the cross but in the midst of His brethren, declaring the glory of God.

**Q: What is v.24 telling us about Christ's work on our behalf?**

A: That the work of the cross was undertaken for us personally.

*In the days of His flesh, He offered up both prayers and supplications with loud crying and tears to the One able to save Him from death, and He was heard because of His piety.  
Hebrews 5:7*

**Q: Where might His praise be taking place in v.22?**

A: In the church.

**Q: Where might His praise be taking place in v.23-26?**

A: In Israel.

**Q: Where might His praise be taking place in v.27-31?**

A: Among the nations.

**Q: What do these three pictures of His praise represent in terms of God's overall plan?**

A: It intimates His plan to complete His work not just within the church, but as originally proclaimed to both Israel and the world as a whole.

**Q: What might be significant about the fact that this Psalm ends in v.31 with the statement, "He has performed it"?**

A: Another way of translating this final phrase could be, "It is finished", paralleling Christ's exact words when completing His work on the cross.

**Application:** Because of Christ's work on the cross, salvation has been accomplished and all who come to Him by faith will be saved.

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<sup>28</sup>For the kingdom is the LORD'S  
And He rules over the nations.  
<sup>29</sup>All the prosperous of the earth will eat  
and worship,  
All those who go down to the dust will  
bow before Him,  
Even he who cannot keep his soul alive.  
<sup>30</sup>Posterity will serve Him;  
It will be told of the LORD to the coming  
generation.  
<sup>31</sup>They will come and will declare His  
righteousness  
To a people who will be born, that He has  
performed it.

<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 quiet waters.  
<sup>3</sup>He restores my soul;  
He guides me in the paths of  
righteousness  
For His name's sake.  
<sup>4</sup>Even though I walk through the valley of  
the shadow of death,  
I 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 have anointed my head with oil;  
My cup overflows.  
<sup>6</sup>Surely goodness and lovingkindness will  
follow me all the  
days of my life,  
And I will dwell in the house of the LORD  
forever.

### **[Read Psalm 23: Christ the Great Shepherd]**

#### **Q: How do we know that Christ is the Great Shepherd?**

A: We're specifically informed so in Hebrews.

*Now the God of peace, who brought up from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the eternal covenant, even Jesus our Lord, equip you in every good thing to do His will, working in us that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen.*

*Hebrews 13:20-21*

**Point:** Christ's work did not end at simply dying for us; He also rose again and lives for us, ministering to us as the Shepherd tending His sheep.

#### **Q: What phrase in this Psalm captures its theme and how is it used throughout?**

A: "I shall not want".

1. In v.2 "I shall not want" for rest and refreshment.
2. In v.3 "I shall not want" for restoration and righteousness.
3. In v.4 "I shall not want" for protection in times of trouble.
4. In v.5 "I shall not want" for provision even in the wilderness.
5. In v.6 "I shall not want" for a home to go to at the end of the day.

#### **Q: What are some of the behaviors of a shepherd with his sheep?**

1. The shepherd knows each sheep by name, and they know His voice.
2. The sheep never need worry when accompanied by the shepherd because they know they will always be protected and provided for.
3. At the end of the day the shepherd leads the flock back to the fold and examines each one as it enters.
4. The shepherd always goes before the sheep to make sure they are not walking into danger.
5. Others?

*"My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand.*

*John 10:27-28*

*[Continued on the next page.]*

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**Observation:** It's interesting to note that each of the Old Testament names for God is seen in this Psalm:

1. Jehovah-Jireh – “The Lord will provide” (Gen. 22:13-14)
2. Jehovah-Rapha – “The Lord will heal or restore” (Ex. 15:26)
3. Jehovah-Shalom – “The Lord our peace” (Judges 6:24)
4. Jehovah-Tsidkenu – “The Lord our righteousness” (Jer. 23:6)
5. Jehovah-Shammah – “The Lord is there” (Ezek. 48:35)
6. Jehovah-Nissi – “The Lord our banner” (Ex. 17:8-15)
7. Jehovah-Raah – “The Lord my shepherd” (Ps. 23:1)

<sup>1</sup>The earth is the LORD's, and all it contains,

The world, and those who dwell in it.

<sup>2</sup>For He has founded it upon the seas  
And established it upon the rivers.

<sup>3</sup>Who may ascend into the hill of the LORD?

And who may stand in His holy place?

<sup>4</sup>He who has clean hands and a pure heart,  
Who has not lifted up his soul to falsehood

And has not sworn deceitfully.

<sup>5</sup>He shall receive a blessing from the LORD

And righteousness from the God of his salvation.

<sup>6</sup>This is the generation of those who seek Him,

Who seek Your face—even Jacob. Selah

<sup>7</sup>Lift up your heads, O gates,

And be lifted up, O ancient doors,  
That the King of glory may come in!

<sup>8</sup>Who is the King of glory?

The LORD strong and mighty,  
The LORD mighty in battle.

<sup>9</sup>Lift up your heads, O gates,

And lift them up, O ancient doors,  
That the King of glory may come in!

<sup>10</sup>Who is this King of glory?

The LORD of hosts,

He is the King of glory. Selah.

## [Read Psalm 24: Christ the Chief Shepherd]

**Q: What does Jewish tradition hold to be special about this particular Psalm?**

A: They believe David wrote it to commemorate the return of the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem.

**Point:** This would be a picture of the greater work of the Messiah, the very Word of God, returning to rule from Jerusalem as we understand will occur during the Millennial Reign.

*And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He who sat on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and wages war. His eyes are a flame of fire, and on His head are many diadems; and He has a name written on Him which no one knows except Himself. He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him on white horses. From His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may strike down the nations, and He will rule them with a rod of iron; and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty. And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, "KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS."*

Revelation 19:11-16

**Q: What is the current state of the earth today?**

A: Although it is the Lord's by creation and redemption, it has not yet been delivered from its bondage to sin and influence by Satan.

**Q: How will the earth's condition change upon Christ's return?**

A: Having been given to Him as an inheritance by God the Father, the earth will be not just be delivered from bondage but filled with the very glory of the Lord.

**Point:** The work of the Millennial Reign is the future work of Christ our Shepherd at that future date.

**Q: How will Christ's coming mirror the conditions of v.8?**

A: Christ will come as one fresh from the battle and having defeated all the nations at Armageddon.

*And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies assembled to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army. And the beast was seized, and with him the false prophet who performed the signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and*

*those who worshiped his image; these two were thrown alive into the lake of fire which burns with brimstone. And the rest were killed with the sword which came from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse, and all the birds were filled with their flesh.*

*Revelation 19:19-21*

**Q: How was it first revealed that Jesus was to be the Messiah fulfilling the Old Testament promises that He would sit on David's throne?**

A: It was revealed to Mary before Jesus was born. (Lk. 1:30-33)

### **Overall Application**

**Q: What other roles of Christ are represented in these three Psalms?**

A: Christ's roles as Priest, Prophet, and King.

*If Christ is our Good Shepherd because we have received Him as Savior, then allowed Him to be our Great Shepherd to guide and bless our life, then when He returns as the Chief Shepherd we will be ready to meet Him.*