

We have been making slow progress as we wander through this wonderful Psalm 23. So far we have seen that the Lord is our personal shepherd. We realised that as we have made him our shepherd we shall not want. He gives us a divine contentment with our lot in life, we are satisfied with His provision emotionally, physically and most of all spiritually.

We also noticed that there are times that the Lord has to make us to lie down in green pastures to enable us to renew our strength, to pull aside from the stress and press of this life. Combined with this renewal He leads us by still waters to restore our souls in an environment that is less than conducive to spiritual growth.

So once God has restored our souls we are then in a place to be led in the paths of righteousness so that we can honour and glorify Him. The out-working of this is that when we go through valley experiences we don't have to walk in fear but can live by faith, because He is with us and comforts us.

We now come across a change of pace in verse 5 of this Psalm. In some of the previous verses we have been on the move but now we are sitting at the table ready to have a feast. It is a feast in the battlefield; in a place where you would least expect to get one. In fact it could be a good case for some fast food.

I guess we often wonder if God is aware of our needs or indeed is capable of meeting our needs. I think it is important for us to understand that experiencing the Lord's abundant supply is not only linked to our relationship with God, but also our obedience to God. I think there are times when we believe that God should prepare a feast for us no matter what condition our walk with God is in.

Just recently a friend of mine has been going through some very difficult times in his business. I have sensed for some time that he has become very self sufficient. His business had been going very well and some how or other he thought he was responsible for the success he had been experiencing. So often when things are going well we manage to forget God, or at least forget that God has blessed us with the success that has come our way.

However, when we walk with God we can look forward to times of feasting which overcomes any discontent we might have whether it be physical, emotional or spiritual. Most important of all is that we feast on God's Word, so that we can develop in our Christian maturity and character. It is distinctly possible that we can go to church, bible study, come from a Christian home and yes, even be involved in a Christian ministry or organisation and be suffering a severe case of spiritual malnutrition.

J. Wilbur Chapman in his devotional study on Psalm 23 gives us four points to keep in mind:

1. Whatever other interpretation one may be given to our feeding on Christ, this at least is true: We must make time to do it, and time must be taken today to satisfy the soul's needs.
2. It is not so much what we eat, but rather what we digest that gives our bodies strength. So it is what you meditate upon today that will make you strong in the Lord.
3. Gratitude is the golden key that unlocks and keeps open the rich storehouse of God's best gifts, so make your requests known "with thanksgiving" for the prepared table.
4. "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God." (Philippians 4 verse 6)

We don't need to be carrying unnecessary burdens by not committing our struggles to God. This can be easier said than done when you get a surprise announcement like your business has just gone broke, or you have been diagnosed with a deadly disease like cancer.

However, did you notice that this feast is provided for us in the midst of our enemies, in the place where we might least expect to find such abundant provision? The wonderful thing is that such abundant blessing tends to be so much more appreciated in the presence of our enemies, because that is when we most need it.

— Carl Carmody, Editor of Challenge



(Please turn over)

# *Praise*

1. Praise God for safe travelling for Carl Carmody during his recent trip to a mission conference in the USA.
2. We are thanking the Lord for the prayer groups and distribution outlets through a number of churches in the Northern Territory. We know that some of the papers are reaching far and wide including some of the islands beyond the Australian coastline.
3. Praise the Lord for the provision of funds to complete the cost of our air conditioning.
4. Praise God for the continued good news we are receiving from those who work with the paper in the prisons in South Africa. Many men and women are responding to the gospel message.

# *Prayer*

1. We are looking at the possibility of producing a paper in South America. Pray for God's leading in this area.
2. Pray for the staff as they prepare each edition of the paper – for wise a choice of testimonies, stories and layout.
3. Please pray for continued protection of the building, equipment and staff as they travel to and from work each day.
4. Pray for the follow up of contacts who have requested help regarding faith in Christ.
5. Pray that High School students doing work experience might be led to consider mission work home or abroad or in the local church.



**Special Request: We are still collecting books to send to African Pastors. If you have any good quality books on Christian Living, Commentaries, Biographies, etc., that you are no longer using, please contact us here at Challenge.**



*Send your testimony to **Challenge** – Your conversion to Jesus Christ is a miracle, and is a wonderful means of witnessing to a lost world – Ring or write to Challenge for a testimony outline sheet.*

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