

Psalm 23:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me
beside the still waters.

Analysis

The shepherd imagery shifts to God's provision of rest and refreshment through two parallel phrases. 'Green pastures' (literally 'pastures of tender grass') represent abundant provision, while 'still waters' (literally 'waters of rest') suggest peace and safety—sheep fear rushing water. The causative Hebrew verbs emphasize God's active leading and enabling, not passive observation. This verse anticipates Christ's invitation in Matthew 11:28-30 to find rest in Him, the Good Shepherd who gives His life for the sheep.

Historical Context

David, the author, drew from his personal experience as a shepherd in the Judean wilderness where finding adequate pasture and safe water sources required constant vigilance and skill. His intimate knowledge of shepherding informs this theological portrait of God's care.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Study Questions

1. What spiritual 'green pastures' is God leading you to that you might be resisting?
2. In what areas of anxiety or turmoil do you need to trust the Shepherd to lead you beside still waters?

Interlinear Text

מִנְחָה וְתַּחַת	עַל	תִּשְׁאַל	בְּנֵא וְתַּ	יְרִבֵּאֵץ נִ	בְּשָׂא	בְּשָׂא וְתַּ	מִנְחָה וְתַּ
pastures	in green	He maketh me to lie down		H5921	waters	me beside the still	
H4999	H1877	H7257			H4325	H4496	

יְנַפְּלֵנִי
he leadeth
H5095

Additional Cross-References

Revelation 7:17 (Parallel theme): For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

Revelation 22:1 (Parallel theme): And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.

Psalms 46:4 (Parallel theme): There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most High.

Revelation 21:6 (Parallel theme): And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.

Revelation 22:17 (Parallel theme): And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

Isaiah 30:23 (Parallel theme): Then shall he give the rain of thy seed, that thou shalt sow the ground withal; and bread of the increase of the earth, and it shall be fat and plenteous: in that day shall thy cattle feed in large pastures.

Job 34:29 (Parallel theme): When he giveth quietness, who then can make trouble? and when he hideth his face, who then can behold him? whether it be done against a nation, or against a man only:

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