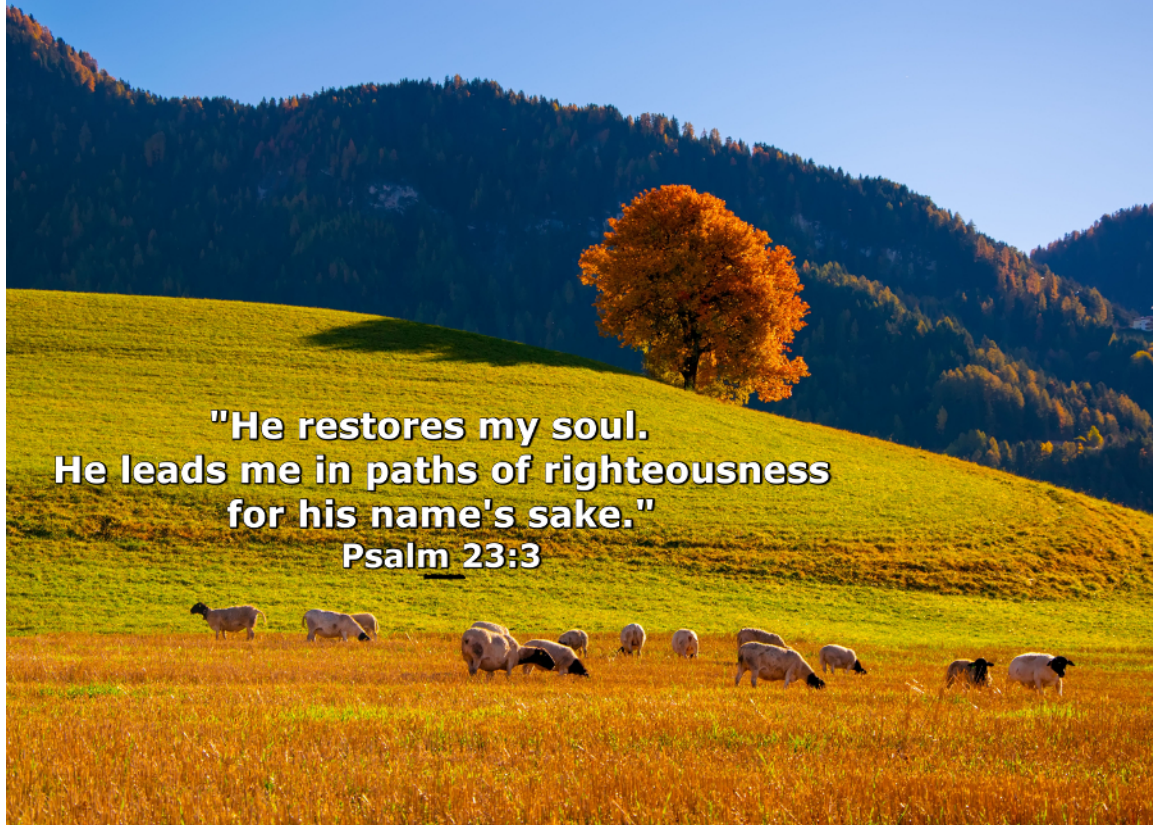


“He Restores My Soul”

8 November 2022

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**"He restores my soul.
He leads me in paths of righteousness
for his name's sake."
Psalm 23:3**

Autumn Rural Landscape with Sheep - Dolomite Alps, Italy - Psalm 23:3 - 123RF Photo
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***"The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake."
(Psalm 23:1-3)***

This lesson explains the biblical meaning of Psalm 23:3, "He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake."

Consider. In your relationship with your shepherd, what does it mean to you that he restores your soul?

Introduction

David writes Psalm 23 from the perspective of a sheep who is in a close relationship with and is under the protective care of his shepherd. In Psalm 23:1 David confidently writes, "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want." As followers of Jesus Christ our shepherd, we are his sheep, and we have a close relationship with him. We trust our shepherd, and he protects us and cares for us. He calls our name, and we follow him. Jesus said, "I am the good shepherd" and "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me" (John 10:11, John 10:27).

1. "He restores my soul"

The Lord our shepherd restores and refreshes our soul -- our life, our emotions, and our vitality -- all that comprises our inner living being (Ref.1). In Psalm 23:3, the form of the Hebrew verb translated as *restore* has a dual meaning. In Psalm 23:3 *restore* literally means *to bring back* and figuratively means *to refresh* (Brown-Driver-Briggs -- Ref. 2). The Lord our shepherd *restores* our soul by *bringing us back* from our wanderings when we go astray from him (Ref. 2, Ref. 3, Isaiah 53:6).

The Lord our shepherd *refreshes* our soul when we are wearied, exhausted, troubled, anxious, and worn down with care and toil (Ref. 4, Matthew 11:28-29). The Lord our shepherd *brings back* our vigor, encourages us, excites us to new effort, and fills us with new joy (Ref. 4, Psalm 16:11, Psalm 51:12, Acts 13:52).as his sons.

2. "He leads me in paths of righteousness"

The Lord our shepherd leads us in paths of righteousness. The Hebrew verb translated as *lead* means to *guide* and implies movement (Ref. 5). The Lord our shepherd *leads us* by calling our name and going before us for the purpose of our following him (John 10:1-4).

The Lord our shepherd leads us in *paths of righteousness* -- in ways that are *right and just, moral and ethical, ways that are in accordance with his word* (Ref. 6).

The paths of righteousness lead to life, not to death. Solomon wrote, "In the

path of righteousness is life, and in its pathway there is no death" (Proverbs 12:28).

3. "For his name's sake"

The Lord our shepherd leads us in paths of righteousness *for his name's sake*. The phrase, *for his name's sake*, means *to maintain his reputation or character* (Brown-Driver-Briggs -- Ref. 7). As followers of our shepherd, Jesus Christ, the way we live should bring honor, not dishonor, to his name. David wrote, "For you are my rock and my fortress; and for your name's sake you lead me and guide me" (Psalm 31:3). David also wrote, "Teach me to do your will, for you are my God! Let your good Spirit lead me on level ground! For your name's sake, O Lord, preserve my life! In your righteousness bring my soul out of trouble!" (Psalm 143:10-11).

Prayer. Thank you, Lord, for bringing us back when we have wandered away from you. Thank you, Lord, for refreshing our vitality when we are weary, and for giving us new direction and new joy. Thank you, Lord, for leading us in righteous paths for living that bring honor and glory to your name. All this we pray in your name, Jesus, our shepherd.

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