

Psalm 23 - Part 6
The God of my Valleys
12/11/2022

- Valleys
- Valleys are interesting in that they happen to everyone
- The Goodness of God
- The main character of the Bible and your life is not you — it's God!

Psalm 23 (ESV) 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. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

1 Kings 20:23 (NIV) Meanwhile, the officials of the king of Aram advised him, "Their gods are gods of the hills. That is why they were too strong for us. But if we fight them on the plains, surely we will be stronger than they.

1 Kings 20:27 (NIV) When the Israelites were also mustered and given provisions, they marched out to meet them. The Israelites camped opposite them like two small flocks of goats, while the Arameans covered the countryside.

1 Kings 20:28 (NIV) The man of God came up and told the king of Israel, "This is what the Lord says: 'Because the Arameans think the Lord is a god of the hills and not a god of the valleys, I will deliver this vast army into your hands, and you will know that I am the Lord.'"

- God is God, not just of your mountaintop experiences, he's the God of the valleys too
- It's also a metaphor for difficult times

What We Know About Valleys:

A) They are UNIVERSAL

- They're a part of life
- You're going to experience disappointment in life

Deut. 11:11 (NIV) But the land you are crossing the Jordan to take possession of is a land of mountains and valleys that drinks rain from heaven.

- Even when you're in the center of God's will, valleys are part of the plan

1 Peter 4:12 (TEV) "Don't be surprised when you are tested by troubles or painful suffering, as if something unusual is happening to you."

B) They are **UNAVOIDABLE**

Psalm 34:19 (TLB) "The good man does not escape all troubles – he has them too. But the Lord helps him in each and every one."

Matthew 5:45 (NIV) He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.

C) They are **UNCERTAIN**

Proverbs 27:1 (NLT) "Don't ever brag about tomorrow, since you don't know what the day will bring forth."

- The valley of Siddim

Gen. 14:10 (NIV) Now the Valley of Siddim was full of tar pits, and when the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled, some of the men fell into them and the rest fled to the hills.

- They ran away from something

Siddim is the valley of **FAILURE**: where you slip, fall, and get stuck.

- Question, what's your Siddim today?
- The Valley of Eshcol

Numbers 13:33 (NCV) We felt like grasshoppers, and we looked like grasshoppers to them."

Eshcol is the valley of **FEAR**: I either move ahead or I give up.

- Do you see it as an obstacle or do you see it as an opportunity?
- The Valley of Baca

Psalm 84:5-6a (NIRV) "Blessed are those whose strength comes from You... As they pass through the dry Valley of Baca they make it a place of springs."

The Valley of Baca is the valley of **GRIEF**. It's where I'm struggling with loss

Three Things to Remember in the Valley:

1st) **PRESENCE**

- Remember that God is with me!

Psalm 23 (ESV) ... for you are with me...

Isaiah 43:2 (TLB) “When you go through deep waters and great trouble, I will be with you. When you go through rivers of difficulty, you will not drown! When you walk through the fire of oppression, you will not be burned up — the flames will not consume you!”

2nd) **PURPOSE**

- Remember that God has a good purpose for my valley!

Romans 5:3-5 (NIV) Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not put us to shame, because God’s love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.

Hosea 2:15 (NLT) “I will transform the Valley of Trouble into a Gateway of Hope!”

Colossians 1:11 (NCV) God will strengthen you with his own great power so that you will not give up when troubles come, but you will be patient.

3rd) **PRIZE**

2 Corinthians 4:17 (NLT) For our present troubles are small and won’t last very long. Yet they produce for us a glory that vastly outweighs them and will last forever!

- Jesus is the prize
- Not because of the absence of the shadow, but because of the presence of the Shepherd
- I will be with you