EVERY DAY WITH JESUS

**DATE: 8/18/2013 am**

**TEXT: Psalm 23:1a**

***“The LORD is my shepherd; …”***

**SERIES INTRODUCTION**

Have you ever started reading a book and shortly after, wanted to jump to the last chapter to find out how it ended?

For a moment, think of **Psalm 23** as a book of 6 chapters (Each verse as a chapter)

Now let’s jump to the last chapter or **v.6**

Let’s also think of **Psalm 23** as a book that describes our Christian Journey

And as we look at the last chapter, we see that when this Journey is over …

We will - ***“dwell in the house of the LORD forever”***

We could subtitle **Psalm 23** *“From Earth to Glory”*

As Believers, we have the Assurance, that when this Life is Over and our Journey is Complete …

We have a Heavenly Home awaiting us

**Ill.** How many remember mother telling you after dinner, while clearing the table to *“Keep your fork”?* You didn’t have to be told why. *You knew the Best was yet to come*

As believers, we know the best is yet to come – Why?

We will ***“dwell in the house of the LORD forever”***

We are Pilgrims Traveling with the Assurance, that when our Journey is over, Heaven is our Eternal Home

Praise God for the Final Chapter

However it’s the Journey described in the previous five verses that we struggle with

We often Shout about the Sweet By and By,

But it’s the Nasty Now and Now, that gives us the Fits

One Day, Getting there, is Settled and Sure,

But it’s *in the* *Going,* that we have the Problem

It’s the Journey that gives us the Trouble

**Psalm 23** has often been called the *“Pearl of the Psalms”*

(It is one of the most popular portions of the Bible)

It has been a source of Strength and Comforts for many

**Quote:** It is as one writer described, *a Psalm for all occasions*

It Blesses us during the Good times, and Helps us during the Bad times

This Psalm has been a Companion at the Bedside, and Comfort at the Graveside

It has been the Seed and Source of many a Sermon

I want to start today, and for the next several weeks study **Psalm 23** as the story of our Life’s Journey

I’d like to think of it as more than just a single Psalm

But each verse as the Day to Day Experience of a Believer on their way home to ***“dwell in the house of the LORD”***

Or to put it another way, **Psalm 23** tells us how to face -

***“The Days Ahead”***

It tells us how we can Face Life, and All that we’ll Encounter

There is coming a day, a Joyous and Glorious day …

… When we will be Home

… But until then, there are ***The Days* *Ahead***

These Days are often anything, but Joyous and Glorious

- There’ll be the Sunny Days in Green Pastures

- But there is also the Shadowy Days of the Valley

- There are days when we drink from the Still Waters

- But there are also days when we need Oil for our Hurts

- There are days when our Cup Runs Over

- But there will also be days when our Cups are Empty

How Do we Face the Days that are Ahead?

I believe this beloved **23rd Psalm** will tell us how to face -

***“The Days Ahead”***

**SERMON INTRODUCTION**

Let’s begin, by looking at the **1st chap. (v.1a)**

Which I will entitle - ***“Every Day with Jesus”***

How Do we Face the Days Ahead?

First and foremost, We must Live Everyday *with* Jesus

Let me explain

**Psalm 23** consists of 118 words, but 116 are devoted to explaining the first two – ***“The LORD”***

You see, this Psalm is about more than just Green Pastures, Still Waters, Full Tables and Cups Running Over

This Psalm is About ***“The LORD”*** … and it’s …

- ***“The LORD”*** Who allows us to Lie Down in Green Pastures and Leads us Beside the Still Waters

- ***“The LORD”*** who Prepares the Table and Fills our Cup

The whole Psalm gives a description of ***“The LORD”***

At the very beginning of this Psalm …

David shares how he Faced Life

He shares the Secret to facing The Days Ahead

What was David’s Secret?

His Secret was ***“The LORD”*** Himself

David was able to Face Life, and all that he Experienced in Life …

… Because of ***“The LORD”***

David’s Secret can be our Blessing

Regardless of what may be ahead … (**Pro. 27:1; James 4:14**)

We don’t know what a day may bring forth

We can Face those Days because of ***“The LORD”***

Let’s pray and think on these things

***“Every Day with Jesus”***

**~~~Prayer~~~**

First, let me suggest that we need to be -

**I. “AMAZED BY” THE LORD’S “PERSON”!**

In this first chapter, on the opening page, in the very first words …

David takes us right to … ***“The LORD”***

**Quote:** Spurgeon once said that he never preached a sermon without making a beeline to the cross

David begins this Psalm by making a beeline to ***“The LORD”***

**Psalm 45:1 – *“My heart is*** *inditing* ***a good matter: I speak of the things which I have made touching the king: my tongue is the pen of a ready writer”***

***Inditing*** – means *committing words to writing; dictating what shall be written*

What he wrote, he wrote with Awe and Amazement as he described the Lord

It’s like David was saying - *“This is the kind of God I have!”*

*(This is the kind of God we have, to face the days ahead)*

When we think of being Amazed by the Lord’s Person,

The First thing we think of is … (By way of intro.)

**1.** The name ***“LORD”*** (spelled with all capital letters in our Bible)

In the Hebrew it is spelled “Y-H-W-H” (No vowels)

When vowels are added it’s pronounced *Yahweh*

*“Jehovah”* is the English translation of the name

So sacred was this Name that Jewish high priests would only pronounce it once a year, and that, in the temple, and even then only behind the veil in the Holy of Holies

Jewish people considered the name too holy to be spoken by human lips

Whenever they needed to say *Yahweh*, they substituted the word *Adonai,* which means, ***“Lord”*** (lower case letters)

If the name needed to be written, the scribes would take a bath before they wrote it, take a new and unused pen, write the name, and then destroy the pen afterward

I bet, David, bathed himself, picked up a new pen, and then, with a heart trembling, in Awe and Amazement, wrote the Words, ***“The LORD”***

Next we have …

**2.** The Personal Name of God

The name David chose, is the Personal Name of God

You can call me preacher or pastor, but that is not my name

They are but descriptions of who I am and what I do

My children may call me dad, and my wife may call me sweetie-pie or handsome, but again that is not my name

(Humor: although they are accurate descriptions)

God has many names and they serve as Descriptions and Declarations of Whom and What He is …

But! the name Yahweh (Jehovah) is the Personal Name of God

Next we see …

**3.** Its First Mention

The Principle of First Mention in Theology tells us that the first time something is found or said (in the Bible) is very important

And that, this First Time, sets a Precedent

Moses was the first to learn God’s Personal Name during his encounter at the Burning bush

And that this Name is associated with Fire is important

God Associates Himself with Fire in many ways

But the most important, I believe, is His Holiness

**Deuteronomy 4:24 – *“For the LORD thy God is a consuming fire …”*** (**Heb.12:29**)

It’s here, that God tells Moses to return to Egypt and lead the children of Israel out

We read in **Exodus 3:13, 14** What Moses said unto God -

***“Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, ‘The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you;’ and they say to me, ‘What is His Name?’ what shall I say unto them?”***

God’s answer to Moses was - ***“I AM THAT I AM”*** … and

***“Thou shalt say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you”***

What Does this Name Mean and What Does it Say about God?

First it declares the -

**A. The ‘Uncaused’ God** (You ask, what does that mean?!)

**1.** It Speaks ofThe Self-Existing One

*Cause* - is something exerting its power into action, to make a thing begin to be

The prefix *Un* means – *not* or *no*

The name ***“LORD”*** speaks of the self-existence of God

One Who has never had a Beginning

One Who will never have an End

He is the One who Causes, but He Himself does not have a Cause

He has Always Existed and will Ever Exist

He Was Not Created and Never Born

He Makes, but He was Never Made

**2.** There Has Never Been a Time When God Has Not Been

Friend, when there was nothing, God was!

Let me put it this way …

There has never been a moment when He was not!

And there will never be a moment when He will not!

He is **The ‘Uncaused’ God**

Furthermore, this Name tells us that He is -

**B. The ‘Unchanging’ God**

First, in regard to …

**1.** Our Case

God said to Moses - *“Just tell them that My Name is I AM”*

Now, if you or I were to call ourselves *“I am”*

That would be an incomplete sentence

Someone would ask – *“You are what?”*

We would have to add a descriptive word to the words *“I am”*

Such as, *“I am Jack,” “I am Bill,” or “I am Dan”*

**2.** But in God’s Case

He needs no descriptive word, because He’s always been

God is, and He is what He has always been

He never changes

The Psalmist declared in **Psalm 102:27 –**

***“But Thou art the same”***

God said of Himself in **Malachi 3:6 –**

***“For I am the LORD, I change not”***

Everything and Everyone Changes

(The Weather changes, People change …)

But God is the **Uncaused** and the **Unchanging God**

Now when you think about the Journey of Life and the Days that are Ahead

Does it not give you Strength and Courage to know that this is our God!

David seems to say –

*“We can face whatever our journey of life may bring because our God is* ***The LORD****!”* (The Ever Existent One)

How Can We Face The Days Ahead?

Don’t look at the Path or our Surroundings

Look To ***“The LORD”*** and At ***“The LORD”***

Let Who He Is and What He Is, fill your heart with Strength and Courage

He is a BIG God, therefore let Him become BIG in your heart

Place your Faith in Him during the Journey

Always be in Awe and Amazement at the God He is!

It will help you face *The Days Ahead*

**“AMAZED BY” THE LORD’S “PERSON”!**

Secondly, let me suggest that we need to be -

**II. “ALERT TO” THE LORD’S “PRESENCE”!**

Once David introduces us to the subject of his book …

… ***“The LORD”***

He then joyfully declares - ***“The LORD is my Shepherd”***

David was a Shepherd, therefore he understood the relationship of a Shepherd to his sheep

Sheep are very amiable creatures

David was very Precious and Personal to ***“The LORD”***

Why? **(Acts 13:22 – *“…a man after mine own heart…”)***

Because they enjoyed a special and tender relationship

David describes God as his Shepherd

David’s Shepherd is our Shepherd also

What should, the Lord as our Shepherd, mean to us?

For one thing, as our Shepherd -

**A. He ‘Watches Over’ Us**

**1.** The word “Shepherd”

***“Shepherd”*** simple means - *to tend the flock*

It speaks of the role of the shepherd and his care for his sheep

Throughout this Psalm …

He describes how ***“The LORD”,*** his ***“Shepherd”,*** cares

**2.** The Shepherd’s Care for His Flock

Each of the thoughts in this Psalm will be dealt with in detail in coming messages

But briefly let’s preview our Heavenly Shepherd’s care for His flock

- In **v. 2** we see Him bringing His flock into green pastures and leading them to the still and peaceful waters

- We see Him in **v. 3** attending the hurts and wounds of His sheep and leading them down paths of righteousness

- In **v. 4** we see Him carefully guiding and guarding the sheep through dangerous terrain

All these actions describe how the Shepherd watches over us, His flock

What do The Days Ahead Possess for us?

No one knows but God

As I said earlier, there will be the Green Pastures,

But there will also be the Valleys

Yet, whatever The Days Ahead May Bring …

We know that ***“The LORD is my Shepherd” …***

And has a Shepherd, He’s watching and caring for us

**Ill.** A mother was putting her little four-year-old daughter to bed. The child was afraid of the dark, so when the light was turned out, the mother would lay by the child to calm her and eventually she would go to sleep. They both lay there looking up at the moon that could be seen from the window. After awhile the little girl asked, “Mother, is the moon God’s light?” “Yes,” said the mother. Then the little girl asked, “Will God put out His light and go to sleep?” The mother replied, “No, my child, God never goes to sleep.” Then the little girl said, “Well, as long as God is awake, there is no sense in both of us staying awake.” (Ps. 4:8 –“I…lay me down in peace, and sleep for thou LORD, only maketh me to dwell in safety”)

**Psalm 121:4** tells us that the God who keeps us -

***“shall neither slumber nor sleep”***

As our Shepherd, He is always there

**He ‘Watches Over’ Us**

Furthermore, we are reminded that -

**B. He ‘Walks With’ Us**

**1.** The Personal Pronoun “My”

When David speaks of ***“The LORD”***

He does not call Him *the* or *a* ***“Shepherd”***

Instead he calls Him ***“my Shepherd”***

The Lord was very personal to David

He was the One that was With Him, Watching over him and Walking by him

He states in **v. 4** that he ***“will fear no evil, for the LORD is with me”***

**2.** Is He Your Shepherd?

Can you call ***“The LORD”*** your Shepherd?

Can you say, (With David) ***“The LORD is my Shepherd”***?

If so, then you can be encouraged by the fact that as your Shepherd …

He is not only **Watching Over You**, but also **Walking With You**

**3.** He Will Be There

We know that whatever The Days Ahead may hold,

***“The LORD”*** will be with us

In the green pastures and beside the still waters we will enjoy His Presence

I also remind you that if we must pass through a long and difficult valley, He’ll be there also!

There will never be a moment that He will not be with us

**Heb. 13:5 - *“I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee”***

There will not be one day… in The Days Ahead,

… That we will have to face on our own

He will be there! He will be with us

**Ill.** Who has not read or at least heard of the poem entitled “Footprints.” One night a man had a dream. He was walking along the beach with the Lord. Across the dark sky flashed scenes from his life. In each scene, he noticed two sets Of footprints in the sand; One made by him and the other by the Lord. When the last scene of his life flashed before him, He looked back at the footprints in the sand. He noticed that many times along the path of his life, There was only one set of footprints. He also noticed that it happened at the worst times of his life. This bothered him very much, So he asked the Lord about it. “Lord, you said that once I decided to follow you, You’d walk with me all the way. But I’ve noticed that during times of trouble, There is only one set of footprints. I don’t understand why you left me When I needed you the most.” The Lord answered, “My precious child, I love you and would never leave you. During your times of trial, When you see only one set of footprints, That’s when I was carrying you.”

As we face The Days Ahead,

Be Alert for the Presence of the Lord

He will be there every step of the way

**“AMAZED BY” THE LORD’S “PERSON”!**

**“ALERT TO” THE LORD’S “PRESENCE”!**

Lastly, let me suggest that in facing The Days Ahead

We can Be …

**III. “ASSURED OF” THE LORD’S “PROVISION”!** (2 thoughts)

What is the result of ***“The LORD”*** being David’s ***“Shepherd”***?

He concludes **v. 1** by saying – ***“I shall not want”***

***“Want”*** – means *desiring or needing something*

**Ill**. One little boy in Sunday school was quoting **Psalm 23** and said, *“The LORD is my shepherd,* ***and that’s all I want.****”*

I like that translation

David declares, that during his Journey through Life

***“The LORD”*** / his ***“Shepherd”*** had met his every need

In the words - ***“I shall not want”*** we see -

**A. His ‘Sufficiency’**

David was magnifying the One who had met his every need

We can face the days ahead knowing that the Lord Can, and Will, meet our every need

**Ill.** One writer put it this way …

- I shall not be in want of Rest

***“He maketh me to lie down in green pastures”***

- I shall not be in want of Drink

***“He leadeth me beside the still waters”***

- I shall not be in want of Forgiveness

***“He restoreth my soul”***

- I shall not be in want of Guidance

***“He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness”***

- I shall not be in want of Companionship

***“Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, Thou art with me”***

- I shall not be in want of Comfort

***“Thy rod and Thy staff, they comfort me”***

- I shall not be in want of Food

***“Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies”***

- I shall not be in want of Joy

***“Thou anointest my head with oil”***

- I shall not be in want of Anything

***“My cup runneth over”***

- I shall not be in want of anything in This Life

***“Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life”***

- I shall not be in want of anything in Eternity

***“For I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever”***

***“The LORD”*** will be with us and He will meet our every need

Therefore, we not only see **His ‘Sufficiency’ …**

But also -

**B. Our ‘Satisfaction’**

David said - ***“I shall not want”***

In modern terms, he said - *“There is no lack in my life”*

David speaks as someone that is Satisfied

On his journey of life, he could not ask for anything more than ***“The LORD”*** Himself

- In ***“The LORD”*** he had found all he needed

- In ***“The LORD”*** his every need had been met

You can be sure that during The Days Ahead

***“The LORD”*** will provide all you need to face whatever the future may bring

**CONCLUSION**

What do The Days Ahead have in store for us?

Like I said, only God knows (Pro. 27:1; James 4:14)

However, regardless of what The Days Ahead will bring

Don’t forget we have a Glorious and Unchanging God to trust in

Let your Hearts be Occupy with the Person of God

Always be Conscious of the Presence of God

There will never be a moment when He will leave you or forsake you

He will always be there

As well, be assured of the Provision of God

You do not have to want

There is no reason why you should lack what you need to face whatever the future holds

Every Day in the Days Ahead can be

***“Every Day with Jesus”***

What more could you ask for in The Days Ahead?

**“AMAZED BY” THE LORD’S “PERSON”!**

**“ALERT TO” THE LORD’S “PRESENCE”!**

**“ASSURED OF” THE LORD’S “PROVISION”!**