

Our Source of Certainty
In Uncertain Times (Part 4):
The Lord Protects Us

Psalm 23:4

Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me (v.4a).

the valley of the shadow of death

the valley of the shadow of death

the valley of deep darkness

the valley of the shadow of death

the valley of deep darkness

the darkest valley

the valley of the shadow of death

the valley of deep darkness

the darkest valley

Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; (v.4, NIV)

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.*

(Psalm 23:1-4)

I. The Lord protects us as we go through dark valleys by His Presence.

Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; (v.4a)

A. The Lord sometimes leads us into dark valleys.

A. The Lord sometimes leads us into dark valleys.

He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. (v.3b)

Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me (v.4a).

“It is in the valleys with their trials and dangers that we develop character.”

- James Boice

B. The Lord leads us through dark valleys.

*Even though I walk through the valley
of the shadow of death*

C. The Lord stays close to us as we go through dark valleys.

I will fear no evil – for you are with me.

*The Lord is my shepherd; He makes me lie
down; He leads me; He restores my soul.
(vv.1-3)*

*The Lord is my shepherd; He makes me lie down; He leads me; He restores my soul.
(vv.1-3)*

You are with me. Your rod and staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil. (vv.4-5)

“I think the switch to the more intimate ‘you’ precisely when he enters the valley of the shadow of death is a universal experience among God's people The crises of life draw us closer to God. We are more prone to talk *about* God when we are in the green pasture and more prone to cry out *to* God when we enter some fearful ravine.”

- John Piper

I am with you always, to the end of the age. (Matthew 28:20)

And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:19).

II. The Lord protects us as we go through dark valleys by His Power.

your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

(v.4b)

A. The Lord exercises His power to protect us.

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1. The Lord protects us from our enemies.

“The shepherd’s rod was a symbol of his power. Actually, it was an oak club about two feet in length. It was used to defend the flock against wild beasts. The head of this rod was round, usually whittled from the knot of a tree—in which the shepherd had pounded sharp bits of metal. This heavy club could easily kill a lion or bear . . . threatening the safety of the sheep.”

– Charles Swindoll

³⁴ But David said to Saul, “Your servant has been keeping his father’s sheep. When a lion or a bear came and carried off a sheep from the flock, ³⁵ I went after it, struck it and rescued the sheep from its mouth. When it turned on me, I seized it by its hair, struck it and killed it.

³⁶ Your servant has killed both the lion and the bear; this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, because he has defied the armies of the living God. ³⁷ The Lord who rescued me from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear will rescue me from the hand of this Philistine. ”(1 Samuel 17:34-37)

A. The Lord exercises His power to protect us.

1. The Lord protects us from our enemies.

2. The Lord protects us from ourselves.

“The shepherd’s staff was his crook, which was bent or hooked at one end. It provided the shepherd with an instrument for prying a sheep loose from a thicket, pushing branches aside along the narrow path, and pulling wandering sheep out of holes into which they had fallen. . . . Like the rod, the staff was a symbol of the shepherd’s power and strength.”

– Charles Swindoll

A. The Lord exercises His power to protect us.

B. The Lord exercises His power to comfort us.